

Article of the Week for the Week of October 16

Due Friday, October 20

_____/20 points

1. Skim the article and **diffuse** the text. (4 pts)
Diffuse = Underline unfamiliar words, use context clues to help find the meaning, write two possible substitutions (synonyms) for at least two unfamiliar words.
2. Read the article. Circle at least 3 **transitions** used by the author to link ideas and paragraphs. (3 pts)
3. Write **3+** thoughtful comments (*connect, question, paraphrase, summarize*) in the margins. (3 pts)
4. Read the writing prompt at the end of the article. Read the article again and underline or highlight information you will use to help you answer the prompt. (10 pts)

Health Check: What is the common cold and how do we get it?Peter Collignon, *The Conversation*, adapted by Newsela, 10/2/17

The “common cold” is extremely common. Most of us will have at least one or two per year. Children get sick more often and very young children often get more than five colds per year.

Even though it’s so common, there’s a lack of good research looking into this infection and ways to prevent and treat it.

What Is A ‘Cold’?

The common cold is caused by viruses. It generally comes on quickly, and then the body takes care of it by itself. It involves our upper respiratory system and airways (nose, throat, pharynx and larynx).

After picking up the virus, there is usually about two days before symptoms start. The illness then often lasts for five to 10 days.

You are likely to be contagious while you have symptoms, which means you can give someone else the same illness. You’re most contagious in the first few days of the illness. Once your body effectively fights the infection, the virus in your body will drop off and you will get better. We get better from these viral infections by sending white blood cells to kill the virus and making antibodies active against it.

Sore throat, cough, sneezing and running noses are the more common symptoms. Headaches, fevers, body aches and severe tiredness are relatively less common.

How Do We Catch Colds?

Many think that being exposed to cold temperatures, especially in winter, causes the common cold. This does not appear to be true. The common cold is caused by viruses. Viruses are very small particles that invade our bodies. One needs to catch one of these viruses to get a cold. Low temperatures alone won’t do it.

However, when it's cold and wet outside, we are more likely to be indoors and in more crowded places. This puts us close to other people who may have a cold. Cold weather does make it more likely that we will catch a cold, especially if we are near people who have one.

The association with winter and cold weather likely contributed to its name. It is still unclear if the weather also contributes to the transmission of these viruses.

When people cough and sneeze, we can breathe in the viruses. More likely, though, most of us get these infections by our hands.

We often touch dirty surfaces. Viruses enter our bodies when our hands then touch our mouth, nose or eyes. Our hands are the way we most often "catch" a cold. This is why good hygiene, along with regular hand-washing, not only decreases our chances of catching a cold but helps protect those around us as well.

What Causes Colds?

The common cold is caused by quite a few different viruses, not just one. Rhinoviruses are the most common cause. These grow best at temperatures of 91-95 degrees Fahrenheit, which is the typical temperature in your nose.

Many other viruses can also cause a cold, and all of them cause the same type of symptoms. Therefore you can't tell by your symptoms which virus is making you unwell. You can usually only tell which virus it is by testing on a sample from your respiratory system.

Most people infected with influenza virus, known as the flu, have only mild symptoms or none at all. Many infected with influenza have the same symptoms as those with rhinovirus. This is why it's usually not possible to tell which one you are suffering from.

Do Antibiotics Help?

The common cold is caused by viruses, so antibiotics do not work and should be avoided. Antibiotics work when someone has a bacterial infection. Bacteria are larger than viruses. They do not need a living host. Viruses, in contrast, need a host, like a plant or animal, in order to multiply. Strep throat is an example of an illness caused by bacteria.

Writing Prompt: On your own paper, write an expository paragraph explaining why the common cold is so common. Your paragraph must:

- Be at least 5 sentences long
- Start with a clear topic sentence that answers the prompt
- Use information from the article to support your central idea