

DIAL: Handwashing Lesson Plan

Objective:

1. Students will be able to explain the importance of handwashing.
2. Students will be able to name the steps of handwashing.
3. Students will be able to model how handwashing decreases the amount of dirt and/or bacteria on their hands.

This lesson will model the importance of handwashing to students. Using black pepper and Dial® Antibacterial Foaming Hand Soap, students will be amazed when the “dirt” seems to jump away from their clean hands.

Extension: This lesson can be used as an introduction to teach about surface tension!

Materials:

1. Plastic plate
2. Dial Antibacterial Foaming Hand Soap
3. Finely ground black pepper
4. Water
5. Large paper or poster to list handwashing steps

Introduction (5 minutes):

Teacher gathers students and asks, “What are the steps of washing our hands? Let’s write them down and act them out!”

Teacher calls on students to share a step of handwashing and writes them in a list.

In order to highlight the importance of following each step, the teacher will act out the step with students. If they skipped a step, teacher can prompt them to go back and fill in the blanks.

Expected responses:

1. *Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.*
2. *Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.*
3. *Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds.*
4. *Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.*
5. *Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.*

Activity (10 minutes):

Teacher shows students the black pepper and explains, “It just so happens that I have dirt here with me today, and we are going to put our hand washing skills to the test.”

On the plate, place a small amount of water. Sprinkle enough pepper on top of the water to create a very thin layer, but not so much that the pepper sinks.

The teacher or students demonstrate how the pepper will stick to your fingertip if you dip it through the layer of pepper floating on the water. "This is similar to how dirt collects on our hands. How does bacteria spread?"

Expected responses:

1. *Touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands*
2. *Prepare or eat food and drinks with unwashed hands*
3. *Touch surfaces or objects that have bacteria on them*
4. *Blow your nose, cough, or sneeze into hands and then touch other people's hands or common objects*

"How can we help decrease the spread of bacteria?"

Expected response: *Washing our hands with soap*

Teacher distributes a small dab of Dial® Antibacterial Foaming Hand Soap to each student. "Let's see what happens when we rub Dial® Antibacterial Foaming Hand Soap on our pointer fingers and touch the "dirt" again. How long should we rub our hands together?"

Expected response: *20 seconds*

"Let's sing happy birthday twice through, beginning to end, so we can rub the soap on our fingers for 20 seconds before we touch the dirt again."

This time, when the teacher and students poke through the layer of pepper floating on the water, the pepper scatters and seems to jump away from the soapy finger.

Closing (5 minutes):

The teacher asks, "Why is it important that we wash our hands?"

Expected responses:

1. *Washing hands helps decrease the spread of bacteria to others*
2. *Handwashing with soap helps remove dirt and bacteria from hands.*

"Today we made a list of handwashing steps. We'll hang it up near the door in our classroom (*or by our sink, if applicable*) so we always remember how."

Students can draw illustrations of themselves washing their hands to post in the classroom or to take home to share with a parent or guardian.

Trying at home or in your classroom?

Tag @Dial for a chance to be featured on our social media pages.

Sources:

- *Steps of Handwashing from the CDC's When and How to Wash Your Hands, "Follow Five Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way"* <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
- *How germs spread from the CDC's When and How to Wash Your Hands, "How Germs Spread"* <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
- *Inspiration for the lesson from Dave Hax' surface tension experiment at* <https://www.instructables.com/How-Dish-Soap-Works-Water-Surface-Tension-Experime/>
- *Why it's important to wash our hands from CDC's Show Me the Science - Why Wash Your Hands?, "Washing hands prevents illnesses and spread of infections to others"* at <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/why-handwashing.html>