

Malaria: The Cause

OBJECTIVE

Your students will learn basic facts about malaria, how the disease can spread so quickly, and will label the pathway of the malaria parasite.

MATERIALS

- one tsp. of glitter
- [Student Reproducible B](#) (PDF)
- access to the internet

DIRECTIONS

Before the lesson

- On your own, watch the 10-minute malaria film (to access, click the link in the sidebar on the right) .
- Select one student and secretly sprinkle the glitter onto the palm only of one of his/her hands.

During the lesson

- How does malaria spread so quickly? Find out with this simple experiment.
1. Divide the class into two groups. Ask one group to take off their shoes. They are mosquitoes. (The student with glitter should be in this group.) The group with shoes on are humans.
 2. Tell both groups that they have one minute to shake hands (silently) with others, from the opposite group only. They should then sit down.
 3. Ask students to check their hands for glitter; those who find it should stand.
 4. Explain to students that the glitter represents a parasite, a living organism that exists by stealing the resources needed by another living organism. Only one “mosquito” had glitter when you began. If that glitter had been a malaria parasite, any “mosquito” with glitter would be a carrier, or vector insect-one that carries the parasite but does not get sick. Any humans with glitter would now be infected with malaria. Ask: *What would have happened if the first "mosquito" had been prevented from shaking hands?*
 5. Now pass out [Student Reproducible B](#) (PDF) and have kids go online.

Answers: 1. Malaria is a disease of the blood caused by a parasite and transmitted from person to mosquito to person. 2. Africa has a malaria crisis. 3. Malaria is spread by the Anopheles mosquito. 4. A vector insect is a living organism that transmits disease from one host to another. 5. Malaria parasites multiply in the liver and blood of humans.