

It is that time of the year once again – sniffles and sneezes everywhere! I was recently with a group of young scientists and one of them sneezed all over and of course, the teacher reminded them to cover up. As any good scientist would do, they asked “why do I need to cover up?”. “Nothing comes out of my mouth when I sneezed, I cannot see it!” Well, that was the inspiration for this week’s article! I am going to show you how germs spread and are really there, even if we cannot see them. Gather those young scientists and let’s get started!

***Remember to ask an adult before doing this experiment.**

Materials

hand lotion
fine glitter
sink/tub/bucket to work over
soap
water
helper
paper towel

Procedure

1. Put a drop of lotion on your hands. Rub it in evenly all over.
2. Have your helper place a pinch of glitter in the palm of your hands.
3. Close your hand then open it.
4. Observe.
5. Squeeze your hands together.
6. What happens?
7. Touch your helper’s hands.
8. What happens?
9. Take a paper towel and “dry” your hands off.
10. What happens?
11. Wash very well with soap and water.
12. Observe.

Explanation

Germs are so small that we need a microscope to see them. In this experiment, we used glitter to represent germs so you can visualize them and how easily they spread. The glitter is acting the same way germs on your hands do. There are a lot of them and they spread REALLY easy, and are very tough to get off.

You should have easily been able to see the germs (glitter) spreads very quickly. When you squeezed your hands together, glitter moved from just one hand to the other. Then when you touched your helper, they should have glitter on them. Just wiping our hands with paper towel does little to get rid of the germs as well; we just spread them out to more surfaces. Perhaps you even touched your mouth or face and have glitter there now as well. This also shows us

how germs travel and get into our bodies and then make us sick. When you washed your hands with soap and water you should have been able to see that the glitter (germs) washed off quite easily.

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