

Lesson 1 Talking About Puberty

Learning Intention

To explore the emotional and physical changes occurring in puberty

Learning Outcomes

Explain the main physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty

Ask questions about puberty with confidence

Resources

[Puberty Changes Teacher Guide](#)

[Pictures of male and female reproductive organs](#)

[Anonymous Questions template](#)

Activities

1. Ground Rules

In a circle, ask the class questions to help establish some ground rules for these lessons. Ensure you include the following: listen to each other; treat each other with respect (this includes no laughing at each other, no put downs); don't ask personal questions; respect confidentiality.

2. Go-round

Introduce the idea of physical and emotional change by briefly discussing the difference between babies and children; i.e. what they can or can't do and what they look like. Use a go-round, asking each child to say their name and complete the following sentence: *One change that happens as a baby grows up is...*

3. Learning Outcomes

Tell the class that the lesson will be about the changes that occur during puberty. Explain that puberty is a special time of change when children grow and develop into young adults, or teenagers. Refer to the learning outcomes on the whiteboard and discuss what they mean. Ensure that the pupils understand the words 'physical' and 'emotional' by explaining that a physical change happens to the body and an emotional change involves feelings. Give one or two examples.

4. Puberty Questions

Use questions to establish key facts about puberty, for example when it happens, to whom and why. Consider the following:

- puberty occurs some time between the ages of 8 and 16
- male and female sex hormones become very active and are responsible for growth and development during puberty
- puberty changes are a normal part of growing up
- each person will start puberty at a slightly different time and will develop in their own way – it's important to respect these differences
- some changes happen only to males, some only to females; some happen to both
- the whole process of change can take a few years.

In pairs ask children to discuss the question: *What physical and emotional changes do you think happen during puberty?* Share ideas and record them on the board. Organise into lists for changes that happen to males, females, and both.

For help with this activity refer to the [Puberty Changes Teacher Guide](#)

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5. Body Changes

Using the [Pictures of male and female reproductive organs](#) display the external body pictures of the adult male and female. Ask the class if they think the male/female have gone through puberty – how can they tell? (e.g. body shape, pubic hair, breasts, chest hair, size of penis and testicles etc.). Display the pictures of the reproductive organs and label key parts (womb/uterus, ovaries, vagina and penis, testicles, scrotum). Explain what happens to them in puberty (i.e. that the female starts to produce eggs in the ovaries and the male starts to produce sperm in the testicles).

In groups, give pupils copies of the external and/or internal pictures and ask them to label the body parts and/or the changes which occur during puberty. Encourage pupils to use the scientific words to help them remember the new vocabulary. Sum up the activity by reminding pupils that since everyone is different, no two bodies look exactly the same and during puberty everyone will change at a different rate.

6. Anonymous Questions

Ask the pupils to complete the [Anonymous Questions template](#): *After the lesson I wanted to know...* This can be used as a needs assessment and can inform future lessons. Explain that the children's questions, where relevant, will be answered during the next two lessons.

7. Closing Round/Review

In pairs, discuss what they have learned in this lesson and use a go-round to close e.g. *One thing I learnt today was ...*

Additional Activities

Body Changes Outline

Draw two big body outlines on flipchart/sugar paper, one male, one female and put them in the middle of the floor or up on the wall. In groups, give pupils small post-its or stickers and ask them to put the sticker on one of the body outlines where they think a puberty change takes place. Draw a heart on the body to include emotions and moods and draw a thought bubble next to the head to include thoughts and worries etc.

Changes DVD Programme

All About Us: Living and Growing – Alternative: Unit 2, Programme 4, Changes www.channel4learning.com/
Tell the class that they are going to see a film about puberty and in particular about the physical and emotional changes that occur as boys and girls grow older. Explain that the DVD will show some drawings of male and female body parts and discuss how the pupils might manage their feelings during the film. Show Living and Growing, Unit 2, Programme 4, Changes. Stop the film just after the beginning of chapter 3, as the children walk away from the shop saying *One day we'll be grown-ups, maybe even mums and dads – give you a race...*

Immediately after the film, ask the children to reflect in pairs on what they've seen e.g. What did they learn? Did anything surprise them? What did they like or not like about the film? Discuss the responses with the whole class. Ask if there were any changes mentioned in the film that have not been talked about in the lesson so far. Add these to the puberty questions list from Activity 4. Check that the class understands why puberty happens.