



**Animals in Art**  
**2022–2023 School Year Workshop**  
**Grades: Kindergarten–5**

**Lesson Overview:**

Utilizing prior knowledge, workshop instruction, and observations from artworks in the High’s collection, students will compose their own bas-relief representation of a pollinator. Students will intentionally think about habitat when creating the background of their composition.

**Learning Objectives:**

*Essential Questions*

- How are artists and scientists similar?
- What is a zoologist?
- What are the unique characteristics of pollinators?
- How do artists represent these characteristics in unique ways?

*Students will be able to . . .*

- Identify varying animal characteristics
- Understand the importance of habitats
- Create a work of art inspired by the unique attributes of pollinators and their habitats

**Performance Tasks:**

- Discussion-based observation, art-making activity

**Mini Glossary:**

- Zoologist: a person who studies animals
- Habitat: the natural environment of a plant or animal
- Mammal: a type of vertebrate animal that feeds milk to its young and usually has hair or fur covering most of its skin
- Insect: a small invertebrate animal, usually with six legs and wings

- Life cycle: the continuous changes an organism undergoes in its lifetime
- Characteristics: the typical or distinguishing attributes and qualities of a person, group, action, or thing
- Endangered animal: a species that is at risk of extinction, or disappearing from the planet forever
- Pollinator: an animal that carries pollen between plants and helps fertilize them
- Bilateral symmetry: a description of something that can be divided in half with each side being the same
- Pattern: a design (lines, shapes, colors) that repeats
- Bas-relief: a mostly flat type of art in which the figures are raised from the background

**Materials:**

- Paper or tagboard (9 × 12, 12 × 18)
- Tissue paper
- Bug body stamps and stamp pads
- Pipe cleaners
- Popsicle sticks
- Crayons
- Oil pastels
- Sharpies/markers

**Additional Needs per Classroom:**

- Large images of butterfly-inspired artwork from the Museum’s collection
- Images of pollinators and habitats
- Work samples
- Visual timer
- Visual schedule

**Procedures:**

Introduction (10 mins)

Discuss with students what a zoologist is and how they will be thinking like one in today's lesson. Tell students: Talk about pollinators and their importance to the ecosystem and environment. Help define and discuss pollen; what is its job? What does it mean to pollinate? Guide students to list some examples of pollinators (butterflies, bats, bumble bees). Use visual aids to explain the importance of pollinators, their life cycles, and their habitats.

Connecting to the Collection (5 mins)



Jan van Kessel (Flemish, 1626–1679), *Butterflies, Caterpillars, Other Insects, and Flowers*, 1659, oil on copper, purchase in memory of Dr. and Mrs. DeLos Lemuel Hill, 58.20.



Nellie Mae Rowe (American, 1900–1982), *Untitled (Butterfly)*, 1978, crayon, colored pencil, and pen on paper, gift of Judith Alexander, 2003.233.

Let's Create a Habitat! (20 mins)

*Differentiate between Grades:*

- **K–2:** Pass out 9 × 12 tagboard and then demonstrate to students how to create their pollinator's body. They can use a variety of tools: stencils, stamps, popsicle sticks, etc. Instruct students to fill in the wings of their pollinator; for butterflies, they can focus on pattern and color. Tissue paper can be used to make their pollinator pop off the page. When this is complete, they will add a background to include grass, trees, flowers, and sky. They can continue to use tissue paper or other materials like watercolor markers.
- **3–5:** Pass out 12 × 18 tagboard. Review pollinators with students, particularly monarch butterflies, bats, and honeybees. Key points of discussion should include colors, markings, patterns, and body parts of each. Briefly discuss how human activities are endangering monarch butterflies, bats, and honeybees. Instruct students to think about the environments where butterflies, bats, and bees live. Students will fill in backgrounds for their artwork first; options

can include flowers, trees, barns, beehives, and caves. Once the background is completed, students can add additional butterflies and bees in various sizes and poses to their new habitat.

**5:** Guide students in a discussion about endangered pollinators, mentioning that monarch butterflies, honeybees, and fruit bats are all on endangered species lists due to human activities. How could this impact our collective future? Students will use their power as artists to create an idyllic environment for pollinators. Pass out 12 × 18 tagboard and white scrap paper. Students will be encouraged to use oil pastels to create a vibrant background. Then they will set their tagboard backgrounds aside while drawing their choice of pollinators on the separate scrap paper. They will cut these out and add them to their backgrounds. Using tissue paper, they can add grass, trees, and flowers so that their work begins to resemble a bas-relief sculpture.

#### Conclusions (10 mins)

Invite students to share their work with the class. Have them put into their own words what a pollinator is and why they are important. Ask them to reflect on what they like about the pollinator habitats they created today and what they learned!

#### Clean-up (5 mins)

Allow time for students to tidy their stations and throw away scraps.