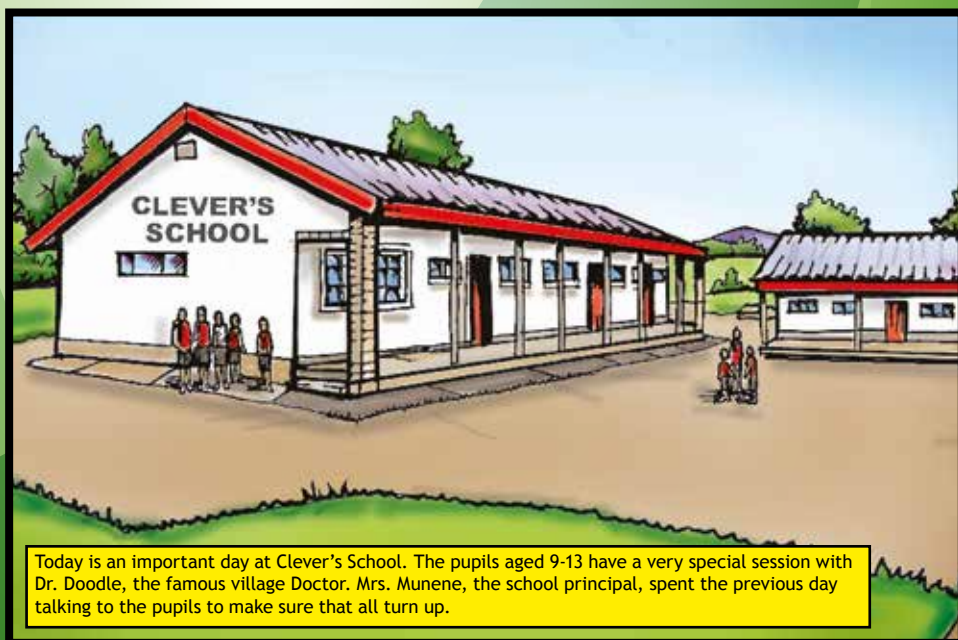
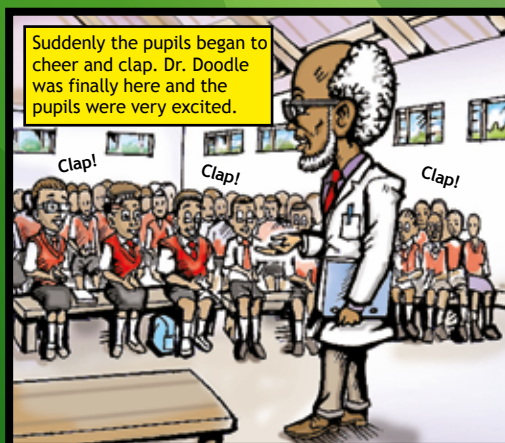
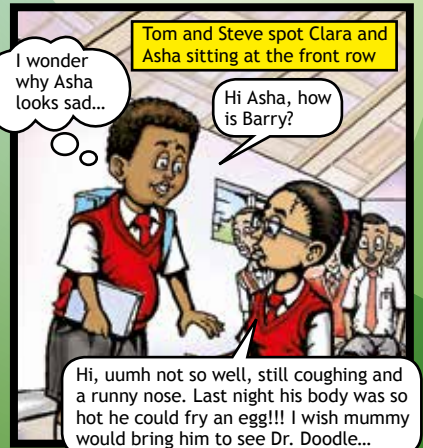
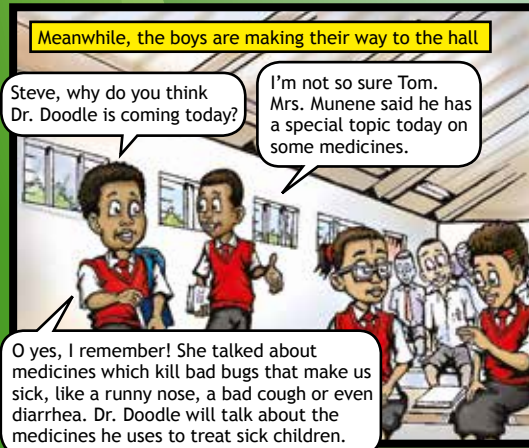
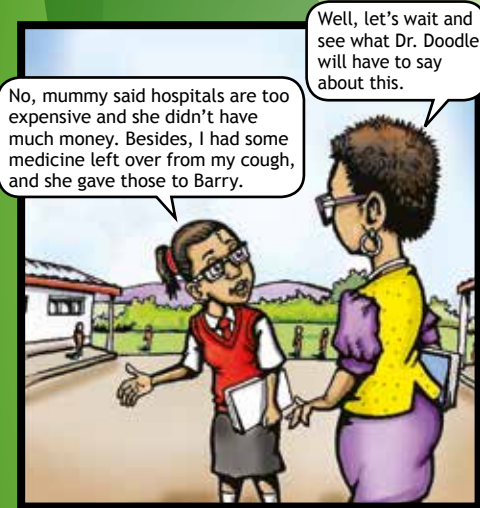
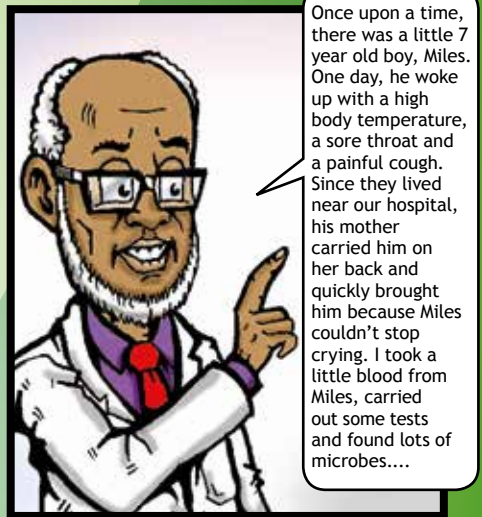


Dr. Doodle and the microbes

Can you help Dr. Doodle?

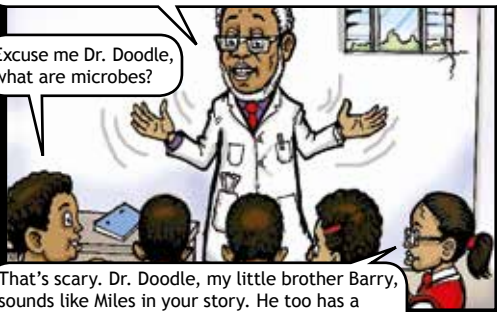






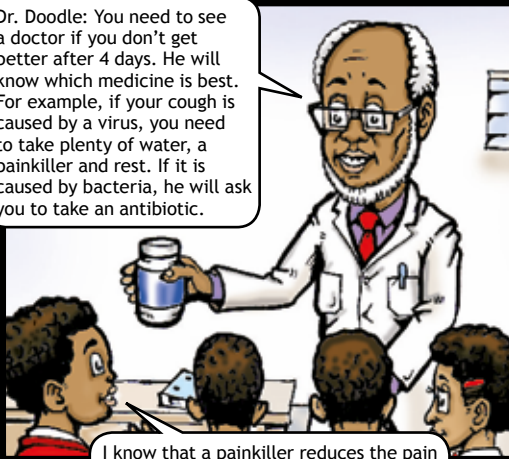
Good question! They are tiny living organisms. There are more of them on a person's hand than there are people on the entire planet! Microbes are in the air we breathe, on the ground we walk, in the food we eat, they're even inside us!

Excuse me Dr. Doodle, what are microbes?

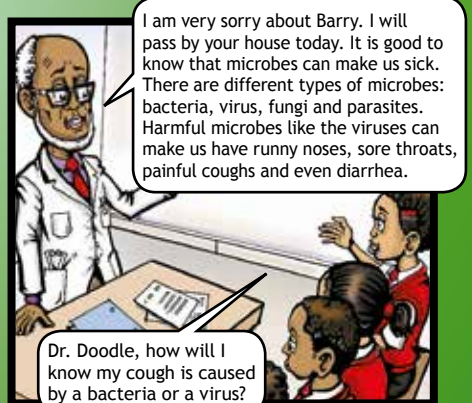


That's scary. Dr. Doodle, my little brother Barry, sounds like Miles in your story. He too has a terrible cough. Do you think he has microbes?

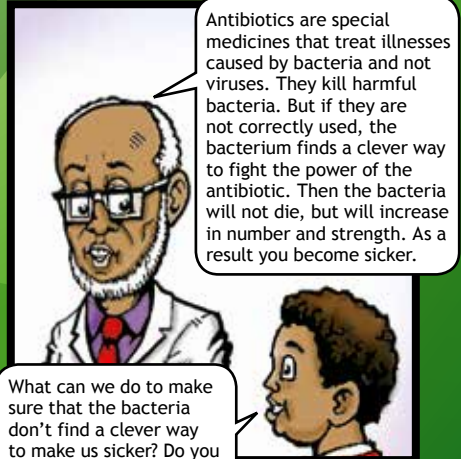
Dr. Doodle: You need to see a doctor if you don't get better after 4 days. He will know which medicine is best. For example, if your cough is caused by a virus, you need to take plenty of water, a painkiller and rest. If it is caused by bacteria, he will ask you to take an antibiotic.



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



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



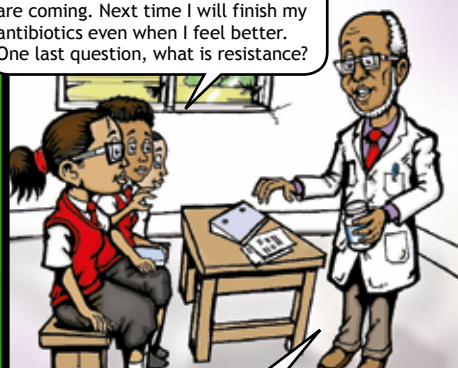
What can we do to make sure that the bacteria don't find a clever way to make us sicker? Do you think people can die?



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.