

Snot: NC Summer Tour Lesson 2007

Sneezes & snot

Objectives: Campers will:

Learn the definition of **mucous**, **snot**, and **booger**

Learn why we sneeze

Learn why **mucous** is different colors

Make fake **mucous** and observe its consistency

Model how **mucous** covers and neutralizes **bacteria**

Materials Needed:

Water

1 1/4 cup measuring cup per table

1 teaspoon per table

1 tablespoon per table

plastic spoons

3 large plastic cups per camper

yellow and green food coloring

1 medium size bowl per pair of campers

1 bowl of water per table

1 bottle of glue per table

1 small paper plate per camper

sprinkles

Instructions:

*** Have one counselor was the bowls and measuring cups while the other explains the next activity! ***

1. (5 minutes) Ask campers if they know what **mucous** is. *(They should, they talked about it during digestion!)* Tell campers that **mucous** is a very sticky and slimy liquid that is in our nose. *(It is also in our digestive system it just does other things there!)* Another name for **mucous** is **snot**. It helps to catch the bacteria by surrounding it and not letting it move. It's sort of like if you were walking through thick mud and got stuck and couldn't go any farther. The **bacteria** get stuck in the **mucous** and can't go any further than our noses. This keeps the **bacteria** from getting to other parts of our body where it can hurt us. When we blow our noses we are blowing out all the bad **bacteria** that have gotten caught in our noses. Sometimes the **bacteria** infects the **mucous** and we get an infection. Tell campers that **snot** turns green when we get sick and is clear or slightly white when we are not sick. **Mucous** is also what **boogers** are made of. **Boogers** are dried mucous that has gotten stuck to the inside of our noses. Tell campers that sometimes other things get into our noses, like dust and dirt or animal hair. When that happens our nose hairs get triggered. They tell the brain that something bad is trying to get into the nose that is bigger than **bacteria** and might not be able to be gotten rid of by the **mucous**. The brain decides to get the

object out of the nose as fast as it can and it causes us to sneeze!

2. (15 minutes) Tell campers that we are going to make fake **mucous** to look at its consistency and see how it catches **bacteria**. Give each camper three cups and a spoon. Put the measuring cups, bowls of water, measuring spoons, glue, and food coloring on each table. Give each camper $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of borax in one cup. Have each camper put $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of water in with the borax and stir until the borax dissolves. Have campers put three teaspoons of water into another cup. Tell campers we are not going to put in any food coloring to represent the color of mucous when we are well. Have each camper put 1 teaspoon of white glue into the third cup. Then have them stir $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of the plain water in the second cup into the glue. Have each camper pour 1 teaspoon of the borax solution over the glue. **DON'T STIR!** When campers reach in and pull out their creation it will be the same consistency and color as healthy **mucous**. Have campers put a few sprinkles on a plate. Then have campers pull out some fake **mucous** from the cup and put it over the sprinkles. Have them move the plate around. The sprinkles should stay stuck in the **mucous** just like **bacteria** get stuck in real **mucous**. Let campers experiment with making their mucous look sick by adding green and yellow food coloring to the water in cup two. Each camper will have enough borax to make five small batches of fake mucous. They will need to add another teaspoon of glue to the third cup for each new batch. Tell campers that now that we have talked about how mucous helps us not get sick we'll talk about another way our body works to protect us.