

Introduction

About the book

Microbes, Bugs and Wonder Drugs, by Fran Balkwill and Mic Rolph with Victor Darley-Usmar, is the first title in the *Makingsenseofscience* childrens' book series published by Portland Press. Written for teenagers from 12 years and upwards, the book aims to teach about disease, the body's response to it, and the drugs used to combat it. It tells of the history, use and abuse of drugs, and their impact on our daily lives, particularly focusing on those drugs with which children will have come into contact, e.g. for asthma. It explains in a non-judgemental fashion the effects that recreational drugs have on the human body. It also shows that science has good stories to tell, and highlights the importance of medical research and related ethical issues, such as the role of animal experimentation in the testing of drugs.

Since its publication, the book has been shortlisted for the 1996 Rhône-Poulenc Junior Science Book Prize and Highly Commended in the 1996 BMA Medical Book Prize.

Suggested order of study

This pack of Teachers' Notes to accompany the book is designed primarily for a group of PSE/PHSE sessions with years 9, 10 or 11, although parts of it should also be useful as additional material and exercises for Science/Biology lessons.

The pack is designed for you to select as much or as little as you want to use. You can pick out individual sessions or follow the whole course, after which your pupils should have gained some insight into the following:

- health issues associated with disease
- some diseases in detail, e.g. malaria, tuberculosis
- vaccination
- drugs, both helpful and harmful
- the history behind some major advancements in medicine
- an awareness of how to avoid illness
- an understanding of what happens in their body when they get ill

Pupils are encouraged to discuss their ideas, which are then built upon by use of the book. Most sessions include worksheets, which may be photocopied and distributed throughout the class. It is suggested in each case that the class is divided into groups of three or four pupils per book in order to complete the worksheet. Depending on the numbers involved, you may opt to split the reading tasks within the group, and to nominate one 'scribe' to complete a 'group' worksheet. Alternatively, the worksheets could form the basis of library projects. Suggested timings are given for each activity.