



## Do you speak bee?

**Curriculum Idea:** Animals, like people, have different ways of communicating with each other. Bees use dancing to communicate information to other bees.

**Related Episode:** My Friend Will Bee Right Back

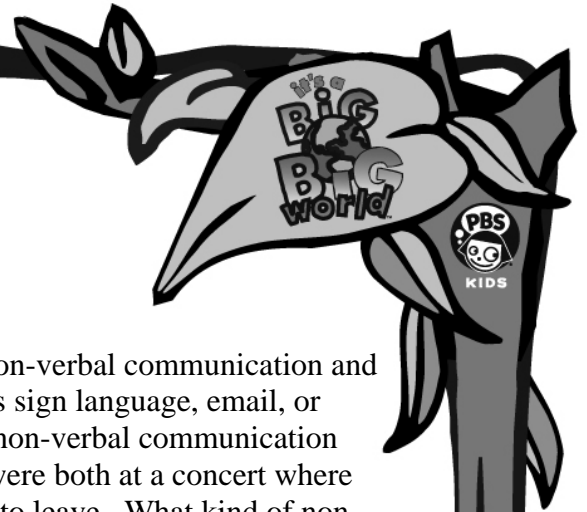
**Ages:** 3-6

**Subject:** Life Science

**Skills:** Communication, Imagination, Observation, Comparison

**Directions:** Ask your child to think of some of the ways that he communicates with people around him. He may speak out loud, write something down, or make a gesture. Just as he uses different ways to communicate, animals have different ways to communicate. Explain that bees for example, communicate by doing dances. A bee who has found a good food source will come back to the hive and do a dance for the other bees. Different dances, along with sounds, can tell other bees how far and in what direction to go for food, and how much food is there. For example, in the “round dance” a bee will make circles to the left and the right. In the “waggle dance” a bee will make a circle, then go in a straight line, then make another circle. Have your child try to perform these two bee dances.

Now ask your child if he can try to communicate with you like bees communicate with each other – by dancing! Tell him to think of something he would like to tell you and then create a dance to communicate that idea. For example, if he wants to say “Let’s read a book,” he might dance over to a book shelf, spin around a few times, point his elbow toward the book, slide over towards a chair, and then twist down into a sitting position. After you guess what he was trying to communicate to you, switch roles and do a dance to try to communicate something to him. For example you might want to dance, “It’s time to pick up your toys,” or “Let’s go outside.” Take turns communicating different things through dances.



**Talk About It:** Talk about the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication and ask him to names of types of non-verbal communication, such as sign language, email, or writing letters. Think of situations where he would need to use non-verbal communication and ask him how he would communicate. For example, if you were both at a concert where the music was very loud and he wanted to tell you he was ready to leave. What kind of non-verbal communication could he use? Or, if a baby was sleeping in the room and he wanted to tell you that he was hungry. How could he communicate that non-verbally? Talk about “body language” and how he communicates that way.

**Take It Further:** Learn about ways other animals communicate. Below are some examples. Ask your child which of these he can imitate.

- Chimpanzees greet each other by touching hands.
- Gorillas stick out their tongues to show they are angry.
- Giraffes intertwine their necks to show affection to one another.
- Kangaroos thump their feet on the ground to warn of danger.
- Whales leap out of the water repeatedly.