



brains on!

CURIOSITY KIT: HOW DO YOU CATCH A COLD?

ACTIVITY OBJECTIVE:

Kids will understand the role of handwashing in contagion and learn about better handwashing techniques through a hands-on demonstration.

MATERIALS/SETUP:

Portable speaker and device to play the episode

Access to a sink with hot/cold water and hand soap

Plain paper

Coloring materials (crayons, markers, paints, glitter, etc)

Germ: glo germ gel

Carrier: black light on hands

-OR-

Germ: cocoa powder

Carrier: white bread

-OR-

Germ: glitter

Carrier: paper towels

INSTRUCTIONS:

(Consider doing the activities while listening to the podcast.)

1. Determine your method for teaching about hand washing and assemble materials.
2. While kids listen to the podcast, have them create their own viruses. (You may want to show enlarged photos of viruses for inspiration.) They should figure out what sickness their virus would cause

and to what (people, animals, plants). They may choose to make them look like monsters or villains, and, if time allows, write a story about the sickness they share.

3. After the podcast, have kids share their viruses with each other, then set them aside.
4. Kids will receive “germs” (glo germ, cocoa powder, or glitter). You can be creative about how they “catch” these germs!
5. The “carrier” (hands/black light, white bread, paper towels) will demonstrate how easily these germs can spread.
6. Ask the kids how to get rid of the germs. Explore their options — anticipate that they’ll likely suggest washing hands.
7. Offer the sink, and have them wash with cold water with no soap, if possible.
8. Have them check for cleanliness. Did they get rid of all of the virus?
9. Ask the kids how their handwashing could be better. If they suggest it, allow them to wash their hands with warm water and soap to see the differences.
10. Recheck their hands.

QUESTIONS ADULTS CAN ASK:

(Don't forget to keep your hands off the project!)

- How many (teeny tiny) rhinoviruses would you need to line up to make a centimeter?
- When you were little, what did you think caused a cold?
- If a virus needs to go through a mucous membrane (mouth, nose, eyes) to get to us, do you think there's a good way to stop the spread of viruses?



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- Do you think humans could ever get rid of the cold virus and make it extinct?
- What makes handwashing successful? Water? Soap? Temperature? Amount of time? All of these?
- What could you do to encourage more hand washing?

ADAPTATIONS ADULTS CAN OFFER:

If the kids are excited about what they've learned (or grossed out about poor hand-washing techniques) encourage them to take action. Could they make posters for public restrooms? A video PSA? Teach younger kids what they've learned?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

WEBSITES:

<https://www.livestrong.com/article/156605-fun-ways-to-teach-children-about-washing-hands/>

http://totallytots.blogspot.com/2011/10/touch-feel-learn-healthy-habits.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%253A+Totally-Tots+%2528Totally+Tots%2529

BOOKS:

Germs Are Not for Sharing
by Elizabeth Verdick

Germs: Fact and Fiction, Friends and Foes
by Lesa Cline-Ransome