

Scheme of Work

Word Box: Puberty, physical changes, emotional changes, moods, menstruation, periods, tampons, sanitary towels, wet dreams, semen, erection, sweat, breasts, spots, pubic hair, facial hair, underarm hair, sexual feelings

Statutory Guidance	Learning Intentions and Learning Outcomes	Lesson Title	Resources
<p>Health Education Mental wellbeing (6c, 6d,6f,) Changing adolescent body (8a,8b) Menstruation (9a)</p>	<p>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</p>	<p>Lesson 1 Talking About Puberty</p>	<p>Puberty Changes Teacher Guide Puberty Changes worksheet Reproductive System slides Pupil Questions template</p>
<p>Health Education Changing adolescent body (8a,8b) Menstruation (9a)</p>	<p>Learning Intention To understand male and female puberty changes in more detail Learning Outcomes Understand how puberty affects the reproductive organs Describe what happens during menstruation and sperm production</p>	<p>Lesson 2 The Reproduction System</p>	<p>Reproductive System slides Puberty Changes Teacher Guide Menstrual cycle animation Male Changes Powerpoint Puberty Card Game Puberty Card Game answer sheet Puberty Card Game whiteboard summary Model materials: spaghetti(fallopian tubes) and poppy seeds (eggs) Selection of menstrual product (tampons, pads, liners, re-usables) Pupil questions from Lesson 1 Additional Activities What is the Menstrual Cycle? cards What is the Menstrual Cycle? whiteboard summary Menstruation Card Game Menstruation Card Game whiteboard summary</p>
<p>Health Education Mental wellbeing (6a,6b,6c, 6d,6e,6f,) Changing adolescent body (8a,8b) Menstruation (9a)</p>	<p>Learning Intention To explore the impact of puberty on the body and the importance of physical hygiene To explore ways to get support during puberty Learning Outcomes Explain how to keep clean during puberty Explain how emotions/relationships change during puberty Know how to get help and support during puberty</p>	<p>Lesson 3 Puberty Help and Support</p>	<p>Kim's Game items and a cloth to cover them (see lesson plan) Kim's Game Teacher Guide Year 5 Puberty Problem Page Year 5 Puberty Problem Page cut-outs Year 5 Problem Page Teacher Guide Pupil questions from Lesson 1 Additional Activities Puberty Bingo cards</p>

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](#)

[Puberty Changes worksheet](#)

[Reproductive System slides](#)

[Pupil Questions template](#)

Activities

1. Group Agreement

In a circle, ask the class questions to help establish some 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. Discuss confidentiality, and identify appropriate people for them to talk to after the lesson if they have more questions.

2. Learning Outcomes

Tell the class 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.

3. Defining Puberty

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
- each person will start puberty at a slightly different time and will develop in their own way - it's important to respect these differences
- 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
- many changes happen to everyone, some only happen to females; some only happen to males
- the whole process of change can take a few years.

4. Listing the changes

Split the class into pairs and give each pair a [Puberty Changes worksheet](#). Ask children to discuss the questions and list their answers: *What physical and emotional changes do you think happen during puberty?* How might people's relationships change during puberty? Share ideas and record them on the board. Organise into lists for changes that happen to males, females, and everyone. Emphasise that most of the changes happen to everyone. For help with this activity refer to the [Puberty Changes Teacher Guide](#)

Lesson 1- continued

Page 2

5. Body Changes

Display the [Reproductive System slides](#). Begin by emphasising that no two bodies look the same and that we grow and change at different rates. Highlight the body changes already discussed with the external pictures; breast development, pubic hair, body hair, muscle growth etc.

Explain that in the next lesson we will be learning more about periods and sperm production and the changes to the reproductive systems of females and males. Find out what the class already know about the following words: Ovaries, Uterus, Vagina, Penis, Testicles. Use the slides to correct any misconceptions. 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).

6. Pupil Questions

Ask the pupils to complete the [Pupil Questions template](#): *After the lesson I wanted to know...* this can be used as a needs assessment and can inform future lessons. Try to focus their questions on puberty, using the list written on the board at the beginning of the lesson to remind them of the changes. Explain that questions will be answered in 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 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, worries etc.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide

PUBERTY CHANGES CHECKLIST

The following checklist provides an overview of the main physical and emotional changes which take place during puberty. Teachers need not expect to include all of this information in the first lesson; the whole checklist would be a lot of information for most classes. For example, in Year 5 some subjects, such as wet dreams might not come up in lesson 1 will be dealt with in lessons 2 and 3.

Changes for both males and females

- The body starts to grow, quite fast at times
- Private parts (genitals) grow and develop
- Moods and feelings can change a lot
- The body sweats more and smells differently
- Body hair grows darker and stronger (on arms and legs)
- Pubic hair grows
- Armpit hair grows
- Spots can appear on the face and shoulders
- Skin can become oily
- Hair may become greasy
- Sexual feelings can develop
- Masturbation might start

Female Changes

- Periods start
- Ovaries begin releasing eggs (ovulation)
- Breasts and nipples grow
- Nipples may darken in colour
- Hips get broader
- A white discharge comes out of the vagina
- The voice deepens a little
- Bones get heavier

Male Changes

- Shoulders and chest grow and develop
- Muscles get thicker
- The voice deepens and 'breaks'
- Facial hair grows
- Chest hair grows
- Sperm and semen start being produced
- Erections happen
- Wet dreams may start
- The testicles 'drop'

Further Notes

These notes offer guidance for teachers; they do not need to be read to the class word for word. Key information can be included where relevant and used at the teacher's discretion, depending on the needs and responses of the class. Some of the information goes beyond the subject matter of the lessons, but may be useful for answering spontaneous questions.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 2

CHANGES TO EVERYONE

The body grows, quite fast at times

During puberty, between the ages of 8 and 17, everyone's body grows a great deal, both inside and out; height, weights, body shape and size all change. This is triggered by the sex hormones. It is natural for all genders to put on some weight during puberty – a lot of growth is happening and the body needs more fat and muscle. Boys and girls can grow at different rates – girls can grow more quickly, but boys can go on growing for longer. For girls, growth spurts are often connected with getting periods. Growth will also be different for each person – everyone changes at their own rate. There are times when a lot of growth happens in a few months – this is often called a growth spurt. Sometimes the brain can't keep up and teenagers can become quite clumsy and awkward.

Private parts grow and develop

Just like the rest of the body the private parts (genitals) grow and change. In males, the penis gets longer and thicker and the testicles and scrotum get bigger. In females, the vulva (the area between the girl's legs, the labia – the folds of skin around the vagina, and the clitoris get bigger. The male and female internal reproductive parts also grow and develop.

Moods and feelings can change a lot

Emotional ups and downs can be a big part of puberty as young people try to get used to their changing bodies and feelings and make sense of new experiences – somewhere between being a child and a young adult. There is a huge amount of hormonal activity and feelings can be influenced by sudden changes and rises in hormone levels. Sometimes people can feel moody, angry, frustrated or sad for no particular reason; at other times life can seem exciting; this is normal, although if someone feels bad most of the time, it would be good to talk to a trusted person. For further advice on mood changes see Year 5, lesson 3, Activity 4, Year 5 Puberty Problem Page.

The body sweats more and smells differently

Once young people reach puberty they sweat in a new way, again due to hormonal activity. More sweat is produced by the sweat glands – for example under the armpits and in between the legs – and it smells stronger. If the sweat isn't washed away it turns into body odour. Teenagers need to pay more attention to hygiene – see Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's Game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Body hair/pubic hair/armpit hair

One of the first signs of puberty is increased body hair. Hair on the arms and legs get darker and hair grows in the armpits and around the genitals (pubic hair). In males pubic hair grows round the base of the penis and on the scrotum and in females hair grows in between the legs and around and above the vulva. There are different ideas about why pubic hair grows, for example to absorb sweat or to protect the private parts. People make different choices about whether to keep or shave body hair. See Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's Game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Spots/Skin/Hair

Just as hormones affect the sweat glands, they also stimulate oil glands in the skin. The oil – called sebum – is actually protective to the skin but during puberty hormones are often in overdrive and the oil glands become over active. The skin on the face can get greasy and spots can develop because tiny holes next to hair follicles get blocked. The extra oil can also make the hair greasy. Many teenagers get spots, which can vary from small pimples to severe acne. Spots can also appear on the neck, upper back and shoulders and boys can be more affected because the male hormone testosterone tends to make them worse. Spots can be difficult to cope with and they can really affect someone's self esteem, but to start with, it can help to understand why they are happening. For further advice on spots, see Kim's Game Teacher Guide and the Puberty Problem Page Teacher Guide.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 3

Sexual feelings can develop

Being attracted to other people, “fancying” them, having exciting feelings about someone that go beyond friendship – this can all start during puberty. Feelings become intense and affect the body in different ways. People can be attracted to others of the same sex/gender or a different sex/gender.

Masturbation

Masturbation is when a person touches, strokes or stimulates their own private parts because it feels nice. It’s quite common for people of both genders to explore their own private parts and masturbate during puberty. There have been all sorts of myths about masturbation – such as, it will cause blindness or insanity or, in males, it will use up all the sperm. However there is no evidence for this. Masturbation can provide a way for someone to understand their own body. However, not everyone likes to masturbate and some people would feel uncomfortable doing so.

FEMALE CHANGES

Periods Start/Ovulation

At some point during puberty girls will start having periods (menstruation). This is when they bleed from the vagina for 2 – 7 days, usually once a month. Once a month the female sex hormones trigger the release of an egg from the ovary (ovulation) and the sides of the womb thicken and form a soft, blood filled lining. If the egg is not fertilised by a sperm it will dissolve while the womb lining breaks down and passes out of the vagina as blood. This is a period. The amount of blood varies from person to person and can be light at times and heavy at others. It may take a while for periods to settle into a regular pattern when girls first start having them. Breasts can become tender before and during a period and women often experience cramping pains. Feelings can be influenced by the menstrual cycle, especially when a period is due - this is called premenstrual tension.

There are a wide variety of products that people can use to help manage their period; tampons, pads menstrual cups and other reusables. They are all used to absorb menstrual fluid. Pads are used externally and placed in the underwear. Tampons and cups are internal products and go inside the vagina. Whatever product is used they need to be changed regularly and they all have helpful and important instructions in the packaging. When changing tampons and pads always dispose of the used product in a bin rather than flushing down the toilet. Parents/carers may be able to advise on what menstrual products to try but in the end, it comes down to what works best for the individual. For more detail on periods see Year 5, lessons 2 and 3. There is an animation of the menstrual cycle at http://kidshealth.org/teen/sexual_health/girls/menstruation.html?tracking=T_RelatedArticle.

Breast and nipples grow

During puberty breasts, nipples and the circle of skin around the nipple (areola) grow and develop. Breasts can take up to four years to grow and mature. Both breasts and nipples can feel sensitive and even tender while they are growing and can also tingle and itch. The nipples and areola can darken. Each girl’s breasts start to grow at different times and breasts and nipples really vary in size and shape and texture. Sometimes one breast grows faster than another and although this evens out many women have slightly different sized breasts, just as people can have different size feet, hands etc.

Hips get Broader

It is natural for girls’ bodies to change shape and increase in weight during puberty, despite the media holding up images of slim women and teenagers. Girls’ hips get broader; how broad depends on someone’s natural body shape, everyone is different. Wider hips create more room for giving birth, providing a wider birth canal.

A white discharge comes out of the vagina

During puberty girls may notice a white creamy fluid in their knickers. This is a healthy vaginal discharge which starts before a girl’s first period and often precedes a period. The fluid comes from glands inside the vagina and helps to keep it healthy. Knowing what a healthy discharge looks like helps to spot an unhealthy one.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 4

The voice deepens a little

Although girls' voices don't change as dramatically as boys, the voice does get gradually deeper – a female adult voice is naturally deeper than that of a female child's voice.

Bones become heavier

While boys' muscles get bigger, girls' bones become denser and heavier.

MALE CHANGES

Shoulders and chest grow and develop

On average, boys start growing later than girls, although they are not necessarily entering puberty later. They may be more likely to have growth spurts towards the end of puberty. One of the final phases of growth for boys is a broadening of the chest and shoulders, although again body size and shape varies from person to person.

Muscles get bigger

While boys are growing, the muscles get bigger, with the muscle fibres getting longer and thicker.

The voice deepens and 'breaks'

In boys, the voice box in the throat grows, making the voice sound deeper and gruffer than before. The 'Adam's apple' – the round bit in the front of the neck – can become more noticeable. Sometimes the voice might veer from high to low, sounding squeaky one minute and deep the next. This can be disconcerting and embarrassing, but like everything else in puberty, the voice settles down with time and can eventually become a whole octave deeper.

Facial hair grows

Males grow hair on their chins, cheeks and around the mouth – facial hair usually appears on the top lip first and then spreads to the rest of the face. The hair is soft to start with but grows thicker and stronger as time goes on. As with all puberty changes, the amount of facial hair varies from person to person and some males will start to grow facial hair earlier than others. It's an individual choice whether to shave or keep facial hair. Women sometimes have a small amount of facial hair, particularly on the upper lip – this is quite normal. For more discussion about facial hair see Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Chest hair grows

As with facial hair, some men have a lot of chest hair, others have a little. Men can also have hair on their back and stomach area.

Sperm and semen start being produced

During puberty the testicles grow and start to produce sperm, which are tiny – invisible to the human eye. The sperm mixes with fluids to form a milky liquid called semen. Semen contains a sugary substance which helps the sperm to move faster. The male body can produce millions of sperm every day. Semen comes out of the body in an ejaculation. This is when a male has an erection and after a time the muscles at the base of the penis contract and push the semen out of the penis quite fast. An average ejaculation produces about a teaspoonful of semen and this can contain millions of sperm. Semen and urine cannot come out of the penis at the same time.

Erections happen

An erection (sometimes called a 'boner' or 'hard on') is when the penis goes stiff and hard and sticks out from the body (instead of being soft and hanging down). Physically, this happens because blood rushes into the tissue in the penis and the muscles around the penis tighten to hold it in. The penis can go hard and soft from quite an early age. During puberty, however, erections can happen a lot, sometimes because of growing sexual feelings or sometimes at random and at quite inconvenient and embarrassing times. This is normal and should settle down with time. It's very common to wake up with an erection.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 5

Wet dreams may start

During puberty, boys may get an erection and ejaculate some semen during their sleep – this is called a ‘wet dream’. A wet dream may be caused by an exciting dream or may not be connected to a dream at all. Boys may have a few wet dreams, a lot or none at all – all of these are normal. It’s not possible to stop wet dreams happening – they happen unconsciously during sleep. (Adult men sometimes have wet dreams). There are different theories about why wet dreams happen but they definitely start during puberty when sperm production begins and are linked to increased hormonal activity. Another way that semen can come out of the penis is through masturbation. Boys may touch or rub their penis, get an erection and ejaculate.

See also Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 3, Puberty Problem Page and Puberty Problem Page Teacher Guide.

Testicles ‘drop’

Boys’ testicles do not strictly ‘drop’ during puberty. Before a boy is born the testicles are inside the body and shortly before birth they descend into his scrotum. What is noticeable during puberty is the penis, testicles and scrotum get bigger, as this happens the testicles get heavier and hang lower, becoming more obvious than they were before. That is why people say that a boy’s ‘balls drop’ but they have already dropped into the scrotum long before puberty. The testicles hang outside the body to keep the sperm cooler than normal body temperature. (Heat can damage the sperm). This is why the testicles shrivel and cling to the body in cold temperatures and hang lower when it’s hot. Often one testicle hangs a bit lower than the other – again this protects the sperm by stopping the testicles from bumping into each other. For more information on puberty see:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/puberty.html?WT.ac=ctg#catchanging-body>

Puberty Changes worksheet

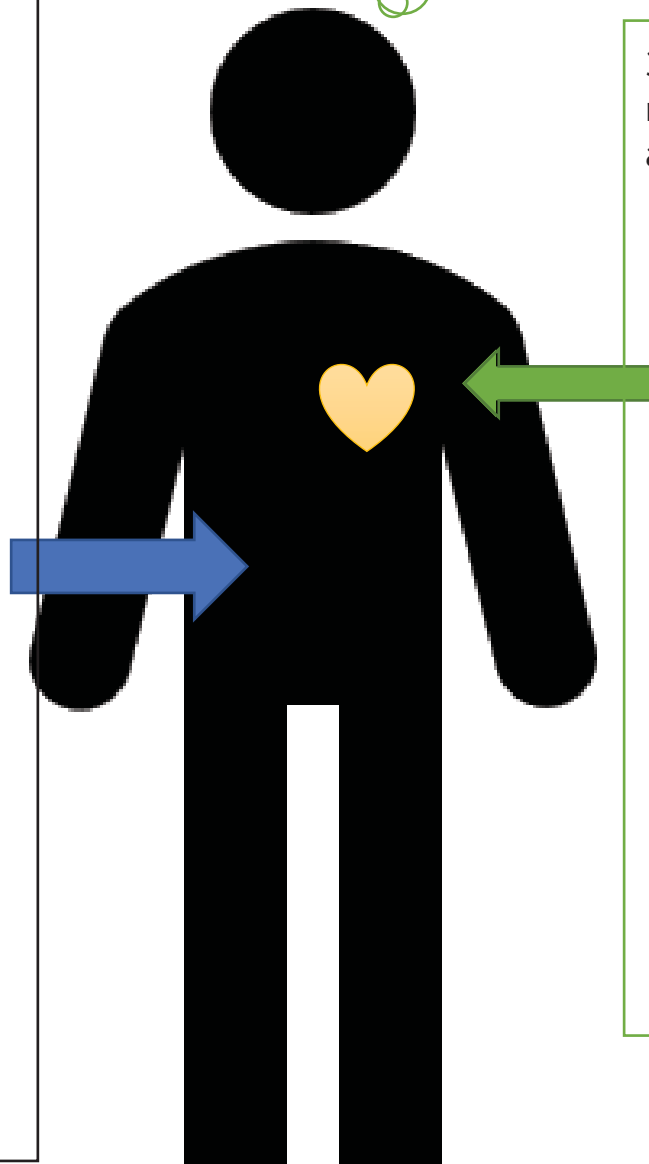
People of all genders and biological sex go through puberty. Some changes happen to everyone and some depend on what body parts a person has.

What are the changes?

1. What are the physical changes that happen to a person's body?

2. How might puberty affect someone's feelings?

3. How could puberty affect relationships with family and friends?



Your Questions



After the lesson I wanted to know...

Your Questions



After the lesson I wanted to know...

Lesson 2

The Reproductive System

Learning Intention

To understand male and female puberty changes in more detail

Learning Outcomes

Understand how puberty affects the reproductive organs

Describe what happens during menstruation and sperm production

Resources

[Reproductive System slides](#)

[Puberty Changes Teacher Guide](#)

Menstrual Cycle animation http://kidshealth.org/teen/sexual_health/girls/menstruation.html?tracking=T [RelatedArticle](#)

[Male Changes Powerpoint](#)

[Puberty Card Game \(one set per group\)](#)

[Puberty Card Game answer sheet](#)

[Puberty Card Game whiteboard summary](#)

Model materials: dried spaghetti (fallopian tubes) and poppy seeds (eggs)

Selection of menstrual products (tampons, sanitary towels, pant liners, reusable products)

Pupil questions from Lesson 1

Activities**1. Recap**

In a circle, remind the class of the ground rules from the last lesson. Ask the pupils what they remember from the first session, reminding them that both physical and emotional changes happen during puberty. Use the [Reproductive System slides](#) to recap on the main body parts.

2. Learning Outcomes

Refer to the learning outcomes on the whiteboard and discuss what they mean. Explain that in this session we will be looking at some of the main puberty changes how those with a uterus will start to have periods and how those with testicles will start to produce sperm.

3. Menstruation/Periods

Ask questions to establish what the class understands about menstruation (periods) so far. Use the whiteboard to show an animation of the menstrual cycle which can be found at:

http://kidshealth.org/teen/sexual_health/girls/menstruation.html?tracking=T [RelatedArticle](#)

Pause the animation after each section, ensuring that the class understands what has happened. Discuss the changing visuals and explain the commentary if necessary. Show the class the poppy seeds and spaghetti, which represent the approximate size of the female egg and the width of the fallopian tubes.

Discuss how the menstrual cycle impacts on a woman's feelings and explain that just before, and during a period women can feel physical pain and discomfort and also feel tense or moody. Discuss menstrual wellbeing, showing different types of menstrual products (tampons, pads and reusables) and explain how they work and where to get them from.

4. Male Changes

Discuss some of the key changes that happen to boys during puberty, such as sperm production, testicles 'dropping', erections and wet dreams. Support this by referring to the [Male Changes Powerpoint](#) and use the [Puberty Changes Teachers Guide](#) to help with explanations. Discuss how these changes might impact on a boy's feelings and moods and reinforce that they are a normal part of growing up.

5. Puberty Card Game

In small groups, hand out copies of the [Puberty Card Game](#). Ask the children to take turns to read out a card. The whole group should then try to reach a consensus on whether the statement is true, false or they don't know and place the card in the appropriate pile. Circulate and support the groups to achieve the task.

6. Card Game Feedback

With the whole class, go through the statements, checking answers and using the [Puberty Card Game whiteboard summary](#) to display the answers. Use key points from the [Puberty Card Game answer sheet](#) to reassure the class about puberty changes and discuss how these might be managed.

7. Pupil Questions

Refer to the pupil questions and explain which ones have been covered in this lesson. Address any outstanding issues and remaining questions.

8. Closing Round/Review

In pairs, discuss what has been covered in the lesson. Finish with a closing round: *One thing I have learnt about puberty today is ...*

Additional Activities

What is the Menstrual Cycle?

In small groups give out the [What is the Menstrual Cycle? cards](#). Ask the children to place the cards in a correct order to show they have understood the menstrual cycle. As a whole group sequence and discuss the pictures and correct misunderstandings. Use the [Menstrual Cycle whiteboard summary](#) to help.

Menstruation Card Game

This activity offers more detailed information about menstruation. In small groups give out the [Menstruation Cards](#) ask the children to read out the statements on the cards one at a time. The whole group can try to reach a consensus on whether the statement is true or false or they don't know and place the card in the appropriate pile. Reassure the children that this is a learning activity and putting cards in the 'Don't Know' pile is okay. Circulate and support the groups to achieve the task. Use the answer sheet or the [Menstruation Card Game whiteboard summary](#) to feedback to the whole group.

Alternative or additional videos

Amaze.org have a range of videos to support learning about puberty. Check for age appropriateness in each case. <https://amaze.org/?topic=puberty>

Betty for schools have a range of lesson plans and films to support further teaching around menstruation <https://bettyforschools.co.uk/resources/8-11-year-olds>

Experiences of Puberty

Use a book about puberty aimed at teenagers to read out a selection of young people's personal experiences of, and worries about puberty, for example what it's like to start a period or getting an erection. Discuss the feelings described by each person and how effectively they managed the situation.

Suggested reading:

Let's Talk About Sex: Changing bodies, growing up, sex and sexual health, Robie H.Harris and Michael Emberly
Everything You Ever Wanted to Ask about Willies and Other Boy's Bits, Tricia Kreitman; (e.g. pp 48–51 for puberty worries about erections and wet dreams)

Everything You Ever Wanted to Ask about Periods ... Tricia Kreitman (e.g. pp 40-43 for puberty worries about periods)

These books are also a good source of information for answering pupils' questions.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide

PUBERTY CHANGES CHECKLIST

The following checklist provides an overview of the main physical and emotional changes which take place during puberty. Teachers need not expect to include all of this information in the first lesson; the whole checklist would be a lot of information for most classes. For example, in Year 5 some subjects, such as wet dreams might not come up in lesson 1 will be dealt with in lessons 2 and 3.

Changes for both males and females

- The body starts to grow, quite fast at times
- Private parts (genitals) grow and develop
- Moods and feelings can change a lot
- The body sweats more and smells differently
- Body hair grows darker and stronger (on arms and legs)
- Pubic hair grows
- Armpit hair grows
- Spots can appear on the face and shoulders
- Skin can become oily
- Hair may become greasy
- Sexual feelings can develop
- Masturbation might start

Female Changes

- Periods start
- Ovaries begin releasing eggs (ovulation)
- Breasts and nipples grow
- Nipples may darken in colour
- Hips get broader
- A white discharge comes out of the vagina
- The voice deepens a little
- Bones get heavier

Male Changes

- Shoulders and chest grow and develop
- Muscles get thicker
- The voice deepens and 'breaks'
- Facial hair grows
- Chest hair grows
- Sperm and semen start being produced
- Erections happen
- Wet dreams may start
- The testicles 'drop'

Further Notes

These notes offer guidance for teachers; they do not need to be read to the class word for word. Key information can be included where relevant and used at the teacher's discretion, depending on the needs and responses of the class. Some of the information goes beyond the subject matter of the lessons, but may be useful for answering spontaneous questions.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 2

CHANGES TO EVERYONE

The body grows, quite fast at times

During puberty, between the ages of 8 and 17, everyone's body grows a great deal, both inside and out; height, weights, body shape and size all change. This is triggered by the sex hormones. It is natural for all genders to put on some weight during puberty – a lot of growth is happening and the body needs more fat and muscle. Boys and girls can grow at different rates – girls can grow more quickly, but boys can go on growing for longer. For girls, growth spurts are often connected with getting periods. Growth will also be different for each person – everyone changes at their own rate. There are times when a lot of growth happens in a few months – this is often called a growth spurt. Sometimes the brain can't keep up and teenagers can become quite clumsy and awkward.

Private parts grow and develop

Just like the rest of the body the private parts (genitals) grow and change. In males, the penis gets longer and thicker and the testicles and scrotum get bigger. In females, the vulva (the area between the girl's legs, the labia – the folds of skin around the vagina, and the clitoris get bigger. The male and female internal reproductive parts also grow and develop.

Moods and feelings can change a lot

Emotional ups and downs can be a big part of puberty as young people try to get used to their changing bodies and feelings and make sense of new experiences – somewhere between being a child and a young adult. There is a huge amount of hormonal activity and feelings can be influenced by sudden changes and rises in hormone levels. Sometimes people can feel moody, angry, frustrated or sad for no particular reason; at other times life can seem exciting; this is normal, although if someone feels bad most of the time, it would be good to talk to a trusted person. For further advice on mood changes see Year 5, lesson 3, Activity 4, Year 5 Puberty Problem Page.

The body sweats more and smells differently

Once young people reach puberty they sweat in a new way, again due to hormonal activity. More sweat is produced by the sweat glands – for example under the armpits and in between the legs – and it smells stronger. If the sweat isn't washed away it turns into body odour. Teenagers need to pay more attention to hygiene – see Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's Game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Body hair/pubic hair/armpit hair

One of the first signs of puberty is increased body hair. Hair on the arms and legs get darker and hair grows in the armpits and around the genitals (pubic hair). In males pubic hair grows round the base of the penis and on the scrotum and in females hair grows in between the legs and around and above the vulva. There are different ideas about why pubic hair grows, for example to absorb sweat or to protect the private parts. People make different choices about whether to keep or shave body hair. See Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's Game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Spots/Skin/Hair

Just as hormones affect the sweat glands, they also stimulate oil glands in the skin. The oil – called sebum – is actually protective to the skin but during puberty hormones are often in overdrive and the oil glands become over active. The skin on the face can get greasy and spots can develop because tiny holes next to hair follicles get blocked. The extra oil can also make the hair greasy. Many teenagers get spots, which can vary from small pimples to severe acne. Spots can also appear on the neck, upper back and shoulders and boys can be more affected because the male hormone testosterone tends to make them worse. Spots can be difficult to cope with and they can really affect someone's self esteem, but to start with, it can help to understand why they are happening. For further advice on spots, see Kim's Game Teacher Guide and the Puberty Problem Page Teacher Guide.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 3

Sexual feelings can develop

Being attracted to other people, “fancying” them, having exciting feelings about someone that go beyond friendship – this can all start during puberty. Feelings become intense and affect the body in different ways. People can be attracted to others of the same sex/gender or a different sex/gender.

Masturbation

Masturbation is when a person touches, strokes or stimulates their own private parts because it feels nice. It’s quite common for people of both genders to explore their own private parts and masturbate during puberty. There have been all sorts of myths about masturbation – such as, it will cause blindness or insanity or, in males, it will use up all the sperm. However there is no evidence for this. Masturbation can provide a way for someone to understand their own body. However, not everyone likes to masturbate and some people would feel uncomfortable doing so.

FEMALE CHANGES

Periods Start/Ovulation

At some point during puberty girls will start having periods (menstruation). This is when they bleed from the vagina for 2 – 7 days, usually once a month. Once a month the female sex hormones trigger the release of an egg from the ovary (ovulation) and the sides of the womb thicken and form a soft, blood filled lining. If the egg is not fertilised by a sperm it will dissolve while the womb lining breaks down and passes out of the vagina as blood. This is a period. The amount of blood varies from person to person and can be light at times and heavy at others. It may take a while for periods to settle into a regular pattern when girls first start having them. Breasts can become tender before and during a period and women often experience cramping pains. Feelings can be influenced by the menstrual cycle, especially when a period is due - this is called premenstrual tension.

There are a wide variety of products that people can use to help manage their period; tampons, pads menstrual cups and other reusables. They are all used to absorb menstrual fluid. Pads are used externally and placed in the underwear. Tampons and cups are internal products and go inside the vagina. Whatever product is used they need to be changed regularly and they all have helpful and important instructions in the packaging. When changing tampons and pads always dispose of the used product in a bin rather than flushing down the toilet. Parents/carers may be able to advise on what menstrual products to try but in the end, it comes down to what works best for the individual. For more detail on periods see Year 5, lessons 2 and 3. There is an animation of the menstrual cycle at http://kidshealth.org/teen/sexual_health/girls/menstruation.html?tracking=T **RelatedArticle**

Breast and nipples grow

During puberty breasts, nipples and the circle of skin around the nipple (areola) grow and develop. Breasts can take up to four years to grow and mature. Both breasts and nipples can feel sensitive and even tender while they are growing and can also tingle and itch. The nipples and areola can darken. Each girl’s breasts start to grow at different times and breasts and nipples really vary in size and shape and texture. Sometimes one breast grows faster than another and although this evens out many women have slightly different sized breasts, just as people can have different size feet, hands etc.

Hips get Broader

It is natural for girls’ bodies to change shape and increase in weight during puberty, despite the media holding up images of slim women and teenagers. Girls’ hips get broader; how broad depends on someone’s natural body shape, everyone is different. Wider hips create more room for giving birth, providing a wider birth canal.

A white discharge comes out of the vagina

During puberty girls may notice a white creamy fluid in their knickers. This is a healthy vaginal discharge which starts before a girl’s first period and often precedes a period. The fluid comes from glands inside the vagina and helps to keep it healthy. Knowing what a healthy discharge looks like helps to spot an unhealthy one.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 4

The voice deepens a little

Although girls' voices don't change as dramatically as boys, the voice does get gradually deeper – a female adult voice is naturally deeper than that of a female child's voice.

Bones become heavier

While boys' muscles get bigger, girls' bones become denser and heavier.

MALE CHANGES

Shoulders and chest grow and develop

On average, boys start growing later than girls, although they are not necessarily entering puberty later. They may be more likely to have growth spurts towards the end of puberty. One of the final phases of growth for boys is a broadening of the chest and shoulders, although again body size and shape varies from person to person.

Muscles get bigger

While boys are growing, the muscles get bigger, with the muscle fibres getting longer and thicker.

The voice deepens and 'breaks'

In boys, the voice box in the throat grows, making the voice sound deeper and gruffer than before. The 'Adam's apple' – the round bit in the front of the neck – can become more noticeable. Sometimes the voice might veer from high to low, sounding squeaky one minute and deep the next. This can be disconcerting and embarrassing, but like everything else in puberty, the voice settles down with time and can eventually become a whole octave deeper.

Facial hair grows

Males grow hair on their chins, cheeks and around the mouth – facial hair usually appears on the top lip first and then spreads to the rest of the face. The hair is soft to start with but grows thicker and stronger as time goes on. As with all puberty changes, the amount of facial hair varies from person to person and some males will start to grow facial hair earlier than others. It's an individual choice whether to shave or keep facial hair. Women sometimes have a small amount of facial hair, particularly on the upper lip – this is quite normal. For more discussion about facial hair see Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Chest hair grows

As with facial hair, some men have a lot of chest hair, others have a little. Men can also have hair on their back and stomach area.

Sperm and semen start being produced

During puberty the testicles grow and start to produce sperm, which are tiny – invisible to the human eye. The sperm mixes with fluids to form a milky liquid called semen. Semen contains a sugary substance which helps the sperm to move faster. The male body can produce millions of sperm every day. Semen comes out of the body in an ejaculation. This is when a male has an erection and after a time the muscles at the base of the penis contract and push the semen out of the penis quite fast. An average ejaculation produces about a teaspoonful of semen and this can contain millions of sperm. Semen and urine cannot come out of the penis at the same time.

Erections happen

An erection (sometimes called a 'boner' or 'hard on') is when the penis goes stiff and hard and sticks out from the body (instead of being soft and hanging down). Physically, this happens because blood rushes into the tissue in the penis and the muscles around the penis tighten to hold it in. The penis can go hard and soft from quite an early age. During puberty, however, erections can happen a lot, sometimes because of growing sexual feelings or sometimes at random and at quite inconvenient and embarrassing times. This is normal and should settle down with time. It's very common to wake up with an erection.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 5

Wet dreams may start

During puberty, boys may get an erection and ejaculate some semen during their sleep – this is called a ‘wet dream’. A wet dream may be caused by an exciting dream or may not be connected to a dream at all. Boys may have a few wet dreams, a lot or none at all – all of these are normal. It’s not possible to stop wet dreams happening – they happen unconsciously during sleep. (Adult men sometimes have wet dreams). There are different theories about why wet dreams happen but they definitely start during puberty when sperm production begins and are linked to increased hormonal activity. Another way that semen can come out of the penis is through masturbation. Boys may touch or rub their penis, get an erection and ejaculate.

See also Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 3, Puberty Problem Page and Puberty Problem Page Teacher Guide.

Testicles ‘drop’

Boys’ testicles do not strictly ‘drop’ during puberty. Before a boy is born the testicles are inside the body and shortly before birth they descend into his scrotum. What is noticeable during puberty is the penis, testicles and scrotum get bigger, as this happens the testicles get heavier and hang lower, becoming more obvious than they were before. That is why people say that a boy’s ‘balls drop’ but they have already dropped into the scrotum long before puberty. The testicles hang outside the body to keep the sperm cooler than normal body temperature. (Heat can damage the sperm). This is why the testicles shrivel and cling to the body in cold temperatures and hang lower when it’s hot. Often one testicle hangs a bit lower than the other – again this protects the sperm by stopping the testicles from bumping into each other. For more information on puberty see:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/puberty.html?WT.ac=ctg#catchanging-body>

Puberty Card Game

1. A girl gets her first period when she starts secondary school

2. A period normally lasts 2-7 days

3. All boys have wet dreams

4. Girls can go swimming when they have their periods

5. Most boys' voices break during puberty

6. The blood from a period and the semen from a wet dream are dirty

7. A boy starts to produce sperm at age 12

8. Girls who start their periods unexpectedly should go home from school immediately

continued

Puberty Card Game

TRUE

FALSE

DON'T
KNOW

Puberty Card Game

Answers

These notes offer guidance for the discussion of the Puberty Card Game answers. The notes do not have to be read to the class word for word - key information can be incorporated into the discussion where relevant.

1. A girl gets her first period when she starts secondary school

FALSE A girl may have her first period at any time between the ages of 8 and 16. It isn't necessarily a sign that something is wrong if she hasn't started by 16, but for peace of mind it might be a good idea to see the doctor if that is the case.

2. A period normally lasts 2 – 7 days

TRUE However this can vary from woman to woman. If periods last much longer or are very heavy it may be good to see a doctor, particularly if the periods cause tiredness. The patterns of periods may change over the course of a woman's life.

3. All boys have wet dreams

FALSE Some boys have a few wet dreams, some have a lot, some have none at all – this is all normal. A wet dream happens when a boy gets an erection during the night and ejaculates some semen sometimes without realising. An ejaculation is when strong muscles at the base of the erect penis contract and send the semen shooting out of the penis. On average an ejaculation produces about a teaspoonful of semen.

4. Girls can go swimming when they have their periods

TRUE Providing a girl is able to wear a tampon in the water, there is no reason not to go swimming. However some girls and women prefer not to use tampons, so this would rule out swimming for them.

5. Most boys' voices break during puberty

TRUE At puberty, the production of **testosterone** causes changes in several parts of the body, including the voice. The **larynx** and vocal chords enlarge which cause the voice to grow deeper. Generally, a boy's voice will start to change somewhere between the ages of 11 and 15 — although it can be earlier or later depending on when puberty starts.

6. The blood from a period and the semen from a wet dream are dirty

FALSE There is nothing 'dirty' about menstrual blood or semen. The flow of menstrual blood is connected to the menstrual cycle and the shedding of the lining of the womb. However it is important to remember that if we leave body fluids exposed to the open air for too long they will attract bacteria and begin to smell. Keeping clean and washing clothes/bed clothes is important. In some cultures and religions there are special rituals and traditions associated with menstruation.

7. A boy starts to produce sperm at age 12

FALSE A boy may start to produce sperm at any time between the ages of 9 and 15.

8. Girls who start their periods unexpectedly should go home from school immediately

FALSE Providing the young woman has access to sanitary wear and a fresh pair of pants if necessary, there is no reason for her to go home. Schools should have sanitary protection available for girls who start their period during the school day.

Lesson 3 Puberty Help & Support

Learning Intention

To explore the impact of puberty on the body and the importance of physical hygiene

To explore ways to get support during puberty

Learning Outcomes

Explain how to stay clean during puberty

Describe how emotions/relationships change during puberty

Know how to get help and support during puberty

Resources

Kim's Game items including: spot cream, bra, comb, deodorant, make up, shaving foam, menstrual pads, tampons, panty liners, diary, teenage magazine, mobile phone, cloth to cover items

[Kim's Game Teacher Guide](#)

[Year 5 Puberty Problem Page](#)

[Year 5 Puberty Problem Page cut-outs](#)

[Year 5 Problem Page Teacher Guide](#)

Pupil questions from Lesson 1

Activities

1. Recap/Introduction

In a circle, remind the class of the ground rules from the last lesson. Ask the class what they remember from last week. Refer to the learning outcomes on the whiteboard and discuss what they mean. Explain that in this session we are going to focus on how young people can take care of themselves during puberty.

2. Kim's Game

Tell the class that they are going to play a memory game and show them the bag of objects. Explain that all the objects inside the bag have something to do with puberty and growing up. Ensure that the objects relate to both physical and emotional changes.

1. Take the objects out of the bag one by one, asking the class if they know what each one is. Name the objects and place them in the centre of the circle;
2. Ask the class to briefly look at the objects and try to remember as many of them as possible;
3. Cover the objects with a cloth and remove one of them without the class seeing what it is;
4. Ask the children to identify which object is missing;
5. Repeat this several times.

3. Discussion

Once the children have identified a number of the objects, discuss what some of them have to do with puberty. Ask questions such as: *What is this for? Who uses it? Why might someone going through puberty use this?* Use the discussion to explore how people can look after their bodies and feelings during puberty. Ask the class which objects they think are really essential and which objects people might choose to use.

Reinforce that soap and menstrual products are essential, whereas we can choose whether to use make up or hair products and also choose which types we use. Consider gender stereotypes and social pressures to look or be a certain way. Encourage the class to think about making informed, healthy choices. For help with this activity refer to the [Kim's Game Teacher Guide](#)

Lesson 3- continued

Page 2

4. Puberty Problem Page

Display the [Puberty Problem Page](#) on the whiteboard and focus on one problem to read out. Ask the whole class what advice they would give to this person. In groups of four or five, give one problem from the [Year 5 Puberty Problem Page cut-outs](#) to each group and ask them to discuss what advice they would give.

5. Problem Page Feedback

Ask one person from each group to read out the problem to the whole class. Then ask the group to share the advice they would give. Use the advice to discuss with the class how to manage puberty and emphasise the fact that strong feelings and emotions are a normal part of growing up. Repeat for each group and use the discussion to generate ideas about who to go to for advice and support. Reinforce that it is never okay to tease or bully other children about how their body looks or changes during puberty. For help with this activity read the [Problem Page Teacher Guide](#).

6. Pupil Questions

Refer to the pupil questions and explain which ones have been covered in this lesson. Address any outstanding issues and remaining questions.

7. Closing Round/Review

Use a go-round using the sentence stem: *One way to get help and support during puberty is ...*

Additional Activities

Pupil Questions

Type each relevant question on to a card, distribute and ask pairs to discuss possible answers. Take whole class feedback and discuss.

Kim's Game Small Group Discussion

Give small groups one or two objects from Kim's Game. Ask groups to discuss and record: *What is the object(s)? What is it for? What advice would you give to someone about using it?* Ask each group to share their findings with the class.

Problem Page Letters

Give each person a puberty problem and ask them to make a list of three things they would like to say to the person. Individually write a reply to the person.

Puberty Bingo

Give each child a [Puberty Bingo card](#). There are four different cards, so they can have a different one from the person sitting next to them. Make up a Kim's Game kit bag ensuring the items match those on the cards. Take the items out of the bag one at a time, naming and discussing each one. As the children identify that the item is on their bingo card they can tick it off. Leave taking the deodorant out until last, as this is the one object on all the cards. The children will then all shout *Bingo* at the same time.

Kim's Game Teacher Guide

These notes offer some general guidance for the discussion after Kim's game; it is not intended that they be read to the class. Not all points need to be covered. Key information can be incorporated into the discussion where relevant.

1. Soap or spot cream

Why is it important to wash? How often should we wash? When and why do we sweat? During puberty the body starts to produce more secretions such as sweat, oily substances, spots, semen, vaginal fluid and menstrual blood. The body will smell if these secretions are left to dry and not washed away. It is best to wash every day using soap and water. Some people find their skin is allergic to ordinary soap and need to use products for sensitive skin.

Why do we get spots? How do spots make us feel? When do we stop getting spots? As the skin gets more greasy and oily it can produce spots. Washing the face regularly, either with soap or a special face wash, can help reduce spots. Spot cream may help to clear up spots and help to prevent spots developing but it cannot stop spots completely. Spots can often make people feel unattractive, particularly if they have lots of them. However, everyone gets some spots and may keep getting them all the way through life, not just at puberty.

2. Deodorant / Anti-perspirant

What is deodorant used for and where? When and why do we sweat? Deodorant is intended to make people smell nice. Anti-perspirant is to reduce sweating, although it can't stop it altogether. Deodorant and anti-perspirant are both meant to be used on armpits, not on sex parts. People sweat when they are hot, doing exercise, when they get nervous or excited. People of all genders sweat but everyone sweats in different amounts.

What happens in our bodies when we sweat? Does sweat smell? The body produces sweat to cool the skin when it is hot. Fresh sweat doesn't smell but sweat that has dried on the body and hasn't been washed off does. It is necessary to wash the parts of the body where sweat gathers carefully. This includes armpits, feet, around the sex parts and bottom. If deodorant is used it is important to use it after washing, NOT instead of washing. For some years there has been research into and debate about whether some of the chemicals in deodorants and anti-perspirants are harmful, although no definite conclusions have been drawn. As with all puberty products encourage the children to consider making informed choices.

3. Comb or brush

Why do you comb/brush your hair? What changes happen to your hair at puberty? Why is it important to wash your hair regularly? Combing or brushing keeps hair tidy and looking good. During puberty hair can become greasier; this is because the pores in the skin (called hair follicles) become oilier and this transfers to the hair. It can be helpful to wash hair regularly, perhaps once a week.

4. Hair gel/spray and other products

Why do people use hair products? Do different genders use different products? Hair gel and hair spray are used to put hair into a certain style, to make it look good, smell nice or to look different. Boys and girls often use the same products to look good either for themselves or for others. *Why do teenagers want to look good? Who for? When do people start liking/fancying each other?* As they grow up young people often start to become interested in each other and may find someone they fancy. Some people may start going out with each other. Boys and girls often worry about how they look because they want to be found attractive. It is common to think physical appearance is more important than personality. Boys and girls worry about what their hair looks like, what clothes they're wearing and what trainers they have, or how many spots they've got.

5. Bra

What is it for? When does a girl start to get breasts? Why do women have breasts? Why are some breasts bigger than others? Bras support the breasts. A girl can start growing breasts at any age from between 8 and 16. Hormones in her body cause them to change shape. Sometimes breasts grow quickly and sometimes they grow slowly. Not all girls need to wear bras and not all girls choose to wear bras. It can be helpful for girls with large breasts to use some means of support, particularly if they are playing sport or exercising, as this can be uncomfortable. When women have babies their breasts grow so that they can provide milk for the baby through breastfeeding. *Why don't boys have breasts?* The hormones in boys' bodies are different to those in girls, and therefore, although boys have nipples like girls their chest and nipples develop in a different way. In fact all foetuses have the potential to grow breasts but as the foetus develops into a male or female baby the development of hormones dictates the gender.

6. Diary or teen magazine

Why do we keep a diary? Why do we read teen magazines? Diaries are used to record private thoughts or events. It sometimes helps to write down problems and worries but does it solve them? Who else might the children talk to about a problem?

Kim's Game Teacher Guide

page 3

Mum, dad, carer, older brother or sister, friends, teacher, uncle, aunt, grandparents. They can also ring Childline (0800 1111) – explain what this is. Teen magazines often have problem pages which talk about all sorts of things. It is very likely that lots of boys or girls share similar concerns. The most important thing is to talk about the problem with someone who is trusted. Bottling up or ignoring a problem can make it feel worse.

7. Mobile phone

Mobiles can be important for letting parents/carers know where a young person is. Young people need to be careful where and how they use a mobile phone. People might want to steal phones; they may be precious or valuable but they are not worth fighting for. Remember private mobile texts, photos or videos can be posted on the internet, often without permission. Mobiles should be used responsibly. If a young person feels harassed or intimidated by someone via their phone they should report it to a trusted adult.

8. Shaving Foam

For safety reasons we do not include a razor in Kim's Game but include shaving foam as a prompt. What is shaving foam used for? Helping to shave hair from the face and body. When do boys start shaving? Does everyone *have* to shave? As with many things in puberty there is no set age to begin to shave as shaving depends on the amount of hair growth and personal choice. An adult can advise on when and how to start shaving safely. Why might men shave? Why might women shave? A man can choose if whether he wants a moustache or beard. In some cultures it is customary for men not to cut their hair e.g. Sikhism. People can also choose whether to shave their legs, armpits or other parts of their body. Body hair is sometimes shaved for cultural reasons. Discuss why social pressure about shaving might influence females .

YEAR 5 Puberty Problem Page

A problem shared ...

Hold The Phone

Dear Problem Page,
I don't have a phone yet and the only computer in the home is in the living room. I want to chat with my friends on-line when I get back from school but I feel like my mum is always looking over my shoulder. I don't understand why I can't have a phone when everyone else has. R, age 11

A spot of bother

Dear Problem Page,

I started to get spots on my face and back when I was about 13. It makes me feel ugly and so I started watching videos on my phone that gave advice. The problem is they all say really different things and I don't know which advice to follow. How do I work out which I should try? P, age 13

Bed Bug

Dear Problem Page,

Sometimes when I wake up in the morning there is a wet patch in my bed, but it isn't wee. It makes a stain so I've tried washing the sheets in the sink but there is nowhere to dry them without my dad seeing. Why is this happening and what should I do? S, age 14

Sleepover Stress

Dear Problem Page,

I started my periods last summer. I told my carer and she helped me to deal with it and it was ok. Now I've been invited to a sleep-over. I really want to go but I'm worried I'll have my period when I'm there. I don't know if my friends have started yet and I'm too embarrassed to talk to them about it. What can I do? P, age 11

Dear Problem Page

Puberty Worries

I learnt about puberty in primary school but now I'm 12 and I feel really confused about things and have lots of questions. I haven't got my period but I get this white stuff in my knickers. I don't wear a bra but my nipples hurt. I don't know if these things are normal. I'm really worried. What should I do? C, age 12

Dear Problem Page,

My friends are always talking about the youtubers we like and some of them have started to wear clothes and make-up to look more like them. I think I look really ordinary and could never look that good. None of the youtubers look like me, they all look amazing. It's making me upset. What should I do? K, age 13

YOUTUBERS

Mood Swings

Dear Problem Page,
I used to be a really happy person. Now I'm 13 and I sometimes feel really miserable. I go up and down and people are beginning to notice. At home they keep calling me moody and tell me to snap out of it. Is this normal and how can I stop it happening? I, age 13

Dear Problem Page,

I am in a chat group with others in my class and we message each other after school. Some people have started to make nasty jokes about one of the group members even though she can read it. They would never say those things at school. I don't like it but worry they would do the same to me if I speak up. A, age 12

Chat Group Bullies

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide

PUBERTY CHANGES CHECKLIST

The following checklist provides an overview of the main physical and emotional changes which take place during puberty. Teachers need not expect to include all of this information in the first lesson; the whole checklist would be a lot of information for most classes. For example, in Year 5 some subjects, such as wet dreams might not come up in lesson 1 will be dealt with in lessons 2 and 3.

Changes for both males and females

- The body starts to grow, quite fast at times
- Private parts (genitals) grow and develop
- Moods and feelings can change a lot
- The body sweats more and smells differently
- Body hair grows darker and stronger (on arms and legs)
- Pubic hair grows
- Armpit hair grows
- Spots can appear on the face and shoulders
- Skin can become oily
- Hair may become greasy
- Sexual feelings can develop
- Masturbation might start

Female Changes

- Periods start
- Ovaries begin releasing eggs (ovulation)
- Breasts and nipples grow
- Nipples may darken in colour
- Hips get broader
- A white discharge comes out of the vagina
- The voice deepens a little
- Bones get heavier

Male Changes

- Shoulders and chest grow and develop
- Muscles get thicker
- The voice deepens and 'breaks'
- Facial hair grows
- Chest hair grows
- Sperm and semen start being produced
- Erections happen
- Wet dreams may start
- The testicles 'drop'

Further Notes

These notes offer guidance for teachers; they do not need to be read to the class word for word. Key information can be included where relevant and used at the teacher's discretion, depending on the needs and responses of the class. Some of the information goes beyond the subject matter of the lessons, but may be useful for answering spontaneous questions.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 2

CHANGES TO EVERYONE

The body grows, quite fast at times

During puberty, between the ages of 8 and 17, everyone's body grows a great deal, both inside and out; height, weights, body shape and size all change. This is triggered by the sex hormones. It is natural for all genders to put on some weight during puberty – a lot of growth is happening and the body needs more fat and muscle. Boys and girls can grow at different rates – girls can grow more quickly, but boys can go on growing for longer. For girls, growth spurts are often connected with getting periods. Growth will also be different for each person – everyone changes at their own rate. There are times when a lot of growth happens in a few months – this is often called a growth spurt. Sometimes the brain can't keep up and teenagers can become quite clumsy and awkward.

Private parts grow and develop

Just like the rest of the body the private parts (genitals) grow and change. In males, the penis gets longer and thicker and the testicles and scrotum get bigger. In females, the vulva (the area between the girl's legs, the labia – the folds of skin around the vagina, and the clitoris get bigger. The male and female internal reproductive parts also grow and develop.

Moods and feelings can change a lot

Emotional ups and downs can be a big part of puberty as young people try to get used to their changing bodies and feelings and make sense of new experiences – somewhere between being a child and a young adult. There is a huge amount of hormonal activity and feelings can be influenced by sudden changes and rises in hormone levels. Sometimes people can feel moody, angry, frustrated or sad for no particular reason; at other times life can seem exciting; this is normal, although if someone feels bad most of the time, it would be good to talk to a trusted person. For further advice on mood changes see Year 5, lesson 3, Activity 4, Year 5 Puberty Problem Page.

The body sweats more and smells differently

Once young people reach puberty they sweat in a new way, again due to hormonal activity. More sweat is produced by the sweat glands – for example under the armpits and in between the legs – and it smells stronger. If the sweat isn't washed away it turns into body odour. Teenagers need to pay more attention to hygiene – see Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's Game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Body hair/pubic hair/armpit hair

One of the first signs of puberty is increased body hair. Hair on the arms and legs get darker and hair grows in the armpits and around the genitals (pubic hair). In males pubic hair grows round the base of the penis and on the scrotum and in females hair grows in between the legs and around and above the vulva. There are different ideas about why pubic hair grows, for example to absorb sweat or to protect the private parts. People make different choices about whether to keep or shave body hair. See Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's Game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Spots/Skin/Hair

Just as hormones affect the sweat glands, they also stimulate oil glands in the skin. The oil – called sebum – is actually protective to the skin but during puberty hormones are often in overdrive and the oil glands become over active. The skin on the face can get greasy and spots can develop because tiny holes next to hair follicles get blocked. The extra oil can also make the hair greasy. Many teenagers get spots, which can vary from small pimples to severe acne. Spots can also appear on the neck, upper back and shoulders and boys can be more affected because the male hormone testosterone tends to make them worse. Spots can be difficult to cope with and they can really affect someone's self esteem, but to start with, it can help to understand why they are happening. For further advice on spots, see Kim's Game Teacher Guide and the Puberty Problem Page Teacher Guide.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 3

Sexual feelings can develop

Being attracted to other people, “fancying” them, having exciting feelings about someone that go beyond friendship – this can all start during puberty. Feelings become intense and affect the body in different ways. People can be attracted to others of the same sex/gender or a different sex/gender.

Masturbation

Masturbation is when a person touches, strokes or stimulates their own private parts because it feels nice. It’s quite common for people of both genders to explore their own private parts and masturbate during puberty. There have been all sorts of myths about masturbation – such as, it will cause blindness or insanity or, in males, it will use up all the sperm. However there is no evidence for this. Masturbation can provide a way for someone to understand their own body. However, not everyone likes to masturbate and some people would feel uncomfortable doing so.

FEMALE CHANGES

Periods Start/Ovulation

At some point during puberty girls will start having periods (menstruation). This is when they bleed from the vagina for 2 – 7 days, usually once a month. Once a month the female sex hormones trigger the release of an egg from the ovary (ovulation) and the sides of the womb thicken and form a soft, blood filled lining. If the egg is not fertilised by a sperm it will dissolve while the womb lining breaks down and passes out of the vagina as blood. This is a period. The amount of blood varies from person to person and can be light at times and heavy at others. It may take a while for periods to settle into a regular pattern when girls first start having them. Breasts can become tender before and during a period and women often experience cramping pains. Feelings can be influenced by the menstrual cycle, especially when a period is due - this is called premenstrual tension.

There are a wide variety of products that people can use to help manage their period; tampons, pads menstrual cups and other reusables. They are all used to absorb menstrual fluid. Pads are used externally and placed in the underwear. Tampons and cups are internal products and go inside the vagina. Whatever product is used they need to be changed regularly and they all have helpful and important instructions in the packaging. When changing tampons and pads always dispose of the used product in a bin rather than flushing down the toilet. Parents/carers may be able to advise on what menstrual products to try but in the end, it comes down to what works best for the individual. For more detail on periods see Year 5, lessons 2 and 3. There is an animation of the menstrual cycle at http://kidshealth.org/teen/sexual_health/girls/menstruation.html?tracking=T_RelatedArticle.

Breast and nipples grow

During puberty breasts, nipples and the circle of skin around the nipple (areola) grow and develop. Breasts can take up to four years to grow and mature. Both breasts and nipples can feel sensitive and even tender while they are growing and can also tingle and itch. The nipples and areola can darken. Each girl’s breasts start to grow at different times and breasts and nipples really vary in size and shape and texture. Sometimes one breast grows faster than another and although this evens out many women have slightly different sized breasts, just as people can have different size feet, hands etc.

Hips get Broader

It is natural for girls’ bodies to change shape and increase in weight during puberty, despite the media holding up images of slim women and teenagers. Girls’ hips get broader; how broad depends on someone’s natural body shape, everyone is different. Wider hips create more room for giving birth, providing a wider birth canal.

A white discharge comes out of the vagina

During puberty girls may notice a white creamy fluid in their knickers. This is a healthy vaginal discharge which starts before a girl’s first period and often precedes a period. The fluid comes from glands inside the vagina and helps to keep it healthy. Knowing what a healthy discharge looks like helps to spot an unhealthy one.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 4

The voice deepens a little

Although girls' voices don't change as dramatically as boys, the voice does get gradually deeper – a female adult voice is naturally deeper than that of a female child's voice.

Bones become heavier

While boys' muscles get bigger, girls' bones become denser and heavier.

MALE CHANGES

Shoulders and chest grow and develop

On average, boys start growing later than girls, although they are not necessarily entering puberty later. They may be more likely to have growth spurts towards the end of puberty. One of the final phases of growth for boys is a broadening of the chest and shoulders, although again body size and shape varies from person to person.

Muscles get bigger

While boys are growing, the muscles get bigger, with the muscle fibres getting longer and thicker.

The voice deepens and 'breaks'

In boys, the voice box in the throat grows, making the voice sound deeper and gruffer than before. The 'Adam's apple' – the round bit in the front of the neck – can become more noticeable. Sometimes the voice might veer from high to low, sounding squeaky one minute and deep the next. This can be disconcerting and embarrassing, but like everything else in puberty, the voice settles down with time and can eventually become a whole octave deeper.

Facial hair grows

Males grow hair on their chins, cheeks and around the mouth – facial hair usually appears on the top lip first and then spreads to the rest of the face. The hair is soft to start with but grows thicker and stronger as time goes on. As with all puberty changes, the amount of facial hair varies from person to person and some males will start to grow facial hair earlier than others. It's an individual choice whether to shave or keep facial hair. Women sometimes have a small amount of facial hair, particularly on the upper lip – this is quite normal. For more discussion about facial hair see Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 2, Kim's game and Kim's Game Teacher Guide.

Chest hair grows

As with facial hair, some men have a lot of chest hair, others have a little. Men can also have hair on their back and stomach area.

Sperm and semen start being produced

During puberty the testicles grow and start to produce sperm, which are tiny – invisible to the human eye. The sperm mixes with fluids to form a milky liquid called semen. Semen contains a sugary substance which helps the sperm to move faster. The male body can produce millions of sperm every day. Semen comes out of the body in an ejaculation. This is when a male has an erection and after a time the muscles at the base of the penis contract and push the semen out of the penis quite fast. An average ejaculation produces about a teaspoonful of semen and this can contain millions of sperm. Semen and urine cannot come out of the penis at the same time.

Erections happen

An erection (sometimes called a 'boner' or 'hard on') is when the penis goes stiff and hard and sticks out from the body (instead of being soft and hanging down). Physically, this happens because blood rushes into the tissue in the penis and the muscles around the penis tighten to hold it in. The penis can go hard and soft from quite an early age. During puberty, however, erections can happen a lot, sometimes because of growing sexual feelings or sometimes at random and at quite inconvenient and embarrassing times. This is normal and should settle down with time. It's very common to wake up with an erection.

Puberty Changes Teacher Guide page 5

Wet dreams may start

During puberty, boys may get an erection and ejaculate some semen during their sleep – this is called a ‘wet dream’. A wet dream may be caused by an exciting dream or may not be connected to a dream at all. Boys may have a few wet dreams, a lot or none at all – all of these are normal. It’s not possible to stop wet dreams happening – they happen unconsciously during sleep. (Adult men sometimes have wet dreams). There are different theories about why wet dreams happen but they definitely start during puberty when sperm production begins and are linked to increased hormonal activity. Another way that semen can come out of the penis is through masturbation. Boys may touch or rub their penis, get an erection and ejaculate.

See also Year 5, Lesson 3, Activity 3, Puberty Problem Page and Puberty Problem Page Teacher Guide.

Testicles ‘drop’

Boys’ testicles do not strictly ‘drop’ during puberty. Before a boy is born the testicles are inside the body and shortly before birth they descend into his scrotum. What is noticeable during puberty is the penis, testicles and scrotum get bigger, as this happens the testicles get heavier and hang lower, becoming more obvious than they were before. That is why people say that a boy’s ‘balls drop’ but they have already dropped into the scrotum long before puberty. The testicles hang outside the body to keep the sperm cooler than normal body temperature. (Heat can damage the sperm). This is why the testicles shrivel and cling to the body in cold temperatures and hang lower when it’s hot. Often one testicle hangs a bit lower than the other – again this protects the sperm by stopping the testicles from bumping into each other. For more information on puberty see:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/puberty.html?WT.ac=ctg#catchanging-body>