



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## GERMS

Our world is filled with viruses, bacteria, and fungi. Even the healthiest body can be attacked by one of these microscopic creatures. Millions of these microbes can be found in a spoonful of dust. But not all of these microbes are bad. Some of them are very good. The good ones help us digest our food. The bad ones are called germs.

Germs enter our body through our mouth, nose, other openings, or even a cut on the skin. It is important that we get enough sleep and eat healthy foods so that our bodies can withstand the attack of these bad germs. The less healthy we are, the easier it is for these germs to mount an attack.

These germs are spread by someone sneezing, coughing, or by touching door handles or other surfaces. We can also get some of these germs from some of the food we eat. These germs can be found in the water we drink. The older we get, the more experienced our body becomes at recognizing these germs and fighting them. The system that recognizes these germs is called our immune system. The cells in our immune system help us fight off these germs.

### STORY QUESTIONS

1. What are the names of microbes mentioned in this article?
  - a. viruses, illness, fungi
  - b. viruses, germs, and colds
  - c. antibiotics
  - d. viruses, bacteria, fungi
2. Which of the following statements is listed in the passage about germs?
  - a. Germs enter our body through our mouth, nose, other openings, or even a cut on the skin.
  - b. Billions of these microbes can be found in our bodies.
  - c. Money has been raised to research more about how the immune system works.
  - d. The cells in our immune system learn to decode bad germs.
3. Which paragraph helps you answer the previous question?
  - a. second paragraph
  - b. first paragraph
  - c. fourth paragraph
  - d. third paragraph
4. Without the immune system, what would happen?
  - a. Our bodies could filter all the germs inside.
  - b. There would be no predictable patterns.
  - c. Another organ of the body would have to take over its role.
  - d. The human body could not survive.



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## MISSION TO MARS

For years, there has been speculation about whether or not there is life on Mars. Mars has always been an intriguing planet to humans. For centuries, stories have been told and retold about Martians invading the earth. Does life really exist on Mars? A group of scientists have been working to find out.

One of the latest space probes to travel to Mars was the *Odyssey* sent by NASA, the U.S. space agency. The *Odyssey* traveled through space for about seven months before it reached the orbit of Mars. It orbited about 200 miles from Mars' surface. The most important task for the *Odyssey* is to identify signs of water. Water means that there are possible signs of life.

There are many important instruments on the *Odyssey*. The Gamma ray spectrometer is an instrument that is used to detect oxygen and carbon on the surface of Mars. The solar array collects energy from the sun. This is how the *Odyssey* gets its power. The cameras are used to orient the *Odyssey*. Communication to earth is possible through the antenna. The Martian radiation environment experiment tests levels of radiation. And finally, the imaging system locates minerals on Mars' surface. Because of the *Odyssey*, scientists have gained valuable information about the planet Mars.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- Which instrument allows the *Odyssey* able to communicate with earth?
  - radiation environment experiment
  - gamma ray spectrometer
  - imaging system
  - antenna
- What is the meaning of the word *orient* as used in this passage?
  - arrange
  - adjust
  - modify
  - opposite
- What is the purpose of the third paragraph?
  - to explain how the *Odyssey* was developed
  - to explain how the animals survive on other planets
  - to explain how scientists designed the *Odyssey*
  - to explain the instruments on the *Odyssey*
- Where would you read to find out about the travels and tasks of the *Odyssey*?
  - first paragraph
  - end of the third paragraph
  - second paragraph
  - end of the second paragraph



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## THE CORAL REEF

A coral reef is a beautiful underwater community filled with many different types of species. You can find fish, coral, sea plants, and much more. These coral reefs have been around for millions and millions of years. Recently, some scientists believe that coral reefs may be in danger. Scientists believe that pollution and human error has destroyed more than a quarter of the world's coral reefs.

Some of the living animals that make up the coral reefs are struggling to survive. For example, coral looks and feels like rock. This causes people to treat coral like rocks. But coral is actually made up of tiny, clear animals. These animals are called coral polyps. The coral stick together to form large colonies. When the coral polyps die, they leave a hard shell of limestone behind. Coral gets its color from tiny sea plants called algae. There is a delicate balance between the algae and the coral. Coral reefs provide homes and shelter for many sea animals and plants.

Pollution and bad fishing practices have caused harm to the coral and algae. Another problem is the warming of the water. The algae cannot live in warmer waters and therefore, the coral loses its source of food and color. This process has been named coral bleaching.

Scientists are working hard to find solutions to the problems in coral reefs. Their goal is to protect and preserve this natural resource.

### STORY QUESTIONS

- What is coral made up of?
  - sea anemone
  - tiny, clear animals
  - seaweed and moss
  - rocks and crevices
- When coral reefs die, they leave a hard shell of . . .
  - calcium.
  - helium.
  - carbon dioxide
  - limestone.
- What does the word *error* mean as used in the passage?
  - extraordinary
  - fault
  - inhibited
  - progressive
- What is the main idea of this reading passage?
  - to inform the reader about the coral reefs and their uniqueness
  - to inform the reader about how coral bleaching occurs
  - to explain the difference between the two different types of corals
  - to explain the life of marine biologists