Today is an important day at Clever’s School. The pupils aged 9-13 have a very special session with Dr. Doodle, the famous village Doctor. Mrs. Munene, the school principal, spent the previous day talking to the pupils to make sure that all turn up.

Good morning Asha, how are you today?

Mrs. Munene, I am sad, My little brother Barry can’t come today. He has a terrible cough and a runny nose.

There is no need to worry, he will get well. Did mummy take him to hospital?

The four friends, Asha, Clara, Tom and Steve have had an interesting conversation in preparation for the great doctors’ visit.
No, mummy said hospitals are too expensive and she didn't have much money. Besides, I had some medicine left over from my cough, and she gave those to Barry.

Steve, why do you think Dr. Doodle is coming today?

I'm not so sure Tom. Mrs. Munene said he has a special topic today on some medicines.

O yes, I remember! She talked about medicines which kill bad bugs that make us sick, like a runny nose, a bad cough or even diarrhea. Dr. Doodle will talk about the medicines he uses to treat sick children.

Suddenly the pupils began to cheer and clap. Dr. Doodle was finally here and the pupils were very excited.

Meanwhile, the boys are making their way to the hall

Hello Asha, how are you? I am so excited that Dr. Doodle is coming. I can't wait to see him.

I am happy too. I want to be a doctor when I grow up. Come, let's hurry and get to the hall before everyone gets the best seats on the front row.

Tom and Steve spot Clara and Asha sitting at the front row

Hi Asha, how is Barry?

Hi, uumh not so well, still coughing and a runny nose. Last night his body was so hot he could fry an egg!!! I wish mummy would bring him to see Dr. Doodle…

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Good morning pupils, how are you today?

Good morning Dr. Doodle! We are fine, thank you.
Excuse me Dr. Doodle, what are microbes?

I am so happy to be here today and thrilled to see all your smiling faces. I have something really special to tell you today! Are you ready?

I know that a painkiller reduces the pain in your body. But what are antibiotics?

Once upon a time, there was a little 7 year old boy, Miles. One day, he woke up with a high body temperature, a sore throat and a painful cough. Since they lived near our hospital, his mother carried him on her back and quickly brought him because Miles couldn’t stop crying. I took a little blood from Miles, carried out some tests and found lots of microbes....

Good question! They are tiny living organisms. There are more of them on a person's hand than there are people on the entire planet! Microbes are in the air we breathe, on the ground we walk, in the food we eat, they're even inside us!

That’s scary. Dr. Doodle, my little brother Barry sounds like Miles in your story. He too has a terrible cough. Do you think he has microbes?

That’s scary. Dr. Doodle, my little brother Barry, sounds like Miles in your story. He too has a terrible cough. Do you think he has microbes?

Dr. Doodle: You need to see a doctor if you don’t get better after 4 days. He will know which medicine is best. For example, if your cough is caused by a virus, you need to take plenty of water, a painkiller and rest. If it is caused by bacteria, he will ask you to take an antibiotic.

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I am very sorry about Barry. I will pass by your house today. It is good to know that microbes can make us sick. There are different types of microbes: bacteria, virus, fungi and parasites. Harmful microbes like the viruses can make us have runny noses, sore throats, painful coughs and even diarrhea.

Dr. Doodle, how will I know my cough is caused by a bacteria or a virus?

Yeeeeees!!!

What can we do to make sure that the bacteria don’t find a clever way to make us sicker? Do you think people can die?

Antibiotics are special medicines that treat illnesses caused by bacteria and not viruses. They kill harmful bacteria. But if they are not correctly used, the bacterium finds a clever way to fight the power of the antibiotic. Then the bacteria will not die, but will increase in number and strength. As a result you become sicker.

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Unfortunately Tom, some people die because they could not get better as the antibiotics could no longer treat their illness. You don’t have to be scared of bacteria. All you need to do is:

- Always wash your hands before and after going to the toilet, before preparing or eating food and after changing baby’s diapers. Good personal hygiene is important and can greatly reduce the spread of infection.
- Do not use leftover antibiotics! Do not share your antibiotics! There are many different types of antibiotics which treat different infections. The doctor knows which antibiotic and dose to give for each illness.
- Many coughs and colds are caused by viruses. The body’s own natural defenses will fight these infections. Antibiotics will not help you get better faster.
- Make sure you finish the course of antibiotics given by the doctor. Else not all bacteria are killed and they can become resistant to the antibiotic.

Oh, Barry was given my leftover medicines! I go home and tell mummy not to give any more and that you are coming. Next time I will finish my antibiotics even when I feel better. One last question, what is resistance?

No need to worry; now you know what to do. Microbes are very clever; they find ways of protecting themselves for the effects of the antibiotics. As a result the antibiotics cannot kill the harmful microbes. This is what we call resistance. We can stop resistance by following instructions from the doctor and taking these special medicines only when we need them.

The bell rings and the pupils run back to class. Mrs. Munene thanks Dr. Doodle and promises the pupils that he will come again to give them more tips on better use of medicines.