



# The Natural World

Note-taking: urban beehives | Cambridge IGCSE ESL 0510/0511

## 1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you read.

1. Why are bees important for the natural world?
2. Can wildlife projects work in busy cities?
3. What safety rules would urban beehives need?
4. How could schools learn from a beehive project?

### Exercise 3 at a glance

In this activity, you will read one factual text and complete notes using information from the text. In the exam, this task is usually worth 7 marks. This practice version includes extra notes to help you build confidence. Use short words or phrases from the text, not your own ideas.

## 2. Read for overall understanding

Read the text. Why do some cities support urban beehives?

### Urban Beehives

Urban beehives are now found on some rooftops, community gardens and school grounds. Cities support these projects because they can support pollinators, improve local biodiversity and teach people about food and nature. Bees visit flowers in parks, balconies and roadside planting, helping many plants produce fruit and seeds. A hive in a city can also make people notice wildlife in places that seem completely built up. Some city beekeeping projects work with local gardeners, who plant lavender, herbs and native flowers near the hive. These plants provide nectar while also making parks, courtyards and school grounds more attractive for people.

A beehive project needs careful planning. Organisers choose quiet corners away from busy paths, use clear signs and place barriers around the hive area. A trained beekeeper checks the colony regularly and watches for disease. Schools that keep bees usually limit access to small groups and provide protective clothing. Students with serious allergies do not take part in close-up hive visits. Beekeepers explain that students should not think only about honey. The more important lesson is the connection between insects, flowers and food production. Without pollinators, many fruits and vegetables would be harder to grow.

The learning opportunities are wide. Students can study pollination, life cycles, weather patterns and the link between insects and food production. Some classes plant wildflowers so bees have more sources of nectar. Others compare honey from different seasons and discuss why its colour or taste changes. The project can connect science with geography, cooking and environmental responsibility. Schools may use observation windows or video links so students can watch hive activity without standing close to the bees. This is useful for younger students and for anyone who feels nervous around insects.

There are concerns too. Too many hives in one area may create competition for wild bees, which also need food. For this reason, some experts say cities should plant more flowers before adding more honeybee colonies. Beehives also require time, equipment and adults who understand safe handling. When planned responsibly, however, urban beehives can make conservation feel close to everyday life. A responsible project also teaches limits. Honeybees are not the only pollinators, and wild bees, butterflies and other insects need habitats too. For this reason, many projects combine hives with wildflower areas and reduced pesticide use.

### 3. Strategy focus

#### Find benefits and safeguards

Nature texts often include both benefits and safety rules. Make sure the note matches the heading before copying the phrase.

### 4. Practice note-taking task

Complete the notes using information from the text. Use short words or phrases from the text. Do not add your own ideas.

Notes	Write short answers
Where urban beehives may be found	- ..... - ..... - .....
Safety planning	- ..... - ..... - .....
What students can study	- ..... - ..... - .....
Concerns and requirements	- ..... - ..... - .....

### 5. Vocabulary notebook

Underline five useful words or phrases from the text. Check their meaning, then record them in your vocabulary notebook.

### 6. Follow-up tasks

1. Discussion: Would urban beehives be suitable near your school? Why, or why not?
2. Strategy: Choose three answers and decide whether each is a place, rule, learning point or concern.
3. Writing: Write advice for a school planning a wildlife project.
4. Vocabulary: Circle words and phrases connected to wildlife, habitats and conservation.

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## 2. Read for overall understanding

Suggested answer: to support pollinators, improve local biodiversity and teach people about food and nature.

## 4. Practice note-taking task

### Where urban beehives may be found

- rooftops
- community gardens
- school grounds

### Safety planning

- quiet corners away from busy paths
- clear signs
- barriers around the hive area

### What students can study

- pollination
- life cycles
- weather patterns

### Concerns and requirements

- competition for wild bees
- time
- adults who understand safe handling

## Notes for checking

This is an extended practice version of the IGCSE ESL note-taking task. The live exam normally has fewer marks, but this version includes extra notes to build confidence and selection skills.

Accept short phrases that keep the same meaning.

Learners should avoid copying a whole sentence if a shorter note answers the heading.

Some answers need more than one or two words, especially when the key detail is a phrase.