Keep Our Country Free of Bird Flu

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM BIRD FLU
Dear Reader,

You may have heard people talk about a new disease called Bird Flu. The disease has occurred in many parts of the world, including some African countries, and you may be worried about it. This comic book contains information about the disease.

Read the facts about the disease and do the right thing to protect yourself against it. Share the information with your friends and family. Enjoy solving the picture puzzle on the back cover with your friends.

African Union

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Hi Mohamed,

Let's go hunting.

Hunt what?

Birds where?

In the grazing lands by the river.

Do you have a catapult?

No, mine is with Jacob.
I DON'T HAVE MINE EITHER.

LET'S PASS BY JACOB'S PLACE AND PICK MY CATAPULT.

JACOB SHOULD COME WITH US TOO. HE IS A GOOD SHOT.

THAT IS A GOOD IDEA. LET'S GO.

JACOB IS BUILDING A CHICKEN HOUSE MADE OF REEDS AND STICKS WHEN JOHN AND MOHAMED ARRIVE.

HI JACOB. WHAT IS THIS?

A HOUSE FOR MY CHICKENS.
YOUR CHICKEN?

YES, MY GRANDMOTHER GAVE ME TWO SMALL CHICKENS. I WANT TO KEEP THEM IN HERE.

YOUR CHICKEN?

WHY DON'T YOU KEEP THEM TOGETHER WITH YOUR MUM'S CHICKENS?

MY MUM'S CHICKENS ROAM AROUND THE WHOLE DAY, MIXING FREELY WITH PEOPLE AND WILD BIRDS.

ALL CHICKENS DO THAT BUT IT IS WRONG. THE TEACHER TOLD US THAT WHEN CHICKENS ROAM ABOUT LIKE THAT THEY CAN GET DISEASES FROM WILD BIRDS AND DIE. THEY CAN ALSO PASS ON DISEASES TO PEOPLE. I DON'T WANT MY CHICKENS TO PASS ON DISEASES TO PEOPLE OR TO DIE.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THAT? ISN'T THAT WHAT ALL CHICKENS DO?

COME ON, LET'S GO HUNTING.

HUNTING WHAT?

BIRDS. YOU HAVE JOHN'S CATAPULT.

I WILL GIVE YOU THE CATAPULT, BUT I WILL NOT COME WITH YOU. HUNTING BIRDS IS NOT FOR ME ANYMORE.
BECAUSE I CAN GET DISEASES FROM WILD BIRDS AND CHICKENS.

JACOB COULD BE RIGHT.

THAT IS SCARY.

WHERE DID YOU GET ALL THIS FROM?

FROM SCHOOL.

AND WHAT ARE THESE DISEASES YOU KEEP TALKING ABOUT?

HAVE YOU HEARD OF BIRD FLU? IT IS TRANSMITTED BY WILD AND DOMESTIC BIRDS.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF THAT JOHN?

NO. WHAT IS BIRD FLU?

BIRD FLU IS A NEW DISEASE IN THE WORLD. IT FIRST BROKE OUT IN ASIA IN 2003 BUT HAS NOW SPREAD TO MANY COUNTRIES, INCLUDING AFRICA. IT IS A DISEASE OF BIRDS, BUT IT CAN INFECT PEOPLE.
How?

PEOPLE GET BIRD FLU WHEN THEY COME IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH SICK BIRDS. THEY CAN ALSO GET THE DISEASE WHEN THEY TOUCH POULTRY DROPPINGS AS THEY CLEAN WHERE CHICKENS HAVE BEEN SLEEPING.

They can also get sick when they come in contact with blood and fluids as they slaughter and prepare sick chickens for cooking.

Mohamed thinks deeply...

I wonder if bird flu kills. Children are always catching and slaughtering chickens and cleaning their droppings...

Does bird flu kill?

Yes, it kills!

No. We don’t have to die. So far our country does not have bird flu and we can keep it that way - free of bird flu! And if the disease comes to our country by bad luck, we can do something to stop it spreading.

Then we shall all die.
AND WHAT CAN WE DO?

THIS IS WHAT WE LEARNT IN SCHOOL....

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM BIRD FLU

JOHN AND MOHAMED LISTEN TO JACOB ATTENTIVELY.

Limit contact with domestic and wild birds. The birds can infect you with diseases, such as bird flu. Avoid touching domestic birds, eggs and bird droppings, especially when the chickens are sick. Avoid hunting birds. Wild birds can spread diseases.
Report to your parent, teacher or government officer if you see a sick bird or chicken, or a wild bird which has died of unknown causes.

Avoid touching sick or dead birds and chickens with your bare hands. If you must touch, use gloves or a polythene paper.

Advise your parents to avoid treating poultry at home on their own. Advise them to call in a veterinary officer instead.

Burn to ashes or bury poultry which has died of unknown causes. Bury deep enough to ensure that dogs cannot dig it out.

Keep poultry in its own enclosure separate from houses in which people live.

Minimize contact between domestic and wild birds.

Carry chickens in a basket, not under the armpit.

Keep new poultry separate from the old poultry for two weeks. This way you will observe to see whether the new birds are sick or healthy. New birds can infect the old ones with diseases.
Clean poultry houses regularly. Put poultry droppings in a hole and cover with soil 2 feet deep. Leave for six months to decompose before using as manure. This will kill the viruses that may cause diseases. Throwing droppings in the garden can spread diseases.

Advise your parents to sell, buy and eat only healthy poultry. Sick poultry can infect the family with diseases.

Cook poultry, eggs and other poultry products well before eating. Cooking well kills viruses that cause diseases. Cook until the meat turns brown and has no traces of blood. Cook eggs until they are hard.

Wash with water and soap all knives and utensils used to prepare poultry.

Do not mix raw poultry meat and poultry products with cooked food or food that is eaten raw.

Wash hands with water and soap many times, especially after:

- Contact with poultry, eggs, poultry products.
- Cleaning the poultry house.
- Slaughtering and preparing poultry for cooking.
Wow!

Why did the teacher tell you all this?

So that we can watch out and keep our country free of bird flu.

I now see...

but what can we, as kids, do to help?

The teacher told us to tell our friends, parents and other people about bird flu. Spread the word to keep our country free of bird flu.

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THE END
There are 10 differences between the two pictures below. Can you spot them all?

Picture 1

Picture 2

Answers to puzzle:

1. Text on chart reads "project" instead of "protect"
2. Mohammed has a missing finger
3. Mohammed has a pocket on his shorts
4. Jacob has a missing tooth
5. There are no sweat drops on their foreheads
6. John's shoe has a hole
7. Jacob's watch is red instead of blue
8. There is a small red line in Mohammed's chart
9. Jacob's shirt sleeve is red
10. Text on chart reads "project" instead of "protect"