

Make a Guidebook to Friendly Home Microbes

Microbes are all around us, living on and in almost everything on the surface of the Earth. Gross! Or is it? Some of these tiny creatures can make us sick, but many other bacteria, archaea, and single-celled fungi actually keep us healthy and make our homes more comfortable. Make your own guidebook of a few of these friendly home microbes! Print out the following pages and follow the instructions to create your guidebook.

Materials: scissors and glue or tape

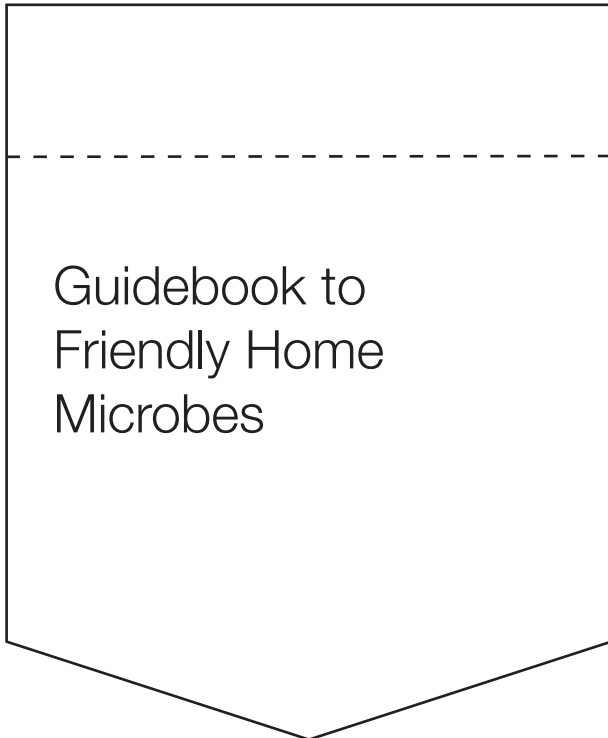
The finished book can look like this:



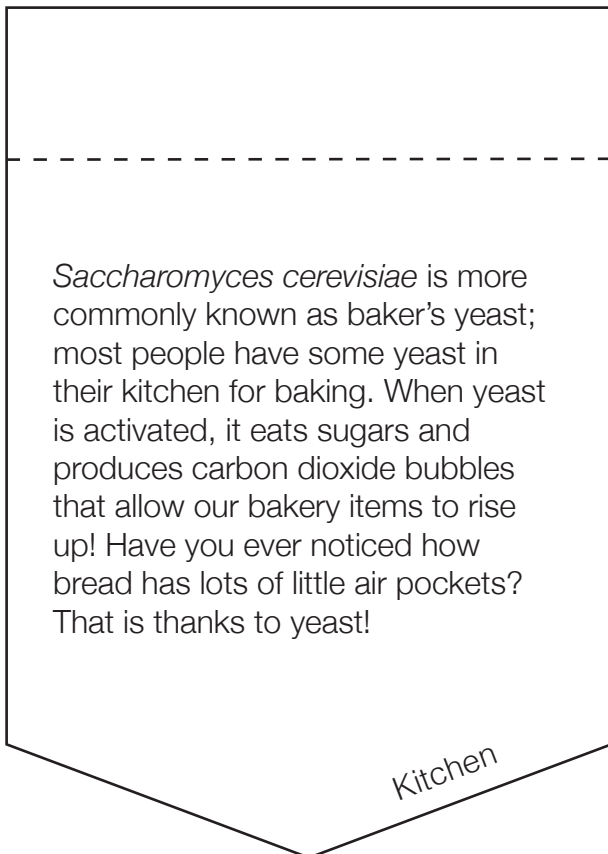
Want to show us your book? [Tweet](#) it at us! [Gram](#) it our way! Put it on [Facebook](#)! Tag us with #couchreach (that's outreach from your couch)!

[*\(Missed yesterday's activity? Check out our archive\)*](#)

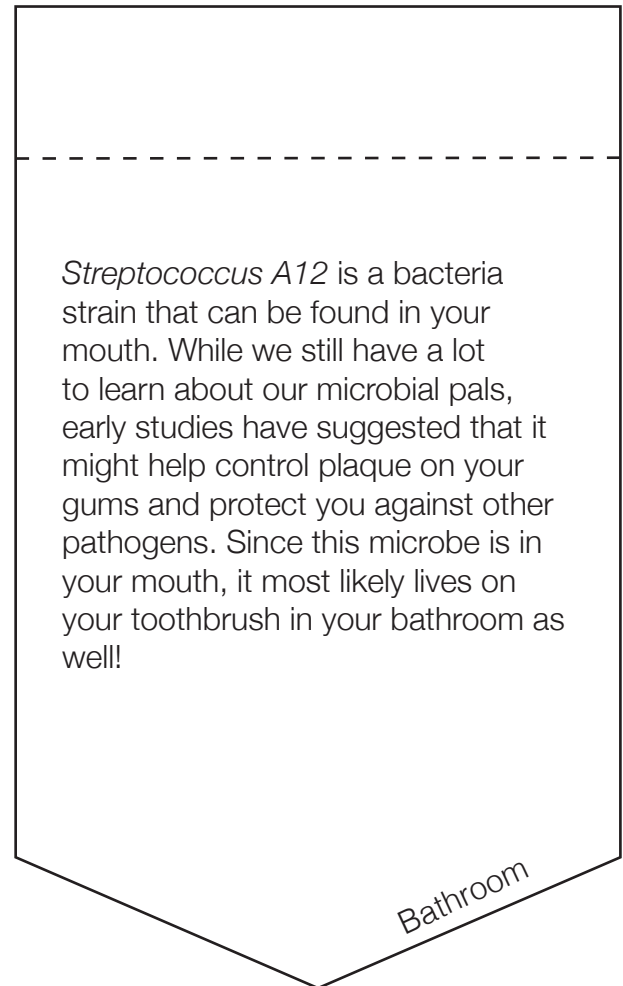
Flap 1.



Flap 2.



Flap 3.



Directions:

Cut out the flaps along the solid lines. Fold flaps along the dotted line. Glue the flaps together to create your guide book. Decorate and share with family and friends.

Flap 4.

Thermophiles are microbes that live in extreme temperatures and environments, but did you know that they also live in the extreme environments hidden in our homes? The microbe *Thermus aquaticus* can be found in hot water heaters in our basements or utility rooms!

Basement

Flap 5.

The plants we have in our living room don't just need soil to live; they also have a microbial community that promotes growth and keeps them safe. We share *Bacteroidetes* microbes with our plants. These microbes found on house plants are also some of the many bacteria that live in our guts to help us digest our food and stay healthy.

Living room