

Glitterbug® Handwashing Activities

What is Glitterbug® potion?

- A non-toxic, hypoallergenic lotion that is blacklight reflective when applied to a surface.
- Applied to hands like a lotion, and dries clear.
- It is used to teach hand washing and how easily germs can spread.
- You may reserve a bottle and blacklight from the 4-H office. If you choose to purchase your own bottle, you can visit <https://www.brevis.com/glitterbug> for more information.
- Blacklights are available from any retailer or online vendor and come in various sizes. The 4-H office has a large blacklight available to loan for the activity.

How is it used?

- Apply a dime-sized amount on hands and rub in like a lotion. It will dry clear.
- When hands are put under a black light, The lotion will glow white. This mimics “bacteria”, but IS NOT actual bacteria.
- It is washed off with soap and water. It may take a few times before it is completely washed off.
- The lotion WILL glow on any surface it comes into contact with, including clothing and hard surfaces. Surfaces can be cleaned with a wet cloth. Clothing can be laundered normally.

Activity ideas:

- Have a handwashing challenge to see what washes off the lotion the best.
 - Wash with cold water, no soap
 - Wash with warm water, no soap
 - Wash with cold water and soap
 - Wash with warm/hot water and soap
- Learn how easily germs can be transferred from person to person and surfaces.
 - Each person gets a dime-sized amount of lotion on their hands.
 - Conduct the meeting as usual and/or have them do normal activities.
 - After activity or meeting is done, shine the blacklight around the area to see how the germs have “spread” from person to person, on surfaces, doorknobs, shared items, etc.

Alternative:

- If these materials aren’t available, you can conduct similar activities using vegetable oil and cinnamon. No blacklight is needed.

