

# The Big Deal About Germs



Take a stand against germs.

Follow the steps shown to write an argumentative essay that explains why hand washing is such a big deal.

## Materials:

notebook (or sheets of lined paper stapled together and stored in a folder)  
access to a computer, tablet, or other device

## Steps:

1. Circle a topic from the “Topics” box.
2. Identify five credible sources on your topic. List each source at the top of a separate page following the format your teacher asks you to use.
3. Take notes on your topic from each source, writing the notes on the appropriate page(s). Then review your notes, inferring as many details as possible about the topic.
4. Based on your notes, develop a thesis statement that states your argument, or claim, about the topic. Write the statement in your notebook.
5. Plan an argumentative essay based on the topic using the outline shown. Write your plan on your own paper.
6. Use the completed outline to write your argumentative essay.

## Topics

- What Germs Are and How They Are Spread
- The Impact of Germs on Human Health
- Communicable Disease Control and Prevention
- Hand Washing Regulations in the Workplace
- Hygiene Interventions in Developing Countries

## Outline

### Title

### Paragraph 1: Introduction

Present two sides to the argument.  
Thesis statement: Tell your opinion.

### Paragraph 2

Reason 1 to agree with your opinion  
Source that backs up this reason

### Paragraph 3

Reason 2 to agree with your opinion  
Source that backs up this reason

### Paragraph 4

Reason 3 to agree with your opinion  
Source that backs up this reason

### Paragraph 5: Conclusion

Restate your side of the argument.  
Restate the opposing side of the argument.  
Restate the three reasons you presented to support your argument.  
Summarize why your thesis statement is correct.



**Georgia-Pacific**  
Professional

# “THE BIG DEAL ABOUT GERMS”

(W.6.1, W.7.1, W.8.1, W.9–10.1, W.11–12.1)

## ADAPTATIONS

**For a less challenging version:** Focus students only on the note-taking portion of this project. Instead of having a student locate five credible sources and write notes in her own words, work with the student to locate one source. Create a note sheet for that source that requires the student to fill in the blanks. This method will provide the student with note-taking practice and help her focus on the most important content from the source.

**For a more challenging version:** After students write their essays, challenge each one (or groups of students with similar thesis statements) to plan a project that will educate the school or community about the topic. Require that the project also motivate others to take actions in support of the argument the student made in her essay.