



Presented by



GROWING BACTERIA IN A PETRI DISH

Overview and objective:

Students will grow bacteria samples taken from common household objects in order to understand where most bacteria and fungus grow, as well as the importance of washing hands and overall cleanliness.

Process:

1. Take one sample per petri dish.
2. Wipe the object with a cotton swab and then rub onto the surface of the agar.
3. Immediately tape the petri dish shut all the way around with masking tape once the sample has been taken.
4. Number the petri dish and write where the sample was taken.
5. Store the dish upside down (to prevent condensation) in a room temperature storage area. Make sure not to place petri dishes in direct sunlight.
6. Wait 24-72 hours to see the bacteria grow. If it smells, it means the bacteria is growing!
7. Write down observations about what you see. What sample grew the most bacteria? What grew the least? Did soap cause less bacteria to grow?
8. When ready to dispose, pour a small amount of bleach into the petri dish to destroy the bacteria, wrap the petri dish in old newspaper and throw in a trashcan or garbage disposal. If no bleach is available, wrap the petri dish in old newspaper and seal in a Ziploc bag before disposing.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- Petri dishes prepped with agar
- Cotton swabs
- Common household items to swab (we used a belly button, a remote control, and a cell phone)
- Tape
- A sharpie
- Ziploc bags or bleach
- Safety gloves and goggles



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Major concepts:

Bacteria and **fungus** are **microorganisms** that grow everywhere, from your hands and feet to your desk and pencil. We can take samples from different objects and grow them in petri dishes prepped with a special substance called **agar**.

This experiment can be used to test the effectiveness of different soaps or hand sanitizers by putting different samples in petri dishes with dirty hands before and clean hands after washing. You can also see how much bacteria is growing on common objects like coins, tables, chairs and forks.

Some bacteria is good but some is also harmful. That's why it is important to take care of yourself and wash your hands with warm water and soap often so you don't get sick.

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