

Engaging Elementary Students in COVID Safety Precautions

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Abstract

Lane College, a Historically Black College in Jackson, TN, is partnering with Lincoln Elementary as part of the College's 10 Blocks Project Initiative. Students in the Lane College Science Club, affiliated with the ASBMB Student Chapters, demonstrated a science interactive with second graders at Lincoln Elementary School. During the Fall 2020 semester, Science Club students, including S- STEM Scholars, and faculty advisors visited the school. Due to the devastating and unforeseen circumstance of the COVID-19 pandemic, the faculty and students took a different approach for the annual interactive experiments. During this visit, Science club students worked with second graders where they demonstrated two fun and relevant experiments which represented the coexistence of germs on their hands and the spread of COVID-19. Following the CDC guidelines, only 25 children were able to participate in this event that occurred in the gym. The two experiments used were a part of the Coronavirus Kit from the Science Tools. Within the first experiment, four volunteers were selected to participate in four hand-washing experiences. Each volunteer was given blue glow powder to put on their hands. One volunteer performed a cold-water rinse without rubbing their hands, while another performed a hot water rinse without rubbing their hands. Another volunteer did a cold water and soap hand wash, while the last volunteer performed a hot water and soap hand wash. The results were observed with a UV light to see if there were any glow germ residues from each participant. The result showed the volunteer who performed the hot water and soap hand wash had very little germ residue left. Our second experiment involved three balloons and three scoops of glow germ powder mixed with water in a spray bottle. Three volunteers were selected to draw on the balloons which represent people. One of the science club members held the balloon, while another person sprayed it from a 1-foot distance. We repeated this process twice at a three feet distance with one balloon covered with a napkin. Then we observed the outcome of all three balloons. The results showed that the balloon covered with the

napkin had very little residue as opposed to the other balloons standing at a similar distance without being provided with the napkins as a face cover. The children were amazed and enthusiastic by both demonstrations and were able to understand the necessary safety precautions for preventing the spread of COVID-19.