

## Poison Prevention: Lesson for grades 3-5

Time: 30 minutes

- Possible objectives:
  - Students will be able to describe what a poison is.
  - Students will be able to identify potential poisons in the home and outside.
  - Students will recognize how to be safe around potential poisons.

### Introduction

- Ask/Discuss:
  - "Do you think you have any poisons in your home?"
  - "What are some poisons that could be around your home?"
  - "What are some poisons that could be found outside?"
- Activity Ideas:
  - Choose a [children's book](#) to read and discuss the potential poisons and how the characters handled each situation throughout the story line.  
OR
  - Escape Room Game at [Poison Escape Room - Poison Escape Room](#)
- Discuss/Explain:
  - "At home and outside there are items that look like drinks, candies, or snacks, but that are actually dangerous poisons. Poisons are anything that gets inside your body that can hurt you or make you sick when used in the wrong way."
- Remember:
  - **If you don't know what something is don't eat or drink it. Ask a grown-up!"** Don't smell something if you don't know what it is.

### Direct Teaching:

- Ask: **"What is a poison?"**
- Answer: Anything that can hurt you or make you sick if it gets into your body
  - Ask for examples—possible answers—laundry soap, cleaners, plants, wild mushrooms, snakes, spiders.
  - Ask: "Do you think poison always smells or tastes bad" **Answer: no, it doesn't.**
- Medicines
  - Ask: "How many of you have ever gotten hurt and needed to take Tylenol or another medicine?"
  - Share: Medicine can be a poison if you take too much, if it's expired, or if you take someone else's medicine
  - Ask: "If you take too much Tylenol, do you think you would get sick right away?"  
**Answer:** It can take over 24 hours for some people to show that they are sick, so not all poisons will make you feel bad right away.

- **Ask:** Do you know other things that are good but can be poison if you have too much or use it the wrong way?
  - **Share:** Toothpaste—Good for teeth but can be bad if you swallow a lot because it contains fluoride.
  - **Share:** Cleaners—Good for adults to keep the house clean but can be bad if swallowed because they contain chemicals that can hurt you. Cleaners can irritate skin and eyes, too.
  - **Share:** Vitamins—Good if you take the right amount but bad if you eat too many because most vitamins contain iron.

### **Routes of Poisoning:**

- Show windshield washer fluid. (**It is included in the look-alikes at the bottom of the lesson in the look-alike picture**)
  - **Ask:** “What does this look like?” (Share: “little kids might think it is juice or sports drink”)
  - **Ask:** “How can this poison hurt you?” **Answer:** Drinking it can make you sick because there are chemicals in it that can hurt your body.
- Drinking or eating poison is the most common way people get hurt, but poisons can get into our bodies from other ways, too.
  - **Ask:** “How else can poison get into our bodies? Other than eating or drinking it.
    - ✓ skin (eg, poison ivy),
    - ✓ from breathing or through the nose (eg, smoke or gas)
    - ✓ by splashing into the eyes (eg, bug spray or sunscreen)

### **Poisons that are Outside (can use as filler if other topics go by too quickly)**

- Plants—poison ivy, poison oak, poison sumac.
- Berries—Even if a bird is eating them, they can still be poison for humans. Only eat berries like strawberries, blueberries, or blackberries
- Wild mushrooms—if you have these in your yard, don’t pick them. Tell your parents.
  - If a kid eats one call the Poison Center 1-800-222-1222.
- Critters
  - Spiders—There are two kinds of venomous spiders in the US. They both have colors in their names, so do you know what they are?
    - Brown recluse and black widow
    - Call the Poison Center if you get bitten by one

- Daddy long legs—If kids bring this up and say that they are poisonous but their fangs aren't long enough to bite, can mention that this is just a myth.
- Snakes
  - Garter snakes will bite but are not venomous
  - If you touch a turtle, snake, or salamander, they can have a lot of germs so make sure to wash your hands
  - If anyone mentions bull snake, let them know they are not venomous but can still bite
  - What should you do if you see a snake? Leave it alone

### **Prevention Tips (if there's extra time)**

- Medicine and household products such as cleaner --Up high and out of sight or locked up if down low.

### **Closure:**

- 911 is good to know, but we can also call the Poison Center
- Repeat after me: 1-800-222-1222
  - Keep this somewhere near a phone or program it into your cell phone if you have one. Tell your parents to program it into their cell phone, too.

### **Optional activity:** Need two volunteers

- One will act like a 2-year-old, and the other will be the big brother or sister
  - The 2-year-old is in the bathroom and finds medicine while the brother/sister is babysitting and playing video games
  - 2-year-old starts eating a bunch of pills and brother/sister finds them
  - What is the first thing you should do?
  - Kids will probably say call 911 or the Poison Center. Before doing that, we should take the poison away from the person.
  - This is one of the only times your parents will be happy that you made your brother or sister cry
  - After that, then you can call either number or get help from an adult

### **Optional Assessment:**

- Exit ticket question: What can you do to prevent a poisoning?
  - **If you don't know what something is don't eat or drink it. Ask a grown-up!" Don't smell something if you don't know what it is.**

### **Additional Activities:**

**Poison Prevention Hero Kahoot!** game created by the Blue Ridge Poison Center

<https://create.kahoot.it/share/are-you-a-poisoning-prevention-hero/826a6a84-424a-401f-b419-764f092ae9cd>

**Poisons in the Home** activity sheet (included) created by Upstate New York Poison Center



# WHAT DO YOU THINK MEDICINE OR CANDY?

A.



B.



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# WHAT DO YOU THINK MEDICINE OR CANDY?

A.



B.



Ibuprofen  
(medicine)

Orange-flavored  
breath mints

# WHAT DO YOU THINK WHICH IS POISONOUS?

A.



B.



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# WHAT DO YOU THINK WHICH IS POISONOUS?

A.



Morel

(edible-but don't pick  
mushrooms unless you're  
an expert!)

B.



Death Cap  
(poisonous)

# WHAT DO YOU THINK Windshield Washer Fluid OR SPORTS DRINK?

A.



B.



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# WHAT DO YOU THINK Windshield Washer Fluid OR SPORTS DRINK?

A.



Sports drink

B.



Windshield washer  
fluid

# WHAT DO YOU THINK MEDICINE OR CANDY?

A.



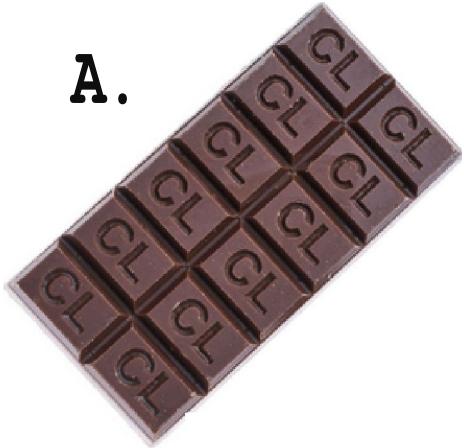
B.



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# WHAT DO YOU THINK MEDICINE OR CANDY?

A.



B.



chocolate laxative (medicine)

chocolate candy bar

# POISONS IN THE HOME

Below is a list of poisonous products that are found in most houses. Put the number of the room in which you would find each poisonous product on the line in front of it.

**1**  
**Bathroom**

**2**  
**Closets**

**3**  
**Bedroom**

**4**  
**Living Room**

**5**  
**Kitchen**

**6**  
**Basement**

**7**  
**Laundry Room**

**8**  
**Garage**

- laundry detergent
- windshield washer fluid
- perfume, cologne, aftershave
- mouthwash
- hand sanitizer
- nail polish & remover
- alcoholic beverages
- medicine
- furniture polish
- cigarettes
- bleach
- deodorant
- gasoline
- cosmetics
- rubbing alcohol
- shampoo
- vitamins
- motor oil
- plants
- fertilizer

**NOW THAT YOU HAVE FOUND THE POISON DANGERS...LOCK THEM UP!**

**POISON**  
**HELP**  
1-800-222-1222