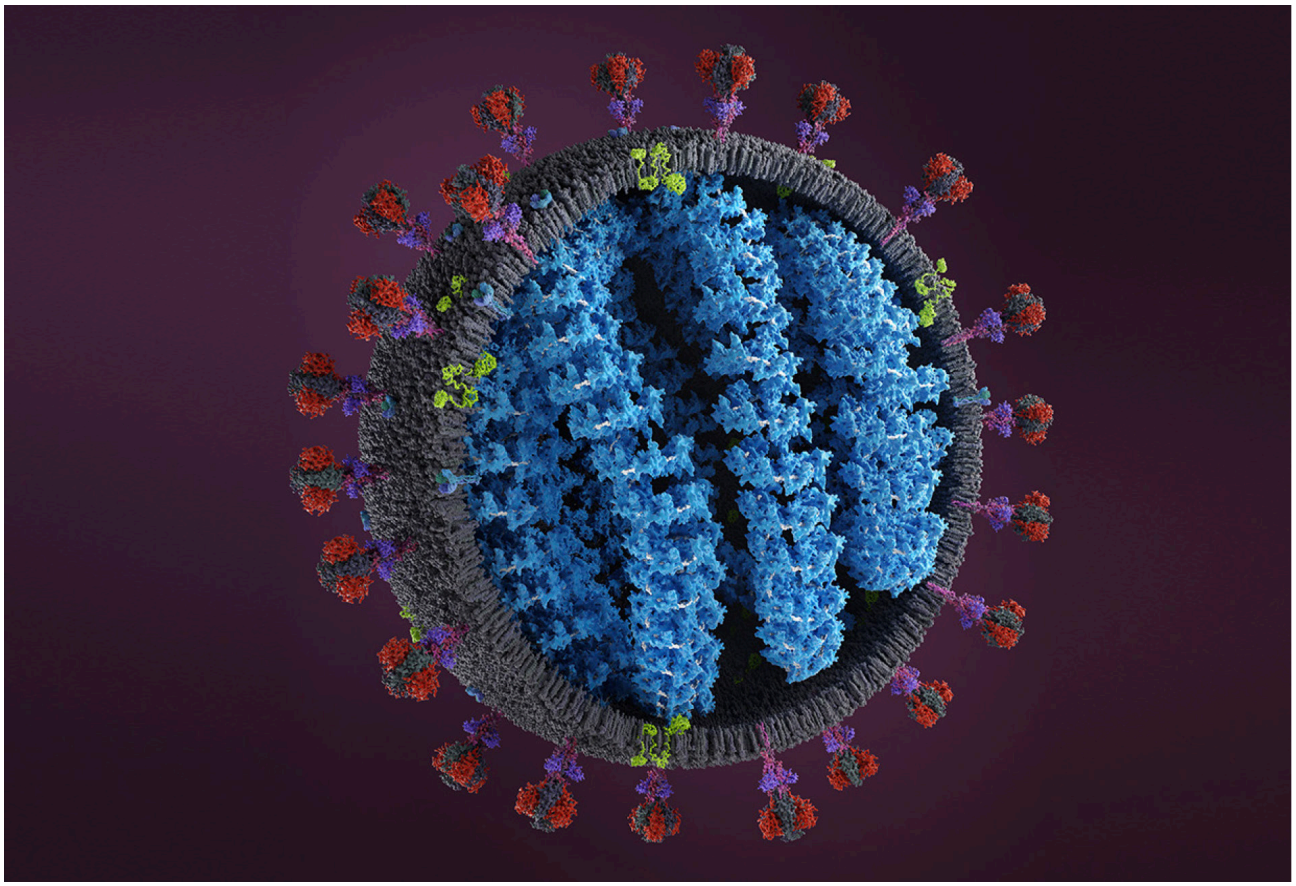
yes!

Building a Just and Sustainable World

Education Connection | Visual Learning

Images, photos, and pictures stimulate the mind. For the viewer, they offer a chance to connect and question. They also offer potential for play and imagination, and pulling the observer into purposeful messages.

Most often, newspaper and magazine readers quickly glance at photos and their captions. With this YES! lesson plan, you and your students can pause to truly understand an image, its message, and why it's interesting (or not).



A Vicious Circle

Step 1: What do you notice?

Ask your students to make sense of the photograph by trusting their instincts of observation and inference. In doing so, the image offers possibilities and interpretations beyond a typical reading where the reader glances at a photograph to reinforce its title or caption. Do not introduce any facts, captions, or other written words.

In response to the question "What do you notice?" you may hear: *light blue coral-like pieces linked in four separate strands, lime green sprigs, fuzzy texture, red and black tree or tassel shapes, a gray circle made of loops close together.*

Step 2: What are you wondering?

After you've heard your students' first observations, you may hear a peppering of questions: *It looks fuzzy, but does it feel fuzzy? Did someone make this? Is it knitted fabric? Is this real or a symbolic representation?*

This is a good time to reveal the photo's caption and other information about the photo. Watch how the conversation shifts from what they believe to be true to discerning the facts about the photo.

Photo caption

The 3D rendering of this coronavirus model was created with consultations of a certified geneticist. 3D structural models and function annotation for proteins encoded by the genome of 2019-nCoV, which is the novel coronavirus causing the COVID-19 pneumonia. (Gray color) Virus membrane (Red and purple color) Surface glycoprotein spike protein: attaches the virion to the cell membrane by interacting with the host receptor, initiating the infection. (Blue color) Packages the positive strand viral genome RNA into a helical ribonucleocapsid (RNP) and plays a fundamental role during virion assembly through its interactions with the viral genome and membrane protein (Green color). Plays an important role in enhancing the efficiency of subgenomic viral RNA transcription as well as viral replication. (White color) RNA (Green color) Component of the viral envelope that plays a central role in virus morphogenesis and assembly via its interactions with other viral proteins. (Flower shape) Plays a central role in virus morphogenesis and assembly. Acts as a viroporin and self-assembles in host membranes forming pentameric protein-lipid pores that allow ion transport.

Photo facts

• There are many types of coronaviruses. COVID-19 is a new disease that was first identified in Wuhan, China, in late December. In February 2020, the World Health Organization announced COVID-19's official name: 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Coronavirus and COVID-19 are being used interchangeably; both refer to the name of the disease that is caused by the virus severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2).

• According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) and through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

• COVID-19 is classified as a global pandemic because it is a person-to-person spread of a disease that causes significant illness and death on an exceptionally broad worldwide scale. The last pandemic was the H1N1 virus in 2009. As of Monday, March 30, The New York Times reported that according to official counts, the coronavirus pandemic has been detected in at least 171 countries, has ickened more than 741,100 people, and at least 35,818 people have died from the virus. It is rising fastest in the U.S., the U.K, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Iran. There are coronavirus cases in all 50 states, with the most number of counted cases in New York, New Jersey, and California.

• One public health strategy to slow the growth of coronavirus is "social distancing"—when people maintain at least 6 feet apart from each other, and large gatherings or events, such as sports events and weddings, are canceled. Other distancing examples include school closures and working from home. The benefits of staying at least six feet away from people are that individuals will be less likely to get the coronavirus and that the spread will slow down or "flatten the curve" so that hospitals have space and enough supplies to treat COVID-19 patients over time, not in one mad, overwhelming rush.

• Covid-19 Mutual Aid USA is a grassroots volunteer group focused on coordinating local care for self-isolating people who need support during the pandemic. The national network connects at-risk and vulnerable people (elderly, disabled, quarantined without pay, undocumented, queer, Black, Indigenous and/or people of color, and those with compromised immune systems and mental health conditions) with local community groups that offer assistance with buying and picking up grocery and pharmacy items, counseling, and more.

Additional Resources:

LISTEN: Trevor Noah Interviews Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergies and Infectious Disease, about COVID-19 (Comedy Central)

EXPLORE: Just For Kids: A Comic Exploring The New Coronavirus (NPR)

VISIT: Coronavirus Timeline: Tracking the Critical Moments of COVID-19 (NBC News)

SIMULATION: Why Outbreaks Like Coronavirus Spread Exponentially, and How to Flatten the Curve (The Washington Post)

SOCIAL JUSTICE RESOURCE: Speaking Up About Racism Around the New Coronavirus (Teaching Tolerance)

Step 3: What next?

1. By this time, most schools are closed, large gatherings including March Madness, weddings, and funerals have been canceled, and in many cities, all but essential businesses have been closed. How has your life been impacted by coronavirus? What are you doing to prevent the spread of the coronavirus? Describe what it's like to "attend" school online—and what you're missing about going to school.

2. How do you feel about not being able to go anywhere you want, when you want? How are you staying connected with family and friends? What are you doing to stay physically and mentally healthy?

3. Every day, every hour—print and online news, social media, podcasts—we are inundated with stories and information about the coronavirus. Where are you getting your news and learning more about COVID-19? How do you determine what news is reliable?

4. What changes have you seen in your community? Have you noticed people buying lots of supplies such as toilet paper? What are you and your community doing to support those who are vulnerable or who have lost their income, maybe even their business or home?

5. There has been an escalation of harassment against Chinese Americans and other Asian Americans since the coronavirus pandemic was detected in Wuhan, China. A new website, Stop AAPI Hate, now tracks these attacks. In the site's first eight days, it received more than 650 reports of discrimination. What do you think of these racial attacks? What do you think is at the root of this bigotry?

For comprehensive information about COVID-19, please visit the Center for Disease Control.

YES! Media has daily news on COVID-19. Be sure to read our coverage on the virus—and how communities are responding—here.