

The Importance of Hygiene

Instructions: Read the hygiene text. Look for the vocabulary in bold. Then answer the questions.

The Importance of Hygiene

Hygiene means keeping yourself and your surroundings clean to help you stay healthy. Good hygiene matters because it reduces the spread of **germs**. Germs are tiny organisms, including **bacteria** and **viruses**, that can cause illness. Germs can spread when we touch surfaces like door handles, tables, or shared equipment and then touch our faces. They can also spread through the air when someone coughs or sneezes.

One of the most important hygiene habits is **handwashing**. Soap helps lift dirt and germs from your skin, and running water washes them away. Washing hands at key times—after using the toilet, before eating, after coughing or sneezing, and after being outside—can lower the chance of getting sick. It is important to wash for long enough and clean between fingers and under nails, where germs can hide.

Hygiene also includes looking after your mouth and body. Brushing teeth twice a day helps prevent tooth decay, keeps breath fresher, and protects gums. Having regular baths or showers, wearing clean clothes, and changing socks and underwear help remove sweat and dirt that germs can grow on.

Hygiene



Keeping hair tidy and trimming nails can also help you stay clean and comfortable.

How to Keep Clean: Helpful Tips

- Wash your hands with soap for long enough, and dry them well.
- Brush your teeth in the morning and before bed.
- Have regular baths or showers, especially after sport or sweating.
- Wear clean clothes, and change socks and underwear every day.
- Keep your nails short and clean, because germs can hide under them.
- Use a tissue when you cough or sneeze, put it in the bin, then wash your hands.
- Wipe shared surfaces (like tables) regularly to help remove germs.

Good hygiene protects other people as well as you. If germs spread less, there are fewer **infections** in a community. This is especially important for babies, older people, and anyone whose body is already fighting an illness. Simple actions—like using a tissue when you sneeze, putting it in the bin, and washing your hands—can make a big difference to everyone's health.

Glossary

Word	Meaning
Hygiene	Keeping yourself and your surroundings clean to help prevent illness.
Germ	Tiny organisms that can cause illness.
Bacteria	Very small living things; some are helpful, but some can make people ill.
Virus	A tiny germ that can spread between people and cause illness.
Handwashing	Cleaning hands with soap and water to remove germs.
Surface	The outside part of an object, like a desk, handle, or tablet screen.
Infection	When germs enter the body and cause illness.
Community	A group of people living or learning together (for example, a school).

Questions

1. Using the text, explain what the word **hygiene** means.

2. What are **germs**, and which two types of germs are named in the text?

3. Find two different ways germs can spread, according to the text.

4. Why is **handwashing** one of the most important hygiene habits? Use evidence from the text in your answer.

5. List three times when the text says you should wash your hands.

6. Why does the writer say it is important to clean between your fingers and under your nails?

7. How does brushing your teeth help to keep you healthy?

8. Give two examples of body hygiene habits from the text that are not about handwashing.

9. What is an **infection**?

10. Explain how good hygiene can help protect other people in a community.

11. Choose three hygiene tips from the list and explain how each one helps stop germs spreading.

1. What is the main message of the text? Write one or two sentences to summarise it.

Answer Key

1. Hygiene means keeping yourself and your surroundings clean so you stay healthy and help prevent illness.
2. Germs are tiny organisms that can cause illness. The two types named in the text are bacteria and viruses.
3. Two ways germs can spread are by touching shared surfaces and then touching your face, and through the air when someone coughs or sneezes.
4. Handwashing is important because soap lifts dirt and germs from your skin and water washes them away. This lowers the chance of getting sick and helps stop germs spreading.
5. Any three: after using the toilet, before eating, after coughing or sneezing, and after being outside.
6. The writer says this because germs can hide between fingers and under nails, so these places need to be cleaned carefully.
7. Brushing your teeth helps prevent tooth decay, keeps your breath fresher, and protects your gums.
8. Possible answers include: having regular baths or showers, wearing clean clothes, changing socks and underwear, keeping hair tidy, trimming nails, or brushing teeth twice a day.
9. An infection is when germs enter the body and cause illness.
10. Good hygiene reduces the spread of germs, so fewer people catch infections. This helps protect everyone in the community, especially babies, older people, and people who are already ill.
11. Example answers: Washing hands removes germs before they can spread. Using a tissue when coughing or sneezing stops germs from going into the air or onto hands. Wiping shared surfaces removes germs that other people might touch.
12. The main message of the text is that good hygiene helps keep people healthy by stopping germs from spreading. Simple daily habits like washing hands, brushing teeth, and keeping clean can protect both you and other people.