

# Lesson Plan: Grow a Germ Zoo

Brighter Idea - Try This at Home

**Grow your own culture of bacteria and fungus to see the germs lurking around us!**

**In this activity you will need:**

## Supplies

- \* 1 tsp beef stock powder
- \* 1 tsp gelatin
- \* 1 tsp sugar
- \* 1 cup of water
- \* Pot
- \* Spoon
- \* Heat source  
(hot plate or stovetop)
- \* Petri dish
- \* Cotton swab
- \* Tape

## Instructions

- 1** Bring the water to a boil. Stir in the beef stock powder, sugar and gelatin until completely dissolved, which takes about 1 minute.
- 2** Turn off the heat and let the mixture cool for about 10 minutes.
- 3** Take the lids off your petri dishes and carefully pour the mixture into the dishes.
- 4** Put the lids on your dishes and place them in a refrigerator to cool for 4 hours.
- 5** Once the gelatin is set, remove it from the refrigerator. Rub your cotton swab on a place that gets touched a lot, then open your petri dish and rub the cotton swab on the gelatin in a zig-zag pattern.
- 6** Put the lid on the petri dish and tape it closed. Turn the petri dish upside down and put it in a warm place for three to five days.
- 7** After a few days, check on your dish and see what you've grown!
- 8** When you're done with your petri dishes, keep them sealed and throw them away.

## What's this all about?

Microbes are all around us on almost every surface we touch, but they are difficult to see without a microscope. By growing a culture of microbes in a petri dish, you can see what's on all those surfaces.

