

The Tangled Web

THIS IS A TEACHER-DIRECTED ACTIVITY



QUESTION: What is the best way to keep STDs from spreading?

MATERIALS:

Rubber gloves

3 x 5 note cards (enough for each member of the class)

PROCEDURE: (Teacher-directed)

1. Before the class begins, privately ask one student to intentionally not participate in the activity and stay seated at his/her desk throughout. Give another student the rubber gloves and ask him or her to wear the gloves throughout the entire activity.
2. Give each student a 3 x 5 card. On one of the note cards, place a small red dot in a corner. Make sure the two previously selected students do not receive the card with the red dot.
3. Tell each student that they must get four other students to sign their names on his or her card. They should put a “1” by the first person to sign, a “2” by the second, a “3” by the third, and a “4” by the fourth.
4. After each student has four signatures, ask everyone to sit down. The only person who did not get any signatures is the one who intentionally did not participate.
5. Tell the students to look for a red dot on their card. Write that person’s name on the board. Ask that person to tell you the name of the first person who signed his or her card. Write that person’s name on the board and connect the two names with a line. Do this with all four people on the student’s 3 x 5 card.
6. Next, ask the first person who signed the red dotted card to tell the name of the person who was the 2nd person on his or her card. Write down that person’s name and connect the names with a line.
7. Continue connecting lines and names until all possible connections to the red dot have been made.
8. If the name of the person with the gloves on his or her hand is mentioned in association with the red dotted card, do not write that person’s name down on the board. This person illustrates “safe sex” using a condom. (This would be a good time to discuss that condoms are not 100% effective.)
9. At the end, the board will look like a spider’s web. The students should be able to see that having sex with someone who has had multiple sexual partners is like having sex with everyone they have had sex with.
10. Only the person who refused to participate could be 100% sure that he or she would not be affected by any type of STD.

HS – Activity #8

QUESTIONS:

1. What could go wrong when a person uses a condom?
2. What similarities do you see between this exercise and the spread of other infectious diseases, like the flu or measles?