ENGLISH

KEY STAGE 2 2005

SPELLING LEVELS 3–5

# Spelling Test

## *Bacteria*

## Teacher's Version

# Bacteria

The importance of **washing** their hands **before** a meal is emphasised to small children as a way of keeping **healthy** . But do you ever think about germs and **disease** ? It is true that some bacteria, and other micro-organisms, can cause **serious** problems, but most bacteria are not especially harmful. In fact, without bacteria, there would be no life on Earth as we know it.

Bacteria that live in soil break down, or decompose, the remains of dead plants and animal **material** . In the **process** , the bacteria make **essential** substances **available** to be used by living plants as they grow. These pass to the animals that eat the plants. Of course the bacteria do not do this to be helpful; it is just the way they obtain the energy they need to **survive** .

Some bacteria live in the digestive systems of humans and animals. This benefits the bacteria as they have a regular **supply** of food, and benefits humans and animals as the bacteria **release** nutrients from the food that would otherwise pass through them.

Humans have found many **surprising** ways to turn some extraordinary bacteria and other micro-organisms to our **advantage** . We use the **properties** of bacteria to produce milk and to make cheese, butter and yoghurt. Bacteria can also be used in **medicine** to stop the effects of other bacteria that cause **physical** illness.

No one knows how many **varieties** of bacteria there might be, or what they could all be used for. But one thing to **remember** is that if we, or any other organism, can benefit from this it may be more by chance than **design** .

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