

Activity: What is Blood Made of?

Students will make 'blood' out of candy. This lesson will teach the blood components' names and functions. Following each component introduction, the candy which represents the component will be brought up by students and added to a container. In the end, the mixture should represent a combination of all the components of the blood in their relative amounts. (Students may work independently in groups to determine which candy represents each component as well as decide the percentages of candy to add to their mixture to make a representative model of blood).

A. What are the four components of blood and their relative amounts?

B. What is the function of each component?

CANDY RED HOTS 44%: Red Blood Cells (RBCs) - carry oxygen and carbon dioxide around body, RBCs only live for about 3 months but are continuously produced in the bone marrow.

CORN SYRUP 55%: Plasma - syrupy, thick, clear, yellowish liquid that carries dissolved food and wastes.

WHITE JELLY BEANS 1/2%: White Blood Cells (WBCs) - bigger than RBCs, oddly-shaped cells that 'eat' bits of old blood cells and attack germs.

CANDY SPRINKLES 1/2%: Platelets - bits of cells and cytoplasm that help your blood clot.

Make sure to add the appropriate relative amounts of each blood component. Groups should mix the candy 'blood', dispense into small cups, and pass out one cup to each student in the group. Supply spoons so that the students can eat the candy if they desire.

Interesting fact: There are 5 million red blood cells, 10 thousand white cells and 250 thousand platelets in a pinhead-size drop of blood!