

Body Bugs!

This book provides links to Life Processes and Living Things strand. It looks at micro-organisms in particular. Challenge activities allow students to use inquiry skills such as observation and drawing conclusions (Sc2, 5f).

Key Science Concepts

- **Micro-organisms are usually too small to be seen.**
- **Micro-organisms can be harmful, causing infection and disease.**
- **Micro-organisms can be useful, for example, in the breakdown of waste.**
- **Different parts of a plant have different functions.**

Background Knowledge

Micro-organisms (or microbes) are found almost everywhere on our planet and most are microscopic. They have the same basic living needs as other living things, but many of them are not classified in the animal or plant kingdom—they exist in their own right. Bacteria, microscopic fungi (molds and yeasts) and viruses are all micro-organisms.

The majority of micro-organisms are harmless, and some are even beneficial. Micro-organisms (mainly bacteria and fungi) play an important part in recycling dead organic matter from plants and animals. They also break down animal waste so that it can be safely reincorporated into the environment.

Certain bacteria are used to make yogurt, cheese, and some antibiotics. Fungi are used for the production of antibiotics and yeast.

Some micro-organisms (viruses and bacteria) are harmful to other organisms, causing illness and disease. Micro-organisms can be spread by contact— from person to person (skin, saliva, blood) by air, by food, by water, or insects.

Before the Reading

Have students complete the word search. Then have them write the definitions for the words.
*key provided

During the Reading

Have students use the cluster map to record information they learn about photography during the reading.

After the Reading

Have students make posters based on their reading advising others how to best avoid spreading germs and promote health and hygiene.

Challenge Activity

Have students write an I-Search paper on a disease caused by micro-organisms, for example, malaria, typhoid, or the plague. Students select a disease. The I-Search paper should include the following:

1. How and why the student selected the topic.
2. What sources did they use and how did they find them.
3. What they learned stated in a first person point of view.
4. Conclusions drawn about the topic.