Disinfecting testing materials

Using local, state, and federal health and safety guidance and your professional judgment, it is important to think about how to disinfect your materials. To learn more about this topic, refer to the CDC website which provides guidelines for environmental and material disinfection in various settings. Please use the best and most specific information available. Canadian customers should refer to the Health Canada website. Here are some practical tips for keeping materials clean and disinfected.

General suggestions

- Disinfect all materials carefully before and after testing and have the examinee wash their hands before and after use. Do not touch the materials yourself after they are disinfected and prepared.
- Ensure examinees do not have a latex allergy before using latex gloves.
- During testing, do not place materials back in the kit immediately after use. Instead, have several resealable plastic bags on hand: some labeled "clean" and the others labeled "dirty" for storage and later cleaning of manipulatives.

Stimulus books are often central to the administration of an assessment. However, paper products are difficult to clean with solvents, as they can mar stimulus content and permanently damage pages.

Consider ways you can eliminate the need to have examinees touch paper stimulus books, including:

- Print a disposable, thin, dotted line that can be placed between the stimulus book and the examinee. The examinee should be asked not to cross the line with any part of their body.
- Place a clear transparency/transparent film over stimulus book pages that does not obscure the images or cause glare.
- Encourage the examinee to point rather than touch stimulus books.
- Encourage examinees without expressive issues to provide verbal responses rather than touching the stimulus book (if acceptable according to administration directions).
- Offer a sanitized, unsharpened pencil or something similar for the examinee to hold and use as a tool to indicate responses.
  - You could purchase brightly colored or designed pencils and allow the examinee to select one for use during their evaluation.
  - You should retain responsibility for turning pages of stimulus materials and allow examinees to use the end of their pencil to point to their responses. At the end of each session, let the examinee take the pencil home.
- Offer adults with good executive functioning a laser pointer; it should be used with caution and directed only at stimuli.
- Use digital stimuli via Q-global® or Q-interactive®. Specific cleaning guidelines for digital devices are below.

Even if you can eliminate touching stimulus books, ensuring that all materials are free of contamination is critical for health and safety reasons. COVID-19, for example, is mainly transmitted via aerosols and droplets and can exist on surfaces, equipment, utensils, fabric, hair, dust, and other particles for days, depending on the conditions. It may also be spread when people touch contaminated surfaces and then touch their face. Regular cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces that are frequent touch points can help to prevent spreading the disease.

Specific disinfection and cleaning suggestions

Supplies needed

- Waterproof gloves (latex, nitrile, or dishwashing)
- Soap/detergent, warm water, clean towels
- Goggles (optional, for your safety)
- Disinfectant (medical grade disinfectant if COVID-19 is suspected, otherwise a 70% alcohol-based product or common soap is acceptable)

Cleaning materials with soft, porous surfaces that can be laundered

- Place materials in a sealed plastic bag until they are about to be laundered.
- Wash using hot water and a detergent, preferably one containing color-safe bleach.
- Air dry

Cleaning materials with hard, nonporous surfaces

- Wash materials with soap and water to remove all visible debris and stains, then dry with a clean towel.
- Apply a disinfectant to materials, following the instructions properly for maximum effect.
- Rinse materials with water and allow surface to air dry. Rinsing following the use of a disinfectant is especially important for any materials that an examinee might put into their mouth.

Cleaning board books, wooden blocks, cards, and materials with soft, porous surfaces that can't be laundered

- Board books, wooden blocks, cards, and materials with soft porous surfaces should not be submerged in liquid or sprayed with disinfectants; however, most can be wiped down with alcohol-based wipes.
- Let surfaces dry completely after wiping them down.

Cleaning digital devices

- Unplug the device from any cables and external power sources.
- Follow the manufacturer's recommendation for cleaning and disinfecting.
- If no guidance exists from the manufacturer, follow the CDC Guidelines. Specifically, use a soft, lint-free cloth to gently wipe the exterior surfaces, including the display, using a 70% isopropyl alcohol solution or disinfecting wipe that does not contain bleach (avoid abrasive cleaning cloths like paper towels).
- Do not excessively wipe the surface of the device.
- Avoid getting moisture into any openings.
- Do not spray aerosol or other spray cleaners directly on the device.

Important reminders about disinfecting

- Immediately throw away all disposable cleaning items.
- Wash hands frequently, especially after handling any contaminated materials, emptying waste baskets, and touching cleaning materials.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol.

The coronavirus causing COVID-19 can be killed by alcohol and chlorine bleach. More specifically: SARS-CoV-2 can be neutralized by lipid solvents including ether (75%), ethanol, chlorine-containing disinfectant, peroxyacetic acid, and chloroform (except for chlorhexidine). A list of disinfectants for SARS-CoV-2 can be found on the EPA's website. *It is important to remember that disinfecting should allow time for the disinfectant to work. Applying the disinfectant and leaving it on surfaces before rinsing is vital.*

We welcome your ongoing questions and experiences related to keeping test materials clean and disinfected.

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Pearson