

Grades  
**PreK to 5**



**HERE**  
For Healthy Schools

## HEALTHY HABITS

# HAND WASHING

### THE BIG IDEA:

Students will learn that tiny germs can be spread both in the air and on surfaces. Without practicing healthy habits, such as handwashing, we risk getting sick. In this lesson, students will learn about the reasons we wash our hands, the correct way to wash our hands, and how to promote handwashing.

**HEALTHY HABITS**

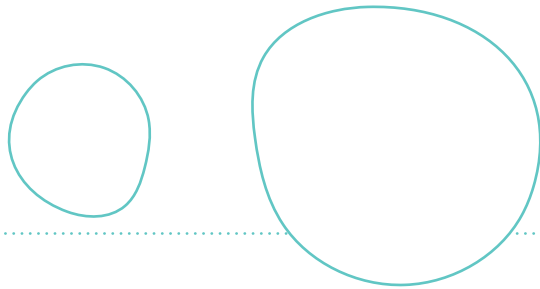
Presented by Lysol® in collaboration  
with NEA and National PTA.

Education Standards: (NHES) Health 1.2.1, 1.2.3, 8.2.2, 7.2.1, 7.2.2;  
(NAEA) Visual Arts: VA:Cn10.1.Ka, VA:Cn11.1.Ka; (CCSS) ELA-LITERACY with SL.K.5

## Goals and Skills

### Students Will:

- Understand that germs can be spread by coughing, sneezing, or touching
- Understand that one way to help prevent the spread of germs is by handwashing
- Learn the correct procedure for washing hands
- Learn when we should wash our hands



## Instruction Steps

**Explain.** Washing our hands is one of the best things we can do to avoid getting ourselves or others sick. When we do not wash our hands, we spread our germs, which can make us and others sick. These germs spread quickly from one person to another through little droplets when someone coughs, sneezes, or talks. If we touch our eyes, nose, or mouth, these droplets can enter our bodies and make us sick. When we touch different surfaces with our hands, we are also spreading our germs. These germs can remain on a surface from a few hours to several days.

**Discuss.** Mimic the proper handwashing steps with your hands. Have students follow along with their hands.

- Wet your hands with water and apply enough soap to be able to cover your hands
- Rub the palms of your hands together. Be sure to include in between and behind your fingers. Rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds (enough time to sing "Happy Birthday" twice).

## Supplies and Preparation

- One bowl of water per child
- Ground black pepper
- Dish soap
- Poster paper
- Art supplies
- Video recording device (extension activity)

## Background for Teachers

Visit the CDC's Handwashing: Clean Hands Save Lives page to learn more about the spread of COVID-19 and the importance of handwashing. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/index.html>

- Rinse your hands with water
- Dry your hands with a paper towel and use a towel to turn off the faucet

[https://www.who.int/gpsc/clean\\_hands\\_protection/en/](https://www.who.int/gpsc/clean_hands_protection/en/)

### It is especially important that we remember to wash our hands during these important times:

- **Before, during, and after** preparing food
- **Before** eating food
- **After** using the bathroom
- **After** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- **After** handling pet food or pet treats
- **After** touching garbage

**Create.** To teach students about the importance of handwashing and stopping the spread of germs, complete the following science experiment:

- Fill a bowl with water and add ground black pepper to the top of it
- Tell students to think of the pepper as the germs that get on our hands

- Have students place their finger in the bowl of water and make note of how the pepper (germs) stay on their finger
- Have students rinse their hands
- Then, have students place a small dot of dish soap onto their finger
- Next, have the students place their finger with soap in the bowl again
- Have students make note of how the pepper spreads. Explain that when we wash our hands with soap, the pepper (germs) does not stay on our hands.

Reinforce the idea that when we wash our hands with soap and water for the correct amount of time, we help prevent germs from spreading.

Have students create their own handwashing posters to place by the sink. Make sure they include the steps on how to properly wash their hands.

### Extensions/Add-ons

If time allows, extend the lesson by creating a 20-second song that reminds students about washing hands and using soap and water. Practice singing the song with students when they wash their hands. Have students practice the song at home with their family.

Have students create a video about the importance of handwashing. Students will write a script discussing how and when to wash our hands. Have the videos played at school during announcements or in the younger students' classrooms to promote this healthy habit.

### Home Connection

Talk to parents about the importance of handwashing at home. Suggest to parents that they can work with their child to create a daily chart that will keep track of how many times family members wash their hands. Discuss as a family why we wash our hands and reiterate when we should wash our hands.

### Additional Resources

- CDC - Stop the Spread of Germs Poster  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/stop-the-spread-of-germs.pdf>
- CDC - Handwashing is Your Superpower Poster  
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/Handwashing-BOY-superhero-8x11-p.pdf> and  
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/Handwashing-GIRL-superhero-8x11-p.pdf>
- CDC - Germs Are All Around You Poster  
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/Handwashing-Middle-School-8x11-p.pdf>
- CDC - Wash Your Hands Poster  
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/pdf/wash-your-hands-poster-english-508.pdf>
- CDC - Handwashing Stickers  
<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/stickers.html>

