

Mycology Phase 3 Reflection

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It is no doubt that Cyclosporine A has made a prolific impact in the world of grafting. Organ transplantation was deemed next to impossible prior to its discovery, primarily due to the high chance of immunological rejection of the host to the graft. When I was first informed of our topic of research, I was uncertain and with little knowledge about it. Reading papers and discussing with group members made it easier to exchange our thoughts as well as expand our knowledge from multiple sources without having the need to read them all ourselves. As further research was applied to complete this assignment, topics regarding Cyclosporines history, benefits, disadvantages, synthesis and of course its mechanism of action were easily selected as our primary areas of focus. Thinking critically as opposed to accepting the cold material fact on the research journals also made me realize that despite its severe risks (with controlled usage) that Cyclosporine A is vital even now to increase chances of survival for allografting.

One of the main challenges I met during the research was finding the right kind of reference. It would take several papers and some insight from my group mates part to realize that instead of finding the one paper, it was best to extract the desired information from 1-2 sources. Most papers discussed cyclosporine from a narrow perspective making it difficult to find a reliable source for its history. I learned that Cyclosporine definitely had a strange past. If it were not for the then-skeptical emergence of organ transplantation, and the support of the British Society of Immunologists then perhaps Cyclosporine may have remained an obscure compound. Nonetheless, choosing an effective form of communication was the most challenging. While we most likely wanted to do something more “exciting” or different, we thought it would be best to use a simple Powerpoint and focus on effectively conveying the vitality of Cyclosporine taking the extra time to properly decide which information was necessary or unnecessary. We also made sure that to compensate for the lengthy and boring (for lack of a better word) Powerpoint, there would be lots of pictures for visual stimulation and simplified narration for faster understanding in the given time limit. Since group work includes compromises, it was inevitable that some of us may have had to confront some sort of difficulty. When my original area of research coincided with my group mate, there was little choice but for me to redo my part of the assignment in another area. We communicated

profusely via email, collaboratively assisting in finer details and editing of finished projects and coming up with methods to approach the presentation.

Nonetheless, over the few months, I was content to know that Yewande, Jackelyn and I had good work ethics. I am grateful to Mr. Nasmith for assigning me to their group. Questions on how to organize our information, relate our topics to sources and formulating a good presentation were always our top concern. They were never hesitant to offer their assistance, actively engaging in our respective portions of the assignment and enlightening me in any areas I missed or did incorrectly. In each Phase, we had divided up the final editing among the three of us leaving me with both the Narration and Final Video editing of the presentation. I understand sometimes I went through the material too fast, and with little explanation on some key points. Additionally, I have taken note to pay more attention to my voice output (to make it more lively) as well as speed of narration.

I do believe our group effectively drew the appropriate conclusions of the background of Cyclosporine A, exactly as the instructor desired. I also believe that thanks to our presentation, we have helped our fellow students understand not only the importance of fungi in the extraction of medically vital compounds, but also to appreciate the scientists to passionately believed in it, and the long road it travelled before becoming a drug that gave a second chance at life to many. As a result, not only did I gain expertise in this subject but also a deeper understanding of the journey from discovery to application in the present world. Previous done research has also given me an insight into research, development, planning and presentation of the product useful in a clinical environment. This is particularly useful in the field of pharmaceuticals which I hope to pursue. Nonetheless, it goes to show this project which incorporates reading research material, interacting and cooperation with fellow classmates as well as planning and developing a presentation were all fundamental skills of a post-secondary student. Although some of the tasks were challenging, it was still a great opportunity of experience if I pursue graduate studies and perhaps, research as well.