

# Tuberculosis

Level: PSE, year 9; Biology/Science, year 9

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## Background information

It would be most useful to cover this session just before pupils receive their BCG vaccine.

While once thought to be vanquished, outbreaks of tuberculosis (TB) continue to occur, and it is one of the most prevalent infectious diseases in the world today. For example, in the mid-1980s after decades of decline, the number of reported cases in New York was alarmingly high. The main reason behind this increase in cases is the development of multi-drug resistance in patients with the disease. Such drug resistance occurs when patients fail to take their medication regularly for the long period (6–12 months) required to knock out the TB bacterium. In addition, HIV seems to activate the disease, since people with AIDS are particularly vulnerable to these drug-resistant forms of TB.

The disease continues to be a major threat, as approximately 1.7 billion people worldwide still carry the bacterium.

## Group work 1

Briefly introduce the topic and then split the class into groups and instruct them to use pages 38 and 39 of the book to help them to complete questions 1–8 of the student worksheet on Tuberculosis.

*(10 minutes)*

## Class discussion 1

Using questions 1 to 8 of the worksheet as a basis, lead a class discussion on TB, explaining how widespread the disease is, and how many people it has killed in the past and present.

*(5 minutes)*

## Group work 2

Instruct the class, in their groups, to complete questions 9 and 10 of the worksheet.

*(5 minutes)*

## Class discussion 2

Lead a second discussion, based on questions 9 and 10 of the worksheet, on the links between poverty and TB. Sum up by reiterating how important it is that pupils receive their BCG vaccine.

*(5 minutes)*