

A LITTLE BOOK ABOUT



CORONAVIRUS

To Help Our Keiki Understand Why Life Changed

Written By: Janice Ikeda



Stay home, stay home, stay home!

All I do is stay at home!

Sam was angry, bored, and a little bit sad. He never thought he would miss school, but he did.



He missed his friends. He missed his teacher.
He even missed school lunch.

Sam had been looking forward to Spring Break and being able to stay up late, sleep in, and play all day. But Sam didn't know Spring Break was going to be so long.

It was fun for a week but now Sam wanted to go back to school.



Why can't I go to school?" Sam asked. "And why can't I go to Grandma's house? Or Aunt Mary's house?"

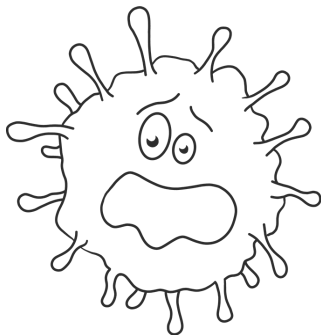
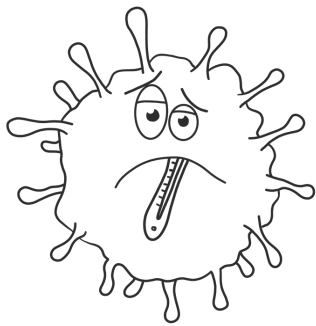
Mama picked him up and put him on her lap.

Sam,” she said, “do you know about the Coronavirus?”

Sam’s eyes got big. “Oh yes. That’s what the evil Dr. X created in his lab and launched into the sky with a giant rocket and it made the clouds green and when it rained everyone got sick and turned into zombies.”

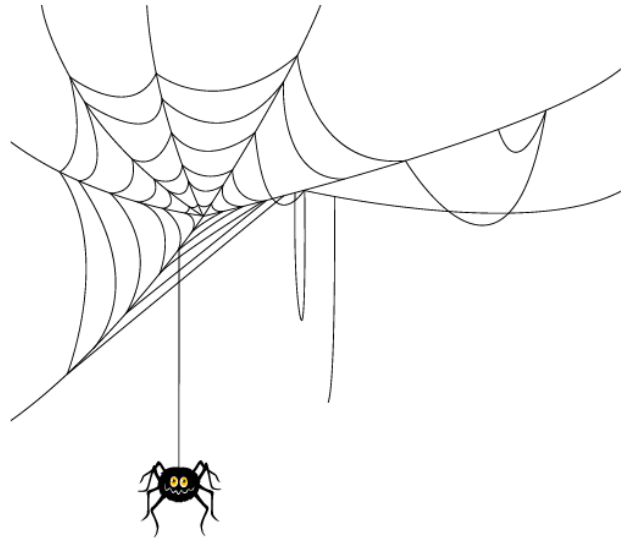


Mama shook her head. “No, Sam. That’s not it. Coronavirus is a very tiny bug that you can only see with a microscope. ‘Virus’ is a special name for certain bugs that are so tiny you cannot see them.



Coronavirus can live anywhere for a few days – and when you touch it, it sticks to your hands and waits for you to rub your eyes or put your fingers in your mouth because it wants to get into your body where it’s warm. In fact, it’s favorite place to live is in your lungs. And if that happens, you get sick.”

“Oh. Like when the boy got bit by a radioactive spider and he got really sick but then he could shoot webs out of his arms and fight the bad guys?”



“No Sam. Most people who get the Coronavirus bug in their lungs will have a fever and feel sick and cough and eventually get better. But some people, especially older people, get so sick from the Coronavirus they need a special machine called a ventilator to help their lungs breathe.”

“You mean old people like Grandma?” Sam asked.

“Yes. Old people like Grandma. That’s why we can’t visit her. The Coronavirus might be stuck to our hands, or our slippers, or even our clothes – and we don’t want to take it to her house.”

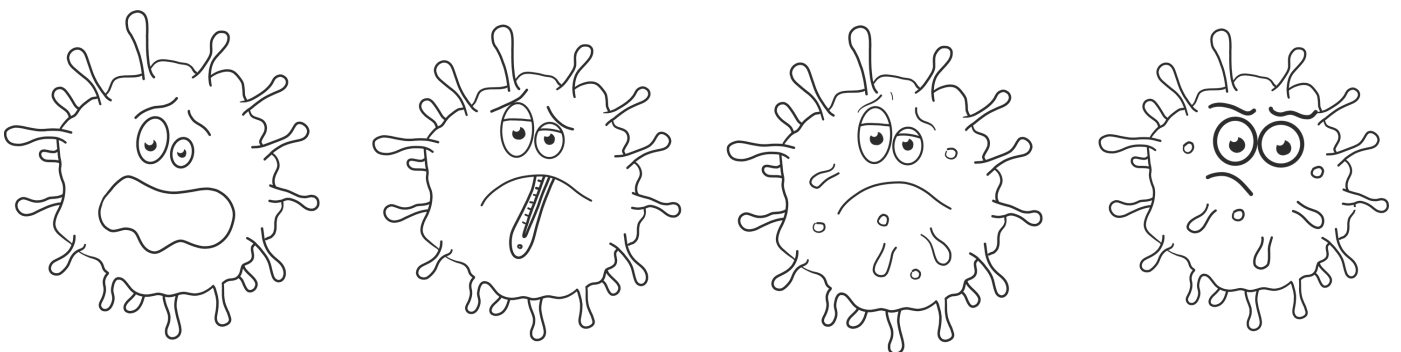
“Yeah, Grandma hates bugs. We better not take any to her house. Even tiny, microscopic ones.”



“But Mama,” Sam wondered, “You told me if I was brave and took my shot at school that I wouldn’t get sick.”

“Yes, I know. But the shot you had in school was called the flu vaccine. A vaccine is something that helps your body fight bugs, and the flu is also a kind of bug that can make you sick. The flu vaccine keeps you from getting sick from the flu bug. It doesn’t work for Coronavirus. And we don’t know when they will make a vaccine for the new Coronavirus bug.”

“Mama, I don’t want to get sick. I don’t want you to get sick. Or my friends, or my teacher, or Aunt Mary, too.”



“Well, you don’t have to worry too much and you can help keep everyone healthy by following three simple rules:”

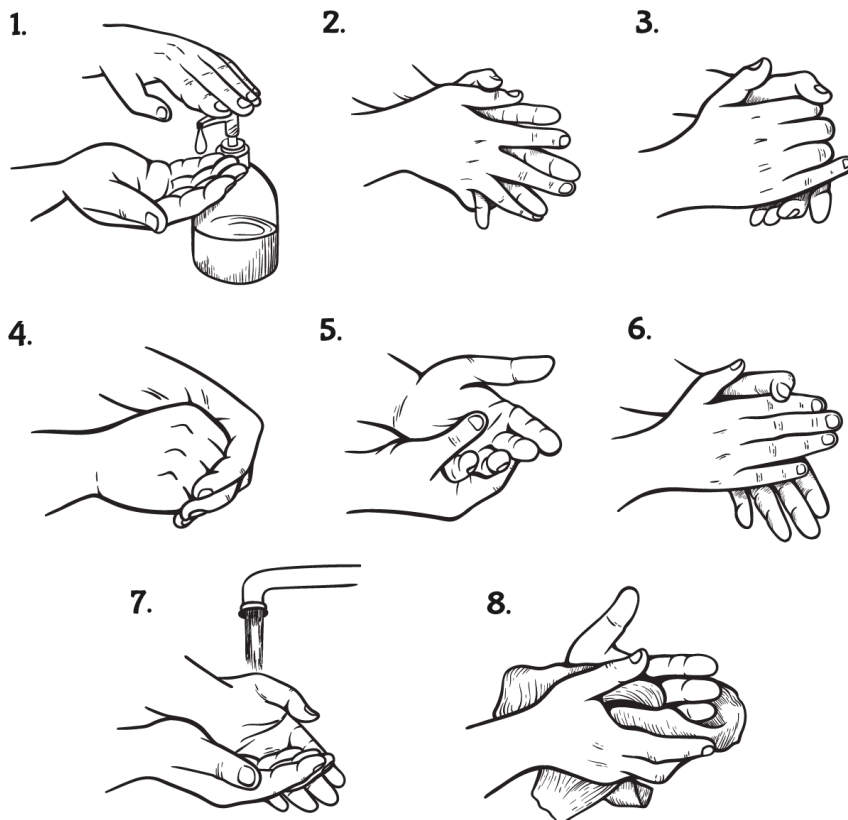
STAY AT HOME!

1. Quarantine - that is a big word that means stay at home. Sometimes people use the word isolate, too.



2. Wash your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds.

3. Keep your hands away from your eyes and mouth.



Sam knew he had to follow the rules so that no one would get sick, but he was still bored and he still missed his friends.

“I hate Coronavirus. Everything is different now and I hate it.”

Sam’s mom grabbed a paper and a pen. She drew a line down the middle of the paper. On one side of the line she wrote, “Things that are different.” On the other side she wrote, “Things that are the same.”

“Things that are different,” Sam said.

“I don’t play with my friends. I don’t drink milk from a little carton at lunchtime. People walk around wearing masks. I have to wash my hands all the time.”

Then Sam smiled and said, “I also get to eat saimin for lunch sometimes and stay up a little late even if it’s not the weekend.”

Sam liked being able to stay up a little late.

“Okay. Now, what are the things that are the same?”

Sam thought. “I still have to brush my teeth after breakfast. I still change out of my jammies and make my bed. I still have to do my reading log. I still get to play outside before lunch and I still take a nap after lunch. And I still need three hugs and two nuzzles and one butterfly kiss before bed.”

Things That Are Different

1. I don't play with my friends.
2. I don't drink milk from a little carton at lunchtime.
3. People walk around wearing masks.
4. I have to wash my hands all the time.
5. I eat saimin for lunch.
6. I can stay up late sometimes.

Things That Are The Same

1. Brush my teeth after breakfast.
2. Change out of my jammies and make my bed.
3. Do my reading log.
4. Play outside before lunch.
5. Take a nap after lunch.
6. 3 hugs, 2 nuzzles, and 1 butterfly kiss before bed.



Sam liked being able to see what was different and what was the same. He liked knowing that he could talk to Mama when he felt angry or bored or a little bit sad. He liked knowing why there was no school and how he could help everyone stay healthy.

“Mama, can you help me write one more list?” Sam said.

“Sure,” Mama replied.

WHAT TO DO WHEN I AM BORED

1. Look at old pictures on the phone and tell stories about when I was a baby.
2. Cook and clean up together.
3. Make a blanket fort and fill it with pillows and my favorite books when I need a quiet space alone.
4. Call Grandma on the video chat.
5. Write a letter to Aunty Mary.
6. Have a paper airplane contest.
7. Make a vision board filled with pictures of things we would like to do after quarantine.
8. Play hop scotch using blue painters tape on the floor.
9. Make a house of cards.
10. Ask Siri what kids do for fun.

Sam and Mama both laughed.



ACTIVITY IDEAS

Draw Sam's face. How does he feel?

Draw your face. How do you feel?

What does Sam miss about school?

What do you miss about school?

Do you know what the Coronavirus bug looks like? Draw it here.

The Coronavirus lives on things we touch. What are the things you touch every day?

Make your own list of things that are different, and things that are the same.

What ideas can you add to Sam's list of things to do when you are bored?

A NOTE FOR MAMA

Dear Mama,

I bet there are days when you feel angry, bored, and a little bit sad too. Quarantine is hard for littles, and just as hard for you. Do what you can and reach out for help when you need to. I know you are doing your very best – and still, some days are just rough. Here are some tips to help get you through.

1. Create a family contract. Have a discussion about the biggest challenges and how each family member can help out or make it better.
2. Be truthful. Have conversations for facts and feelings.
3. Set up structure. Create a daily schedule and hang it on the fridge.
4. Keep moving. Kids can feel frustrated and bored without physical activity. Even small exercises like jumping jacks, burpees, or walking like a duck around the house can help.
5. Give each other space. Create little zones like a game zone and a chill-out corner.
6. Stay in touch. Use technology to remain connected to others.
7. If you ever need someone to talk to, no shame! The TALK Line (415-441-KIDS) is a crisis and counseling line for parents that is answered by a live person 24 hours a day, every day. You can also access local resources at 1-800-753-6879 or text ALOHA to 741741.