

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## The Common Cold

1. Work in small groups and discuss these questions:

- When was the last time you had a cold?
- What are the typical symptoms of a bad cold? Can you list at least three?
- Do you think you get fewer or more colds in Ireland than you did in your country?
- Why do you think that is?
- Are colds more common in summer or winter?
- When you get a bad cold do you try to keep going or do you retire to the bed?
- Do you keep your children at home from school if they have a cold?
- What's the best remedy for a bad cold?
- Do you always carry a packet of tissues with you?
- Do you ever carry a handkerchief?
- Have you heard the saying "Feed a cold, starve a fever"?
- What does it mean?
- Do you have this saying (or something similar) in your language?
- Do you think it's true or is it just an "old wife's tale"?

2. You are going to read an article about the common cold from the website [www.commoncold.org](http://www.commoncold.org). Before you read the article work with a partner and decide if you think the following statements are true or false.

		T or F
A	Colds can last up to 2 weeks.	
B	Adults get on average 4 to 5 colds a year.	
C	The symptoms of a mild dose of flu are similar to the symptoms of a cold.	
D	You can catch a cold from going out in cold weather without wrapping up.	
E	Children get fewer colds than adults	
F	A common cold is caused by a virus infection in the nose.	<i>True</i>
G	Domestic animals such as cats and dogs can also catch colds.	
H	Washing your hands regularly and not touching your nose and eyes with your hands can help you avoid getting a cold.	
I	There are ten different cold viruses.	
J	Antibiotics will not cure a cold.	
K	You can get vaccinated against colds.	

Now read the text and check your answers.

## What a Common Cold is

A common cold is an illness caused by a virus infection located in the nose. Colds also involve the sinuses, ears and bronchial tubes.

The symptoms of a common cold include sneezing, runny or blocked nose, itchy throat, chilliness or feverishness and not feeling well in general.

Colds last on average for one week. Mild colds may last only 2 or 3 days while severe colds may last up to 2 weeks. A cold is a milder illness than influenza (flu). Influenza typically causes fever, muscle aches and a more severe cough. Mild doses of flu are similar to colds.

Adults get an average of 2 to 3 colds a year and children 6 to 10 depending on their age and exposure. Children's noses are the major source of cold viruses.

There are over 100 different cold viruses. They live only in the noses of humans and not in animals except chimpanzees and other primates.

There is no cure for the common cold but you can get relief from your symptoms by:

- resting in bed
- drinking plenty of fluids
- gargling with warm salt water
- taking aspirin

Never take antibiotics to treat a cold because antibiotics don't kill viruses

There are several ways you can prevent yourself from getting a cold

- Cold germs on your hands can easily enter through your eyes and nose, so keep your hands away from those parts of your face
- Avoid being close to people who have colds
- Wash your hands regularly with soap and water

Many people believe that you can catch a cold by going out in cold weather without enough warm clothing, but there is no scientific evidence for this

## Your Reaction

- What is your reaction to what you've read?
- Is there any information in the article that surprised you?
- Is there any thing in the article that you don't agree with?
- How would you rate this article on a scale of 1 to 5

where 1 = Very Boring and 5 = Very interesting?

1    2    3    4    5

- How would rate the this article on a scale of 1 to 5

where 1 = Very easy to understand and 5 = Very difficult to understand?

1    2    3    4    5

## Focus on structure

The article tells you how to avoid getting a cold. What form of the verb is used?

Your friend is very overweight. Work with a partner and make a list of five things for him or her to do to lose 10 kilos over six months. The first one has been done as an example

1. *Join the local gym*

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

The article suggests ways in which you can relieve the symptoms of colds. What structure is used?

Match the beginnings of sentences 1 to 3 with endings A to C

1. You can reduce your bad cholesterol
  2. You can increase your flexibility
  3. You can avoid gum disease
- A) by flossing everyday
  - B) by doing ten minutes stretching exercises each day
  - C) by eating more starch and fibre

For some people, their health is a private matter. If you think any of these questions are too personal, you don't have to answer them.

## Discussion

- When was the last time you were at the doctor?
- Was it difficult to get an appointment?
- Was it for yourself or a member of your family?
- What was wrong with you? What were your symptoms? Was the doctor helpful?
- How did you choose your GP when you first arrived in Ireland?
- Did you or do you find there is a language or a cultural barrier between you and your GP?
- Have you or any member of your family had to go to A&E since you have been in Ireland? Did you have to wait long?
- Have you or any of your family been in hospital since you came to Ireland? What did you think of the care you received?
- What do you think of the standard of Irish Health Service (HSE) in general?

**If you haven't been to hospital and neither  
has anybody in the family then *"Touch  
Wood!"***

## The Common Cold

**MODULE: Health**
**LEVEL: R2L**

<b>Time: 4 hours</b>	<b>Focus: Facts and myths about the common cold followed by a discussion of Irish health service</b>
<b>Class organisation: Small groups. Pairs</b>	<b>Type of activity: Speaking, True or False reading comprehension, Writing advice. Matching halves of sentences</b>
<b>ELP: B1 p.28 Read and understand information that is available in public leaflets <i>etc.</i> A2 p.26 Keep a short conversation going on a familiar topic;(Everybody's health) express my agreement or disagreement politely (on topic of Irish health service)</b>	

**For this activity you need...**

1 worksheet per student  
Dictionaries

**N.B.**

### In Class Procedure at a Glance

1. Distribute the list of questions and give the students a few minutes to read through the questions to make sure everybody understands them. Let them check in their dictionaries or with their peers and with you as a last resort. Tell them they won't be allowed to use their dictionaries later so they must check all vocabulary now. You will almost certainly have to explain an "old wife's tale"
2. Organise the students into small groups of 4 or 5 depending on the size of the class. (To alter the dynamic of the class it can be useful to pick out a few people to be the group leaders and they can then take it in turn to choose the other students to be in their group. As far as possible get the students to sit in closed circles or at least where everybody can see everybody's face!)
3. Move between the groups monitoring the use of language for later feedback. Only intervene if there are glaring, persistent errors. Discourage any writing at this stage. In a class that is very attached to pen and paper you might like to consider insisting that they put all

writing materials away for the duration of the discussion. Ditto dictionaries.

4. Once the groups have exhausted the topic, get some feedback by putting a few of the questions to the whole class - listing the symptoms of a cold on the board, asking for a show of hands on whether they get more or fewer colds in Ireland, listing the different remedies, getting one of them to explain "feed a cold starve a fever" and asking if this saying exists in other cultures and if they think it's true.
5. Choose a few points of language to give feedback on.
6. Now put the students into pairs. (This will involve more movement and although it will take up time it is worthwhile to create variety) Give them as long as necessary for most pairs to read the statements and to say if they think they are true or false. Let them use dictionaries if you think any of the vocabulary will cause a problem.
7. As soon as most pairs have finished turn their attention to the article "What a Common Cold is" Give them plenty of time to read through the article so that they can check their T/F answers against the information in the text. (They may of course disagree with some of this information, in which case so much the better but tell them that for the moment they are interested in what is T/F **according to** the article. Allow dictionary use .
8. Check the answers as a whole group before looking for a general reaction to the article.
9. Give students a few minutes to look back at the article and to identify the verb form.- imperative -(You could ask them to underline all the examples) Then in pairs get them to add four more things to do in order to lose weight.
10. As the pairs finish let them join another pair to compare their suggestions.
11. When most pairs have finished gathered all the suggestions together on the board.
12. Focus attention on the use of gerund after "by" (You don't need to use the term if you think it will be confusing) Let students do the matching exercise individually before comparing in pairs and finally checking as a whole class
13. Finally put students in small groups and give them plenty of time to discuss the 10 points. When the groups have exhausted the subject allow some time for feedback and general discussion in the whole group.