

# What are Germs?

Right now — at this very moment — millions of tiny creatures are crawling, floating, sliding, and partying all over you.

Relax. Mostly.

These microscopic organisms are called germs, and although they are far too small to see, they are some of the most powerful things on Earth. Germs include bacteria, viruses, fungi, and other microscopic life forms that can live on your skin, in your mouth, and even inside your body. Some germs are helpful, some are harmless, and some are absolute troublemakers.

Bacteria are single-celled organisms that can survive almost anywhere: in boiling hot springs, freezing ice, and even deep underground. Many bacteria are actually essential for human life. Your stomach, for example, contains billions of friendly bacteria that help you digest food. Without them, you would feel constantly ill — and very hungry.

Viruses, however, are a different story. They are not really alive in the usual sense. Instead, they invade living cells and hijack them like tiny criminals, forcing the cell to make more viruses. This is why viruses can make you sick so quickly and why your body needs time to fight back.

Fungi are another type of germ, although they prefer dark, warm places. Some fungi help make bread rise and cheese taste delicious, while others cause itchy infections on skin and nails. Yes — even germs have good and bad sides.

So why don't germs completely take over the world?

Because your body is a fortress.

Your immune system is a highly trained defence force, packed with white blood cells that patrol your body searching for invaders. When germs attack, alarms are triggered, soldiers are released, and battles begin — all without you noticing. When you get a fever, it is not the germ winning; it is your body turning up the heat to fight back.

Washing your hands, covering your mouth when you cough, and cleaning surfaces are all ways to stop germs spreading. Germs love to travel, especially on fingers, door handles, and phones. Yes — especially phones.

So next time you wash your hands, remember: you are not just cleaning dirt. You are stopping an invisible army from throwing a party on your fingertips.

## Comprehension Questions

1. Why does the author begin the text by speaking directly to the reader?

- A) To make the topic engaging
- B) To explain scientific facts
- C) To frighten the reader
- D) To give instructions

2. Which type of germ is described as “not really alive”?

- A) Bacteria
- B) Viruses
- C) Fungi
- D) Microbes

3. Why are some bacteria described as helpful?

- A) They cause illness
- B) They help the body digest food
- C) They clean the skin
- D) They fight viruses directly

4. What does the phrase “tiny criminals” suggest about viruses?

- A) They are harmless
- B) They are misunderstood
- C) They cause damage by taking control
- D) They move slowly

5. Why does the author call the body a “fortress”?

- A) It is difficult to enter
- B) It has thick skin
- C) It stores germs
- D) It has strong defences

6. What does a fever show according to the text?

- A) The body is losing the fight
- B) Germs are multiplying
- C) The immune system is responding
- D) The body is shutting down

7. Why does the author include humour in the text?

- A) To make germs seem silly
- B) To distract from science
- C) To confuse the reader
- D) To keep readers interested

8. Which of these places do germs particularly like to travel on?

- A) Water
- B) Shoes
- C) Phones
- D) Windows

9. What can be inferred about germs from the text?

- A) All germs are dangerous
- B) Germs are always helpful
- C) Germs play different roles
- D) Germs cannot survive long

10. What is the main purpose of the text?

- A) To warn children about illness
- B) To explain germs in an engaging way
- C) To teach cleaning rules
- D) To describe medical experiments

# Answers

1. **A**
2. **B**
3. **B**
4. **C**
5. **D**
6. **C**
7. **D**
8. **C**
9. **C**
10. **B**