Frontline: *Ebola Outbreak* - video worksheet answers

1. What precautions must doctors and other health care workers take when preparing to treat infected patients? Why is this important?

   They must cover their entire body so that there is a physical barrier between them and the infected patients at all times. This strain of Ebola is transmitted through contact with an infected patient or the patient’s bodily fluids. If they do not properly cover themselves or disinfect possibly contaminated areas, they may become infected themselves.

2. What are some of the common symptoms seen in patients infected with Ebola?

   Vomiting, diarrhea, fever, severe headache, pain in the stomach and muscles, unexplained bleeding or bruising.

3. Briefly explain why health workers are bringing infected patients to the hospital if there is no cure.

   - Although there is no cure, patients have a greater chance of survival if they are treated by a doctor who can keep them hydrated, give them anti-nausea medication, and are kept isolated.

   - Once a person has begun to show symptoms of Ebola they can infect others. They need to be isolated from others as soon as possible so the virus is unable to spread.

4. What strategies are health care workers on the ground using to alert the population about the outbreak? Do you think this is the most effective method considering the means of available communication? Why or why not? What tools might health care workers in the United States use if there was some kind of outbreak?

   - Nurses and health care workers have been walking the streets of the more populated towns speaking to the population and distributing flyers. Signs with
common symptoms of Ebola are also being posted in areas that have larger foot traffic.

- Although the Internet may be the best way to get important news out within areas that have regular access, areas without it must use alternative strategies like physically posting information and speaking to groups in person.

- Within the United States communication might be broadly disseminated through online social communication tools like Twitter or Facebook, respected news broadcasts and their online components as well as government organizations like the Center for Disease Control.

5. What challenges are Manjo and the disease surveillance team in the film confronted with?

- Many local residents are afraid of the health care workers because 70 percent of the patients who go to the hospital die there and never come back.

- Many people in the villages do not understand that an infected person can cause the infection of another person in the village, so they don’t see why they need to send the infected people away.

- There are rumors that the Ebola outbreak is a lie and that doctors are just trying to steal the blood of the people. This has caused people to riot and even destroy hospitals and clinics.

6. At the end of the documentary, the volunteer gravediggers are interviewed about the personal losses they have experienced as a result of the Ebola outbreak. What psychological impact do you think the Ebola outbreak has had on people living and working in the affected areas in Western Africa?

People may be experiencing extreme grief, loss of hope, anger and fear making life very difficult for them to carry on. Even after the outbreak is over, people who survived it may continue to feel afraid, hopeless and even guilty in some cases.