

Investigations in Infectious Disease: Outbreak on the Hospital Ship USNS Relief

This is a **PREVIEW** of Investigations in Infectious Disease: Outbreak on the Hospital Ship USNS Relief, Classroom Version (4 Lessons).

The full curriculum includes four classroom lessons with a video demonstration of a DNA fingerprinting experiment.

To request the full version of this curriculum at no cost, go to <https://www.adventurelab.org/nih-sepa-grant-project.aspx> and fill out the request form.

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The activities described in this manual are intended for school-age children under direct supervision of adults. The authors and Seattle Children's cannot be responsible for any accidents or injuries that may result from conduct of the activities, from not specifically following directions, or from ignoring cautions contained in the text.

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How to decide which version is best for your classroom:

Where are you located?	How much time is available?	How many classes are participating?	Version	Description
Western Washington	5 lessons, including a 1-hour mobile lab visit	3-5 (30 students max per class)	Investigations in Infectious Disease Mobile Lab Version	5 days, includes a mobile Science Adventure Lab visit to your school
Puget Sound area	5 lessons, including a 3-hour field trip	1 (32 students max)	Investigations in Infectious Disease Field Trip Version	5 days, includes a field trip to the Science Discovery Lab in downtown Seattle; transportation assistance is available
Any location	4 lessons	Not limited	Investigations in Infectious Disease Classroom Version	Classroom activities (4 days)
Any location	2 lessons	Not limited	Investigations in Infectious Disease Using the Claim, Evidence, Reasoning Framework	Classroom activities (2 days)
Any location	1 lesson	Not limited	Introduction to Epidemiology of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Featuring Infectious Disease Researchers	Video and reading
Any location	20 minutes	Not limited	Epidemiological Investigation of the COVID-19 Pandemic Student Reading	Reading

Investigations in Infectious Disease: Outbreak on the Hospital Ship USNS Relief

General Description

This unit includes classroom activities and a video of a laboratory experiment, which are anticipated to have a positive, sustained impact on students' content knowledge, perceived self-efficacy in science, and interest in a biomedical career. This unit is aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

During this four-lesson unit, students will learn about:

- The fields of epidemiology and infectious diseases.
- The steps in an epidemiological investigation.
- How scientists can use DNA to identify the source of an infection.

In Lessons 1 through 3, students will use standard epidemiological techniques to investigate a simulated outbreak of infectious disease onboard a hospital ship. In Lesson 3, students will watch a video that demonstrates the use of research-grade equipment to perform a DNA fingerprinting experiment that identifies the source of an infection. In Lesson 4, students will learn how to interpret the results of the DNA fingerprinting experiment and discuss some of the common misconceptions about infectious diseases. Students will use the evidence collected throughout the lessons answer the essential question *“What caused the crew and passengers to become ill on the USNS Relief in August of 2018?”* and complete a Claim, Evidence, Reasoning framework.



Overview and Standards

Lesson	Disciplinary Core Ideas	Science and Engineering Practices	Crosscutting Concepts	Vocabulary
<p>Lesson 1: Introduction to Epidemiology</p> <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What background knowledge and terminology does an epidemiologist need to know in order to be able to successfully launch an investigation? 2. How is an outbreak of infectious disease investigated in order to identify the source and prevent further spread? 	<p>LS1.A: Structure and Function All living things are made up of cells, which is the smallest unit that can be said to be alive. An organism may consist of one single cell (unicellular) or many different numbers and types of cells (multicellular).</p>	<p>Planning and Carrying out Investigations: Conduct an investigation to produce data to serve as the basis for evidence that meet the goals of an investigation.</p> <p>Analyze and Interpret Data: Analyze displays of data to identify linear and nonlinear relationships.</p> <p>Using Mathematics and Computational Thinking: Use mathematical representations to support scientific conclusions and design solutions.</p> <p>Communicating Information: Communicate scientific and/or technical information in writing and/or through oral presentations.</p> <p>Integrate qualitative scientific and technical information in written text with that contained in media and visual displays to clarify claims and findings.</p>	<p>Patterns can be used to identify cause and effect relationships.</p> <p>Cause and Effect relationships may be used to predict phenomena in natural or designed systems.</p>	<p>Microorganism Infectious disease Pathogen Epidemiology Epidemiologist</p>
<p>Lesson 2: Outbreak on the USNS Relief</p> <p>Guiding Question:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can we use this background knowledge to begin our investigation of the infections on the USNS Relief? 	<p>LS1.A: Structure and Function</p>	<p>Developing and Using Models: Use a model to describe a phenomenon.</p> <p>Analyze and Interpret Data</p> <p>Asking Questions and Defining Problems: Ask questions that can be investigated within the scope of the classroom, outdoor environment, and museums and other public facilities with available resources and when appropriate, frame a hypothesis based on observations and scientific principles.</p> <p>Ask questions to identify and/or clarify evidence and/or the premise(s) of an argument.</p> <p>Constructing Explanations: Construct an explanation using models or representations.</p> <p>Communicating Information</p>	<p>Patterns Cause and Effect</p>	<p>Outbreak Epidemic Pandemic Epidemic curve Point source outbreak Person-to-person spread outbreak</p>

Lesson 1

Introduction to Epidemiology

Description

In this lesson, students will learn the background knowledge and terminology that an epidemiologist needs to know in order to be able to successfully launch an investigation.

Lesson Overview

Students will learn the background knowledge about infectious disease that an epidemiologist needs to know in order to be able to successfully launch an investigation and will share their prior knowledge about how infectious diseases spread. Students will be introduced to the steps in an epidemiological investigation using the COVID-19 pandemic as an example. Students will then apply the same principles to begin to investigate the infections on the USNS Relief. The steps are condensed into three phases for this unit. The three phases are: 1) Gathering information and preparing case reports, 2) Defining how the infection is spreading and identifying the source, and 3) Implementing control and prevention measures. *This lesson should take between 55-60 minutes of classroom time.*

Guiding Questions

1. What background knowledge and terminology does an epidemiologist need to know in order to be able to successfully launch an investigation?
2. How is an outbreak of infectious disease investigated in order to identify the source and prevent further spread?

Outcomes and Learning Targets

Specific Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Identify the four types of infectious microorganisms, also called pathogens: bacteria, fungi, parasites, and viruses.
2. Determine whether a microorganism is unicellular, multicellular, or neither: bacteria (unicellular), fungi (unicellular and multicellular), parasites (unicellular and multicellular) and viruses (neither; they are an exception to this classification as they are not composed of cells).
3. Identify the common routes of infection, including but not limited to direct contact, indirect contact, insect bites, food contamination, airborne infection, and from animals.
4. Identify the phases in an epidemiological investigation.

Key Vocabulary

- Microorganism
- Infectious disease
- Pathogen
- Epidemiology
- Epidemiologist

Materials Needed

- If students have an existing science lab notebook or composition book, it is recommended they use that to show their work. Loose paper could be used as an alternative.
- PowerPoint presentation with videos for Lesson 1.
- Teacher manual.
- Copies of pages 2-6 of the Student Manual if needed.
- Provided copies of *Information for Parents/Guardians* and *Permission to Participate in Seattle Children's Science Adventure Lab* slip for each student if needed (Resource pages 85-86).
- Optional: Key Vocabulary words for a word wall (Resource pages 144-165).

SAMPLE

Slide 6

Lesson 1

12 minutes

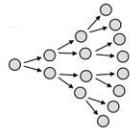
Slide 6

Phases of an Epidemiological Investigation

Phase 1:
Gathering information and preparing case reports.

Phase 2:
Defining the infection is spreading and identify the source.

Phase 3:
Implementing control and prevention measures.



Slide 6

Phases of an Epidemiological Investigation

6A. Direct students to page 3 of the Student Manual.

6B. Introduce the *Phases of an Epidemiological Investigation* by reading the first paragraph on page 3 of the Student Manual.

6C. Instruct a student to read *Phase 1 – Gathering information and preparing case reports* to the class.

6D. Repeat with *Phase 2 – Defining how the infection is spreading and identifying the source*, and *Phase 3 – Implementing control and prevention measures*.

Background: Students will be provided with case reports from infected and non-infected people on the USNS Relief at the time of the outbreak in Lesson 3. Students will explore each part of Phase 2 throughout Lessons 2-4.

Lesson 2

Outbreak on the USNS Relief

Description

Students will use the knowledge gained in Lesson 1 to launch an epidemiological investigation. Students will learn about how clusters of infections are classified as an outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic and determine which category the infections on the hospital ship fall into.

Lesson Overview

Students will review the simulated scenario about the infection that occurred on a hospital ship and learn about how cases of infectious diseases are classified including outbreak, epidemic, or pandemic. Students are led through the three general phases of an epidemiological investigation, which are: 1) Gathering information and preparing case reports, 2) Defining how the infection is spreading and identifying the source and 3) Implementing control and prevention measures, described in more detail below. Students will learn about the different types of epidemic curves and use data to plot an epidemic curve that helps to identify how the simulated infection on the USNS Relief is spreading. *This lesson should take between 55-60 minutes of classroom time.*

Guiding Question

1. How can we use this background knowledge to begin our investigation of the infections on the USNS Relief?

Outcomes and Learning Targets

Specific Learning Outcomes

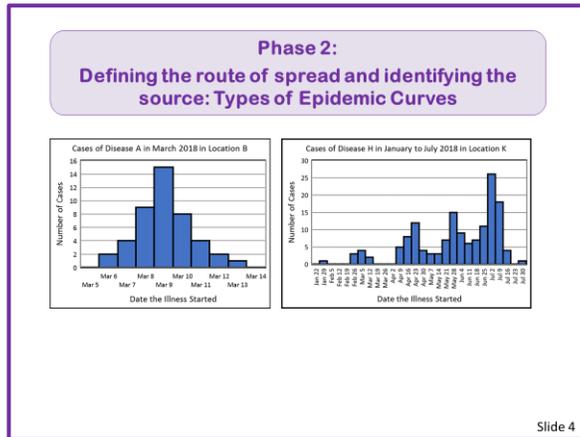
Students will be able to:

1. Explain two main ways that infectious diseases spread.
2. Analyze evidence to create a graphical representation of the number of cases of an infectious disease over time by plotting an epidemic curve.
3. Differentiate between outbreak, epidemic, and pandemic and explain how an outbreak progresses to an epidemic and pandemic.

Key Vocabulary

- Outbreak
- Epidemic
- Pandemic
- Epidemic curve
- Point source outbreak
- Person-to-person spread outbreak

Slide 4



Phase 2: Types of Epidemic Curves

4A. Direct students to page 8 of the Student Manual.

4B. Moving to Phase 2, introduce the *Types of Epidemic Curves* by reading the first paragraph on page 8 of the Student Manual to the class.

4C. Point out the labels on the examples of epidemic curves.

- **Title:** Cases of (*disease*) in (*month year*) in (*location*).
 - Example: Case of Disease A in March 2018 in Location B.
- **Horizontal x-axis** represents **time**.
 - This could be on the scale of days, months, or even years.
- **Vertical y-axis** represents **number of cases**.
 - The height of each bar represents the number of cases in that time frame. A taller bar represents more cases.

4D. Instruct students to read about examples of epidemic curves that show how different infections spread. Students could take notes or highlight the unique characteristics for each type of curve.

Lesson 3

Review of Case Reports and Introduction to DNA Fingerprinting

Description

Students will review case reports from some of the passengers and crew who were affected by the outbreak on the ship and create a list of foods that are potential sources of the infection. They will be introduced to the principles of gel electrophoresis and DNA fingerprinting. Students will watch a video demonstrating how DNA samples can be visualized using gel electrophoresis, which separates DNA according to size and learn how to interpret the results.

Lesson Overview

Students extract information from case reports of the infected people and work with classmates to narrow down the source of infection. They will examine possible explanations on how foods are at risk for contamination. Students will be introduced to gel electrophoresis and DNA fingerprinting, which are laboratory techniques that are commonly used to identify the source of a bacterial infection. They will watch a video about the laboratory techniques needed to identify a bacterial contaminant: isolating DNA, generating fragments, and separating them using gel electrophoresis. The fragments of DNA from a sick patient and suspected foods will separate and students will be able to compare the patterns, or DNA fingerprints, and identify the source. *This lesson should take between 55-60 minutes of classroom time.*

Guiding Questions

1. How can investigators use case reports to identify commonalities between infected patients?
2. What laboratory techniques are used to compare DNA samples from bacteria?

Outcomes and Learning Targets

Specific Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Identify potential sources for the outbreak by reviewing case reports and extracting relevant information.
2. Identify gel electrophoresis as a laboratory technique that separates DNA fragments according to their size.
3. Identify DNA fingerprinting as a laboratory technique used to compare patterns in DNA.

Key Vocabulary

- Gel electrophoresis
- DNA fingerprinting
- DNA fingerprint
- Micropipette
- Enzyme

Case Reports for Each Group

Background: Epidemiological investigations of outbreaks begin with field investigators gathering information from people in the community that are exhibiting symptoms of the disease and those who appear to be symptom-free. That information is summarized into case reports. Reviewing these reports of infected and non-infected people is a key part of any epidemiological investigation and can help narrow down possible sources of the infection. Information collected often includes basic medical information (age and gender), vital signs (temperature, blood pressure, and respiratory rate), list of symptoms, and recent activities (what they have done and where they have been). The investigation of these recent activities can be expanded to include people they have been in contact with or foods they recall consuming. Please note that in an actual investigation, epidemiologists would review many more case reports, information about what locations and events infected people had visited, and many other factors. While this scenario has been simplified to allow students to complete it in the allotted time, it does model the process used during an authentic investigation.

Slide 7

SAMPLE Lesson 3

7 minutes

Slide 7

Gel Electrophoresis and DNA Fingerprinting

How can DNA samples be compared to see if they match?



Slide 7

Introducing Gel Electrophoresis and DNA Fingerprinting

7A. Involve the class in a discussion about their prior knowledge of how DNA samples could be compared to see if they match. If needed, supplement their ideas with the examples from the list below.

- Companies such as Ancestry.com and 23-and-me offer genetic sequencing of a DNA sample isolated from person's cheek cells. Genetic information from the sequence can be used to determine who a person is related to, information about where a person came from, their ancestry, and about genes associated with medical conditions. Information about how the sequencing and interpretation is done is on each company's website.
- Matching DNA samples is also used in the field of science called forensics. Forensic scientists use DNA to solve crimes by comparing DNA samples to identify victims or criminals.

7B. Direct students to page 12 of the Student Manual.

7C. Instruct students to read page 12 of the Student Manual and tell them they will be doing these techniques during their visit on the Science Adventure lab.

CER Tip #9: The laboratory technique, DNA fingerprinting, will need to be performed to match the DNA sample from the patient with the samples from the foods. This will tell us which of the five foods is the culprit.

Lesson 4

Analysis of Bacterial DNA Samples to Identify the Source

Description

In this lesson, students will interpret the results of the DNA fingerprinting experiment. They will state a claim, compile all the evidence for the claim, and interpret the data to form their reasoning about the source of the outbreak that occurred on the hospital ship.

Lesson Overview

Students will compare the DNA fingerprints from the five candidate foods to the DNA fingerprint from the first sick patient in order to identify the contaminated food. Students will share their prior knowledge about why outbreaks do not spread indefinitely and what factors may limit their spread. There is a unit assessment with suggested questions found on Resource page 123-124. Teachers may administer this assessment at their discretion. *This lesson should take between 55-60 minutes of classroom time. (Optional unit assessment not included in the time frame.)*

Guiding Questions

1. How are the results of a DNA fingerprinting experiment interpreted?
2. Why do outbreaks stop at some point?

Outcomes and Learning Targets

Specific Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

1. Learn how to interpret results of a DNA fingerprinting experiment and draw conclusions.
2. Discuss reasons why outbreaks do not continue indefinitely.

Key Vocabulary

- Immunity

SAMPLE

Slide 2

Lesson 4

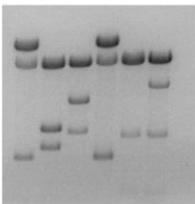
3 minutes

Slide 2

Review DNA Fingerprinting

Directions:

- Tape the image of the gel from the DNA fingerprinting experiment.



Slide 2

Review DNA Fingerprinting

- 2A.** Distribute an image of the DNA fingerprinting experiment performed in the video to each student and instruct them to tape in their lab notebook. Resource page 121.

[Click on Slide 2](#)

Slide 2, after click

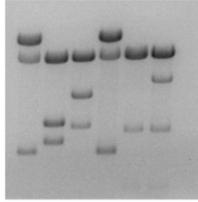
Review DNA Fingerprinting

Directions:

- Tape the image of the gel from the DNA fingerprinting experiment.

Remember!

- DNA fingerprint is a unique pattern of DNA fragments.
- If the patterns of DNA fragments are different, then the DNA sequences are different and the samples do not match.
- If the patterns of DNA fragments are the same, then the DNA sequences are the same and the samples match.



Slide 2

2B. Remind students that identifying the source of the infection is part of Phase 2 of an epidemiological investigation.

2C. Review the principles of DNA fingerprinting:

- A DNA fingerprint is a unique pattern of DNA fragments.
- If the pattern (both position and number) of DNA fragments from samples seen in the gel are different, then the DNA sequences are different, and the samples do not match.
- If the patterns of DNA fragments seen in the gel are the same, then the DNA sequences are the same and the samples match.

Slide 9

Lesson 4

20 minutes

Slide 9

Claim, Evidence, Reasoning

Directions:

Complete the Claim, Evidence, Reasoning framework.

Based on the epidemiological investigation, make a claim about what caused the crew and passengers to become ill on the USNS Relief in August of 2018.

CLAIM:

- What conclusion can you make about your original focus question?

EVIDENCE:

- What data or observations do you have to support your claim?

REASONING:

- How does the data you used for evidence support your claim?



Slide 9

Claim, Evidence, Reasoning

9A. Say This:

Now that we have progressed through the phases of an epidemiological investigation and gathered evidence in the form of data from case reports and laboratory experimentation, you will use this evidence to answer the essential question, “What caused the crew and passengers to become ill on the USNS Relief in August of 2018?” and complete a Claim, Evidence, Reasoning framework.

9B. Direct students to page 14 of the Student Manual. Students may use their lab notebooks or page 15 to complete this task.



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