Make a Guidebook to Friendly Home Microbes

Microbes are all around us, living on and in almost everything on the surface of the Earth. Gross! Or is it? Some of these tiny creatures can make us sick, but many other bacteria, archaea, and single-celled fungi actually keep us healthy and make our homes more comfortable. Make your own guidebook of a few of these friendly home microbes! Print out the following pages and follow the instructions to create your guidebook.

Materials: scissors and glue or tape

The finished book can look like this:

Want to show us your book? Tweet it at us! Gram it our way! Put it on Facebook! Tag us with #couchreach (that’s outreach from your couch)!

(Missed yesterday’s activity? Check out our archive)
**Flap 1.**

**Saccharomyces cerevisiae** is more commonly known as baker’s yeast; most people have some yeast in their kitchen for baking. When yeast is activated, it eats sugars and produces carbon dioxide bubbles that allow our bakery items to rise up! Have you ever noticed how bread has lots of little air pockets? That is thanks to yeast!

**Flap 2.**

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**Flap 3.**

*Streptococcus A12* is a bacteria strain that can be found in your mouth. While we still have a lot to learn about our microbial pals, early studies have suggested that it might help control plaque on your gums and protect you against other pathogens. Since this microbe is in your mouth, it most likely lives on your toothbrush in your bathroom as well!

**Directions:**

Cut out the flaps along the solid lines. Fold flaps along the dotted line. Glue the flaps together to create your guide book. Decorate and share with family and friends.
Thermophiles are microbes that live in extreme temperatures and environments, but did you know that they also live in the extreme environments hidden in our homes? The microbe *Thermus aquatics* can be found in hot water heaters in our basements or utility rooms!

The plants we have in our living room don’t just need soil to live; they also have a microbial community that promotes growth and keeps them safe. We share *Bacteroidetes* microbes with our plants. These microbes found on house plants are also some of the many bacteria that live in our guts to help us digest our food and stay healthy.