

MICROBES STORYTIME: THE SPREAD OF GERMS!

CREDIT AND EVALUATION

This health program was developed in partnership with the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM). Your feedback is encouraged. <http://nnlm.gov/Zkj>

AGES

Children 4+ years

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

One child sneezes, and the whole room gets sick! After storytime with *Sick Simon* or *Tiny Creatures*, children learn about handwashing. Consider buying microbe plush toys (or cutting silhouettes out of construction paper) to show the shapes of common germs and viruses. For school age children, explore germs through citizen science.

The Turmeric Hand Wash Challenge

This activity teaches the importance of hand washing. Sprinkle your hands with turmeric to symbolize “germs.” Using a large clear bowl filled with warm water for washing, demonstrate the 20 second rule for hand-washing (wet, lather, scrub, rinse, dry). Repeat as necessary until the turmeric is gone and the clear water in the bowl has turned yellow. For older children, you could also discuss the anti-microbial properties of turmeric (see Resources).

The Blue Chalk Ball Challenge

After coating your hands in blue chalk, pass a ball around the circle (at least twice). Once the ball returns to the librarian, ask children to inspect their hands. Everyone should have some blue chalk on their hands. Talk about how easily germs spread. If we do not wash our hands, we share germs!

MATERIALS

- Storytime materials such as books and (germ) puppets
- Health information handouts for caregivers
- A bowl of water and turmeric
- A sink or hand wipes, blue chalk, and a small/medium ball
- Germ stickers or stamps

TIP:

Consider incorporating your favorite version of a fairy tale in which a character falls ill, such as “Sleeping Beauty” or “Little Red Riding Hood.”

TIP:

Ask children to count to 20 or sing “Happy Birthday,” which takes about the same amount of time.

WARNING:

Turmeric can stain skin and clothing! Roll up your sleeves and consider wearing an apron.

GAME/ACTIVITY

SPACE

Meeting room

PERSONNEL

One to two staff members or volunteers

RESOURCES

Web

NNLM: Summer health programming

<https://nnlm.gov/initiatives/summer-reading>

MedlinePlus: Children's health

<https://medlineplus.gov/childrenshealth.html>

MedlinePlus: Germs and hygiene

<https://medlineplus.gov/germsandhygiene.html>

Centers for Disease Control: Handwashing

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing>

National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH):
Turmeric

<https://bit.ly/2dIFD7t>

Jbrary: Storytime resources

<https://jbrary.com>

Microbe plush toys

<https://www.giantmicrobes.com/us>

Children's Nonfiction

Davies, Nicola and Emily Sutton. *Tiny Creatures: The World of Microbes*.
Candlewick Press, 2014. 978-0763673154.

Children's Fiction

Krall, Dan. *Sick Simon*. Simon & Schuster, 2015. 978-1442490970.

Search your collection for children's nonfiction about biology, germs, and anatomy!