What Did I Touch Today?

Summary

Students will learn about germs and how they travel.

Materials

Germs Everywhere

Small stickers or sticky notes (6 per student)

- What Have Our Hands Touched Today? worksheet

Spreading Diseases

Heavy duty paper towels or coffee filters Variety of water-based markers labeled with #1 Variety of permanent markers labeled with #2 Spray bottle filled with water Water containers Pipettes or eyedroppers Old newspapers Additional Resources Books

- Wash Your Hands
- , by Tony Ross; ISBN 1923132018
- Mr. Putter and Tabby Catch the Cold
- , by Cynthia Rylant; ISBN 0152047603
- Morris Has a Cold
- , by Bernrad Wiseman; ISBN 0590434292
- Ebeneezer Sneezer
- , by Fred Penner, Barbara Hicks; ISBN 0920534376

Background for Teachers

Students should be aware that germs/bacteria travel from one person to another.

Intended Learning Outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate a positive learning attitude.
- 2. Develop social skills and ethical responsibility.

Instructional Procedures

Invitation to Learn

Ask students to hold out their hands. Move from student to student making comments such as, "Yuck," "Gross," and "Eew!" making certain to comment on each student, not only those who have dirty hands. "There are 'THINGS' on you!" Look at own hands and say, "OH NO! There are THINGS on me TOO! What are these things?"

Instructional Procedures

Germs Everywhere

These "things" on our hands are everywhere.

Give each student six stickers. Have them walk around the room and CAREFULLY place a sticker on six things they have touched today (e.g., doorknob, pencil sharpener, chair, computer keyboard, desk, tables, etc.). (We will be taking the stickers off, so don't push them down too

hard.)

After each student has finished, invite them to look around and see where most of the stickers have been placed. What does this tell you?

Graph where they put the stickers to see what has been touched most often on the <u>What Have</u> <u>Our Hands Touched Today? worksheet</u>. Which five places have had the most contact? You may have students put a sticker on the doorknob if they have touched it during the day, and continue with other objects that would receive the most contact in a day's time. This allows for more controlled results.

Many people have touched the same things in the room. By doing this, germs are passed to others by our hands.

Where do some of these germs come from (e.g., sneezing, noses, coughing, bathroom hygiene, animals, dirt, etc.)? When we touch something, the germs come onto our hands. Does this mean we shouldn't ever touch anything again? Should we wear gloves? Should we stay in our homes so we never come in contact with germs again? (No. Germs are part of life.)

There are germs that are harmless and there are germs that can make us sick if they get inside of our bodies. They get inside our bodies through our mouths, noses, and eyes. What can we do to stop sharing a lot of germs with others?

Wash our hands and wash them thoroughly. Even drying them with a paper towel removes some of the germs that are on our hands.

Throwing away tissues, bandages, and other items we have used and not leaving them for others to pick up. Coughing and sneezing in a tissue or on our arms instead of in our hands.

Keeping our rooms, desks, and other areas clean helps prevent germs from spreading. Don't put things in your mouths.

Spreading Diseases

Divide the chalkboard into two sections, labeling one side with the number 1 and the other side number 2.

List a few different illnesses people have (e.g., strep throat, colds, chicken pox, measles, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, hay fever, etc.). List all communicable diseases under #1 and noncommunicable diseases under #2 without telling the students why.

Choose five diseases from each side.

If the disease is under the #1, write the name of it on your paper towel using a marker that has #1 on it.

If the disease is under the #2, write the name of it on your paper towel using a marker that has #2 on it.

Place your paper towel on a piece of wax paper. Fill your pipette with water. Very carefully squeeze one drop of water on each initial and watch what happens. Allow students time to experiment. You may want to limit them to a certain number of drops on each letter.

The ink on the communicable disease initials will spread when the water is dropped on the letters.

Students should come to the conclusion that communicable diseases will spread from one person to another, while noncommunicable diseases cannot be passed from one person to another.

Some diseases are called *communicable* diseases. This means they spread to others. Other diseases are called *noncommunicable*. You can't catch a noncommunicable disease from other people.

Change the numbers on the chalkboard from #1 to the word *communicable* and from #2 to *noncommunicable*. We can help limit communicable diseases simply by washing our hands, coughing and sneezing away from people, and practicing good hygiene habits, but we can't control noncommunicable diseases or catch them from others.

Extensions

Create and laminate flyers to hang in the restrooms encouraging handwashing. Write a story from a germs point of view, either letting it live and being transferred from one person to another, or being washed down the drain.

Family Connections

Encourage healthy habits to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

Share stories and poetry with family members.

Write a poem about what to do with germs and put it in a booklet to take home and share with family members.

Assessment Plan

Each student draws a picture of the correct ways to avoid spreading diseases (e.g., covering mouth with tissue or coughing into sleeve, washing hands, not putting things in their mouths, not sharing cups or utensils with others, throwing away their tissues, etc.).

Bibliography

Research Basis

Haury, D.L. (1993). Teaching Science through Inquiry. ERIC Clearinghouse for Science Mathematics and Environmental Education (ERIC Identifier ED359048). Retrieved February 22, 2005, from http://www.eric.ed.gov

Indeed, research findings indicate that, "students are likely to begin to understand the natural world if they work directly with natural phenomena, using their senses to observe and using instruments to extend the power of their senses."

Authors

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