

# Plagues: The Microscopic Battlefield



Author/Publisher/Website:	Koch, F.
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Primary Identifier:	9781626727526

Recommended Grades:	8-10
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Subjects/Courses:	Science
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## ERAC Review

### DESCRIPTION

This engaging comic book follows two characters – Yellow Fever and Bubonic Plague – as they learn about the human body’s immune response and the history of disease transmission. The readable, fun text provides a good level of detail of the topic, clear descriptions of concepts and vocabulary, and is accompanied by compelling visuals that help students understand microorganism structure and bodily processes, labelled diagrams, and a timeline of events. Useful as a class read-aloud to engage students, for students to extend learning, and for teachers to use extracts on specific topics to support learning.

### CURRICULUM FIT

Does the resource support BC curriculum?	Extensively
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**This product supports the Core Competencies of the BC curriculum:**

- Creative Thinking

#### Comments:

This resource supports Biology curricula from junior science and senior Biology courses, more specifically, topics including kingdoms of living things, immune response, vaccinations, epidemics, and prokaryotic versus eukaryotic cells.

### GENERAL CONTENT

#### Content:

Is the resource engaging?	Extensively
Is the content current for the intended curriculum and grade?	Extensively
Is the content accurate for the intended curriculum and grade?	Extensively

## GENERAL CONTENT

Is the content timely and important for student broad understandings? Extensively

### Audience:

Is the content appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students? Extensively

Does the resource provide opportunities for creative and critical thinking? Moderately

Can the content be differentiated? Not at all or slightly

Can reading level be adjusted? Not at all or slightly

Is the level of detail appropriate? Extensively

Is the content of particular interest to male students? Extensively

Is the content of particular interest to female students? Extensively

Is the language use appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students? Extensively

Are the visuals appropriate to the emotional maturity and cognitive level of students? Extensively

### Comments:

The story follows the characters Yellow Fever and Bubonic Plague as they learn about the body's immune response and about the history of disease transmission. The comic format could be particularly intriguing for students who appreciate short bits of text to read accompanied by colourful illustrations. Students may need help with following the text if they are unfamiliar with reading comics. There are some historical connections related to specific plagues and some scientific discoveries. The text offers good descriptions of concepts and vocabulary throughout the story, but is likely not intended to elicit deep thinking.

## TECHNICAL DESIGN

Does the resource make effective use of the medium? Extensively

Is the location of illustrations appropriate? Extensively

Is the resource easy to use? Extensively

Is the use of font, text size and presentation uniform? Extensively

Are extraneous elements/illustrations kept to a minimum? Extensively

### Comments:

The comic format is a fun, light read for students. The incorporation of descriptions throughout the comic provides the teaching of concepts embedded within the story, and the inclusion of some labelled diagrams, an illustrated glossary, and a timeline of events at the end of the book provides additional reference information.

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Is the instructional design effective and appropriate for the intended audience? Extensively

Is the resource suitable for a wide range of learning and teaching styles? Moderately

Are the instructional elements consistent with the purpose of the resource? Extensively

Are the concepts clearly explained? Extensively

## INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Does the resource provide multiple strategies to help learners construct meaning?	Moderately
Does the resource support the transfer of learning to personal or applied contexts?	Extensively

### Comments:

The book provides opportunities for the reader to learn through the story but also with the support of additional reference information. Students would need to be familiar with the basics of cells, bacteria, and viruses before reading it. Descriptions of concepts and terms are clear and easy to understand.

## PRINT CLASSROOM

Does the reference cover topics with sufficient depth for the intended audience?	Extensively
Does the classroom reference have a bibliography and footnotes?	Moderately
Does the resource broaden students' experiences and understandings?	Extensively
Does the resource make effective use of visual elements?	Extensively
Are the images compelling?	Extensively

### Descriptors:

Student research tools

Secondary reference material such as summaries or reviews of research

### Comments:

This resource covers only one specific topic in Biology (plagues) but does so with decent depth considering the length of the story. The visuals are quite compelling and contribute not only to reader engagement but also to the understanding of microorganism structure and bodily processes. There is a page with a couple of notes elaborating on topics from the comic, and with a list of books suggested for further reading.

## SUGGESTED CLASSROOM USAGE

### Comments:

This relatively short comic could be read to a class to engage students in content in the form of a fun, illustrated story. Excerpts could be used to help teach about specific topics, share some of the historical background that the text includes, or introduce students to what a science comic might look like, perhaps for the purpose of creating their own. Students who are interested in extending their learning or who might enjoy or benefit from the comic medium could read the book in its entirety.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

### Readability:

At intended grade level(s)

### Comments:

This resource is part of a series of science comics written by various authors. The introduction is written by Bryn Barnard, author of the book called *Outbreak! Plagues that Changed History*.