



What are viruses?

Book band: Purple

This book explains what viruses are, what they do and how we can prevent them from spreading.

Skills focus

- 1a Draw on knowledge of vocabulary to understand texts
- 1b Identify / explain key aspects of fiction and non-fiction texts, such as characters, events, titles and information
- 1d Make inferences from texts
- Monitoring understanding

Guided reading session

You will need

- Multiple copies of Collins Big Cat *What are viruses?*

Tune in

Show children the front cover of the book and read the title.

Ask: What sort of sentence is this? (*a question*)

Explore children's knowledge and understanding of the word 'virus'.

Read the back cover blurb.

Focus on the phrase 'a force for good' and establish that it means 'doing something good'.

Ask: What kind of book do you think this is? (*non-fiction*)

Ask children to turn to the contents page. Explain that the contents lists all the sections in a non-fiction book along with their page numbers. This makes it easy to look up a particular section.

Ask children to find the entry for 'Glossary and Index' in the contents and to turn to the page number listed.

Ask: What do you notice about how the glossary is organised? (*alphabetically*)

Establish that a glossary gives definitions for some words in the book.

Ask: What do you notice about how the index is organised? (*alphabetically*)

Establish that an index can be used to look up certain information in the book.

Ask children to turn to page 2.

Read pages 2 and 3.

Check children's understanding of the final sentence on page 3.

Draw attention to the words in bold. Explain that this shows they are in the glossary.

Challenge children to quickly find them in the glossary and to read the definitions.

Read page 4.

Ask: What are the main differences between viruses and germs? (*viruses are smaller than other germs / germs are living things but viruses are not alive*)

Ask children to look at the image on pages 4 and 5 and to read the labels.

Establish that this shows how different germs and viruses look.

Heads together

Ask children to read pages 6 to 9.

Remind them to read any images as well as the text and to look up any words in bold in the glossary.

As they read, move around the group and support children who may find the activity challenging.

Wrap up

Ask the following questions:

- What have you learnt from reading these pages?
- Do you think we should be worried if we get a virus?

Return to pages 6 and 7 and draw attention to the leader lines that link labels to parts of the diagram. Explain that this helps a reader to understand the diagram.

Establish that, in non-fiction, images are there to add to a reader's understanding of what they are reading.

Vocabulary boost session

You will need

- Multiple copies of Collins Big Cat *What are viruses?*
- Flipchart or whiteboard

Vocabulary table

Focus word	Child-friendly explanation	Example sentence	Tell me...
invaded	If you say something is invaded, you mean it is entered by something.	Me and my friends invaded the gang's den.	Tell me about a place that you think could be invaded.
destroys	If you say something destroys, you mean it damages it really badly.	I built a sandcastle on the beach and my sister destroyed it.	Tell me about something that you think could be destroyed.
beaten	If you say something has been beaten, you mean it has been defeated.	Our team were beaten in the last minute of the game.	Tell me about a game you've played and have beaten someone.

Tune in

Ask children to turn to pages 10 and 11.

Ask: What do you notice about the sentences at the top of these pages? (*They are bigger than the rest, are in bold and they are questions.*)

Explain that these are headings and they help a reader to know what the text underneath is about.

Ask children to read the green boxes.

Explain that these are captions which explain the photographs.

Ask: What have you learnt from these pages?

Read pages 10 to 13, explaining the meaning of the focus words as you read them. Use the information in the Vocabulary table above to help you.

Ask: What have you learnt from these pages?

Heads together

Write up the focus words and example sentences on the flipchart or whiteboard.

Ask children to explain what is happening in each of the example sentences.

Use the 'Tell me' prompts in the Vocabulary table to deepen children's understanding of the focus words.

Wrap up

Ask children to explain what the labelled photograph on page 12 means.

Ask: What is happening in the photo on page 13? (*someone is taking a child's temperature*)

Ask children to choose one of the focus words as their word of the week. Challenge them to use it as often as they can – both at home and at school.

Follow-up independent sessions

You will need

- Multiple copies of Collins Big Cat *What are viruses?*
- Reading Journals
- Multiple copies of Resource sheet: Quiz

Children can read page 14, then answer these questions in their Reading Journals:

- What is this section about?
- What do cold viruses invade?
- How fast do droplets travel when we sneeze?
- What have you learnt from reading these pages?

Children can read pages 16 and 17, then answer these questions in their Reading Journals:

- What is this section about?
- What should you do if you have cold symptoms?
- Why should you wash your hands?
- What have you learnt from reading these pages?

Children can read pages 18 to 20, then do the quiz on Resource sheet: Quiz.

Resource sheet



Name: _____

Quiz

1. Who is the author of this book?

2. How many viruses could you line up on a full stop?

3. What two things do all viruses have?

4. How many viruses can get inside human cells?

5. What illness does the child in the photo on page 11 have?



Quiz answers

1. Isabel Thomas

2. 10,000

3. instructions and a protective coat

4. about 200

5. chickenpox