

objective for this lesson was to 'investigate the growth of microorganisms'. The intended learning outcome was for children to discover which conditions can speed up the growth of mold. In a previous lesson, the children were each given a slice of bread and were instructed to put a small amount of warm water on it. Children were allowed to place the bread anywhere they wished, but had to make note of the conditions of this place, for example cold, damp or warm. Children then had to make their own predictions of which environment they thought mold would grow best in. In this sessions however, children retrieved their bread and analysed it to discover whether mold had grown on it – answering their predictions. Each child was then grouped based on a difference in the amount of mold that had grown on their bread and discuss the place they had left it, along with its conditions. Finally, each group was asked to feedback to the teacher and engage in a whole class discussion directed by the class to discover which environment speeds up the growth of mold.

During the first part of this lesson, the teacher carefully arranged children into groups so that they could engage in exploratory talk with their peers that had found similar results. Children discussed their findings with one another, to discover which environment and conditions caused the mold to grow slow/fast. Members of each group were offering their ideas with others and eventually the group would come to a shared agreement in terms of which conditions help the growth of mold. As Mercer & Dawes (2008) states, in exploratory talk 'a speaker 'thinks aloud', taking the risk that others can hear, and comment on partly-formed ideas... listeners gain the benefit of hearing a speaker's tentative thought'. This is particularly useful in science because children engage in scientific enquiry and discover answers for themselves and so by talking to their peers in this

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Page 20 of 20