Finger Germs

Name: _____

Date: 6-11-12

Classes: Science or Language Arts

Grade Level: K-2

Professions: A variety of health professions

All HOTT lesson plans are designed with the purpose of increasing students' awareness of the variety of health careers that are available to them. If possible, invite the corresponding health professional into your classroom to discuss his/ her occupation. If this is not an option, use the attached sheet to share this/these career(s) with your students.

Purpose: Children will construct finger puppets to represent "germ characters," and share what they have made with the class. Children will learn that there are many kinds of tiny living organisms, including germs. Students should understand that germs can cause sickness and that some other tiny living organisms are helpful to us.

Materials needed: *"Finger Germs" puppet template, *Germ characters coloring sheet, *Heavy construction paper or card stock, (*one sheet per child), blackboard, scissors, glue, stapler, bread, cheese, vinegar and yogurt (or pictures of them), Optional: Photographs of germs

Duration: 30-40 minutes

Instructions:

• Explain that germs are tiny living things called microorganisms that we can't see with our eyes alone. Explain that germs can make us sick. Two types that make us sick are viruses and certain bacteria.

- Ask children to talk about illnesses they have had. Record their responses on the blackboard. Form one column for illnesses caused by germs and another for those that were not caused by germs. Research might be required to obtain information regarding germs causing illnesses.

- Discuss Words to Share Bacteria
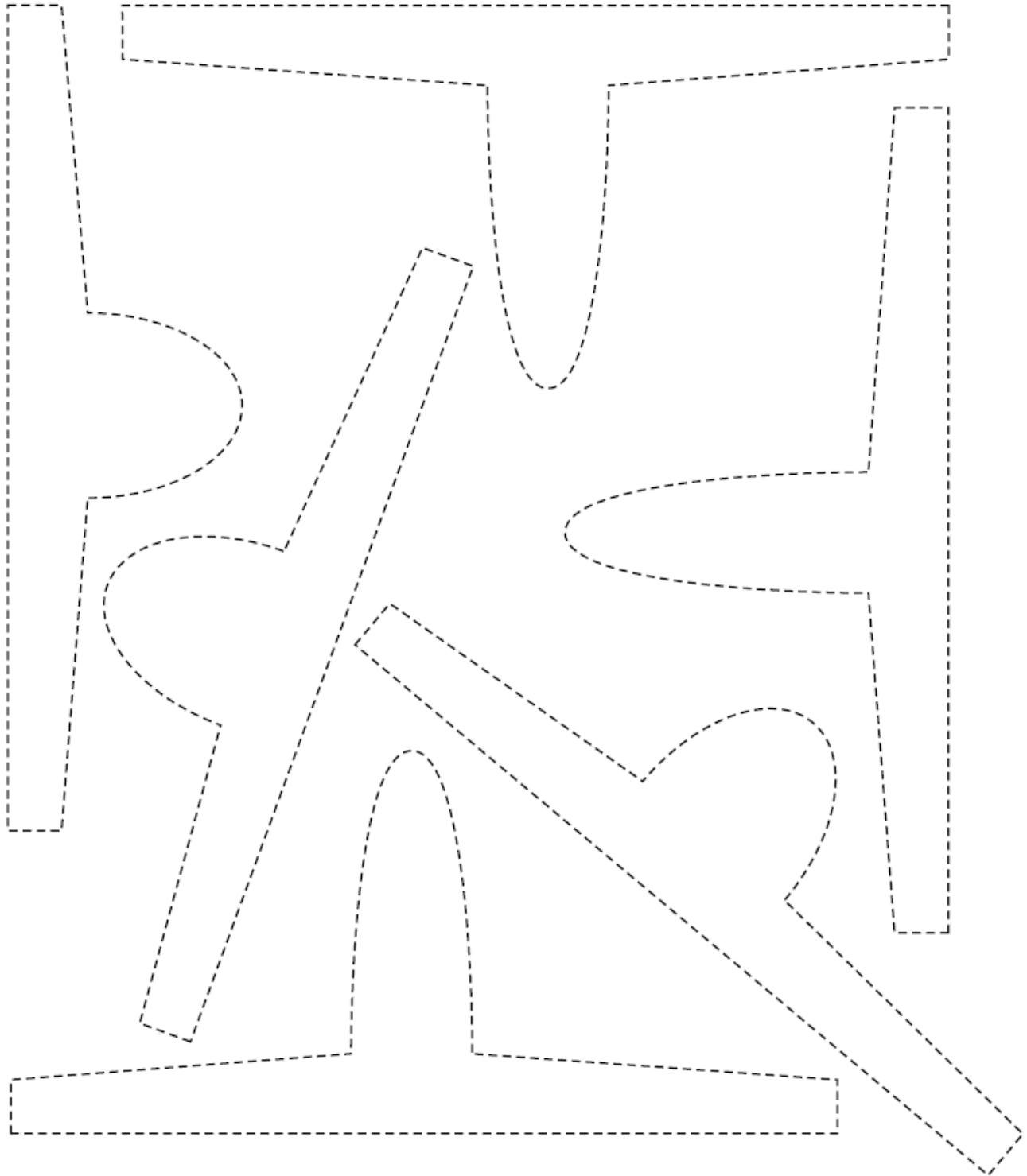
    -Fungi

    -Germs

    -Microorganism

    -Viruses

• Distribute puppet-making materials. Have each child use the materials and the template to make a puppet depicting a germ of their choice. They can both invent their own germ, based on what they have seen and heard, or cut one out from the character coloring sheet and glue it to the template.

• Ask each child to show his or her puppet to the class, describing its characteristics.

• Explain that there are also other microorganisms that don't make us sick. Explain that these tiny living things can actually help us. Ask whether anyone has gone to the doctor lately. Tell children that some medicines doctors prescribe come from these good organisms, such as penicillin, which comes from a good fungus.

• Talk about other microorganisms that are helpful. Yeast (another fungus) makes bread rise. Others help us make cheese and vinegar, and break down dead plants and animals to fertilize the soil. Yogurt is also full of good bacteria (acidophilus). Show examples of these products to help children visualize.

• Ask the following questions to check for understanding:

    -What are some different kinds of microorganisms and what do they do?

    -How are germs different from other microorganisms we've talked about?

    - If there were no microorganisms in the world, how would people's lives be better? How would they be worse?
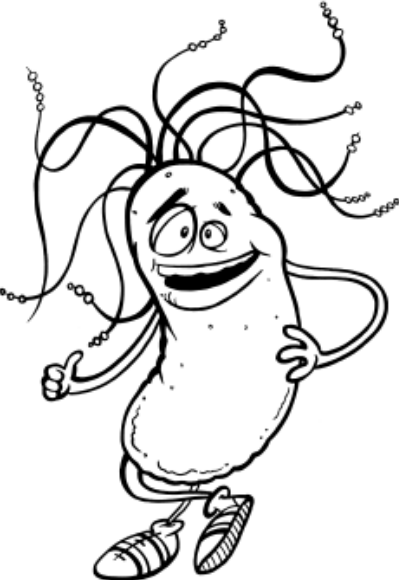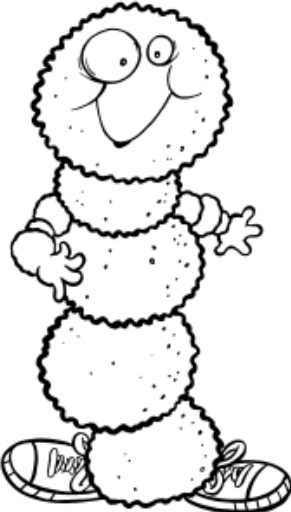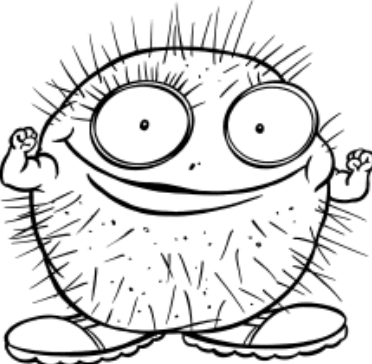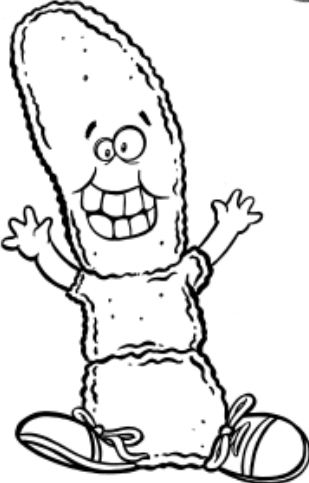
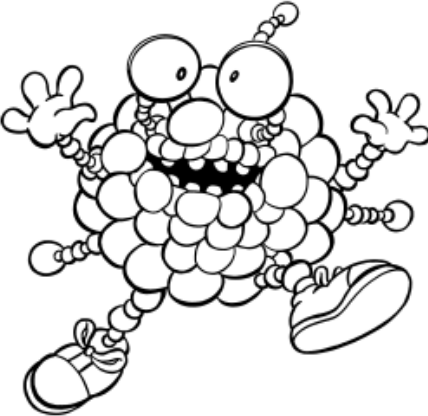
References: www.healthyhands.com

"Finger Germs" Puppet Template

Trace the templates below onto a sheet of card stock or heavy construction paper and then cut them out. These will be used to hold your germ characters, or you can draw your own characters on them. The puppets work best if made for two fingers.

Germ Characters Coloring Sheet

A **children's doctor or a pediatrician** is a doctor who helps kids and babies feel better when they are sick. They give them check-ups to make sure that they are healthy. They can also give kids medicine to help them feel better.

- Who has been to the doctor or pediatrician lately?

- What did the doctor do?

- Where does a doctor work? *(hospital, clinic)*

- Who helps the doctor? *(nurse, pharmacist, lab tech….)*

A **Nurse** is a person who cares for people who are sick or disabled. The nurse may check the patient before the doctor sees them. They may check the ears, throat, eyes, or blood pressure.

- Do you know a nurse?

- Where can a nurse work? *(school, clinic, hospital…)*

- Do you know your school nurse?

- How do nurses help you?