

The Passage into Puberty



Key Concepts

Growth and development

Teacher Tip: When teaching sensitive subjects such as reproductive health, it is essential to follow state and district guidelines for notification of parents and to provide opportunities for community members to preview materials.

Skill Emphasis

Accessing Information

Time Requirements

Two to three 35-minute sessions

Materials & Preparation

Make transparency:

- Physical Changes

Provide copies of the Student Quiz for each student:

- What Do You Know? (About Puberty)

Copy student page:

- Hormone Effects

Provide Family Letter

Synopsis

Students explore the physical, emotional and social changes of puberty and create a handbook to guide the passage through puberty.

Objectives

Students will explain the physical, emotional, and social changes of adolescence.

Students will identify sources of information about adolescence.

Copy teacher pages:

- Quiz check for What Do You Know? (About Puberty)
- Hormone Effects

Have sentence strips and tape available. Plan to use the writing board for taping sentence strips or have poster paper available.

Provide for student access to the following articles about puberty:

- http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty.html
- http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty_p2.html
- http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty_p3.html

Background and Web Links

To view current content and background information for this lesson, visit this Lesson Plan and Teacher Resources at www.HealthTeacher.com.

Teaching Steps

1. Discuss Puberty.

Invite students to take the What Do You Know about Puberty? quiz.

Ask students to make a note on the back of the quiz of any information they'd like to have about puberty. Ask students to return their quiz responses without names on them.

Use this information to guide lesson emphasis.

Define vocabulary terms:

- Puberty
- Adolescence
- Sexual changes



Concepts

- Puberty is when physical, hormonal, and sexual changes occur and the individual becomes capable of reproduction.
- Sexual changes include breast development in girls and appearance of pubic hair in both girls and boys.
- Puberty is associated with rapid growth and the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics.

- Secondary sexual changes include growth of hair on certain areas of the body and voice changes.
- Adolescence is the period of transition between puberty and adulthood.
- Adolescence begins at different ages; girls usually enter adolescence about two years before boys.

2. Hormones at work!

Indicate that hormone changes are responsible for beginning puberty in each individual. Indicate that the timing for the hormone changes is different for every person, but usually happens between the ages of 9 and 16 for girls and 10 and 16 for boys.

Review the major hormone changes using the Hormone Transparencies / Slides

Discuss what hormones do in our bodies.

Review the physical changes first and ask:

How might these physical changes affect a young person's sense of self (who you are)?

Review the emotional and social changes and ask:

How might these changes affect a young person's sense of self (who you are)?

Ask which of the changes you think would affect young people the most and why.
(Responses likely will vary.)

Have students create a graphic organizer for this information (provide instruction on creating the organizer or use the student page provided).

Concepts

- Hormones are chemicals that occur naturally in our bodies. They are responsible for many changes in the body, including growth and development.
- Hormones can change our appearance and influence our feelings.

3. Students research information about puberty.

Provide for student access to the following articles about puberty:

http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty.html

http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty_p2.html

http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty_p3.html

4. Groups work to identify the changes of puberty and ways to manage those changes.

Divide students into small groups and assign each group one of the topics below. Be sure to have at least two groups working on each topic area so that more ideas are generated.

- Physical changes of puberty
- Emotional changes of puberty

- Social changes of puberty

Using the information obtained from the above web articles, or other information that you have provided, instruct each group to prepare a sentence strip (one per response):

- Identifying the changes that occur during puberty for their topic area
- Identifying ways to manage each of the changes

Possible responses may include the following:

- **Physical Changes / Management:** Glands change and produce more sweat and odor. / Start using deodorant.
- **Emotional Changes / Management:** Hormone changes create moodiness. / Know that mood changes are normal. For most people, less comfortable moods eventually give way to better ones.
- **Social Changes / Management:** Physical and emotional changes of puberty create desire for social changes. / Seek friends who experience similar feelings and help each other cope.

5. Reflect, summarize, and discuss.

Create 3 T-charts on the board or on poster paper, set up as follows:

- **Physical Changes / Management**
- **Emotional Changes / Management**
- **Social Changes / Management** Call for student responses from the above teaching step. Have students post their sentence strips on the appropriate T-chart in the appropriate area of the chart.

Review the questions from the Quiz (step 1) and call for answers from the class.

6. Extended Learning: Students read Strangers in the Mirror (optional).

Optional: Assign students to read the book *Strangers in the Mirror* by Allen Say. (32 pages)

In the story, a young Asian-American boy wakes up one morning with the face of an old man. He has trouble convincing people that he is still himself. Draw parallels from this story to waking up one morning with many of the changes of puberty present. Contrast the sudden change with the years-long maturational transition from childhood to adulthood.

Assessment

Students create a handbook (similar to a brochure) for navigating through puberty. This handbook will identify the common characteristics of puberty and suggest ways of dealing with the physical, emotional, and social changes they will be going through.

- Common changes that occur during puberty
- Ways to deal with the changes of puberty

Assessment Criteria

Concepts

Student work demonstrates proficiency by showing the ability to:

- Identify changes that occur during puberty and adolescence.

Accessing Information

Student work demonstrates the ability to:

- Access valid information for the brochure.

What Do You Know? (About Puberty)

Directions: place a check mark in the blank beside the correct answer (there can be more than one correct answer).

1. Puberty starts automatically when you are 13 years old.

True
 False

2. Puberty means a change in the pubic bone.

True
 False

3. Puberty means hair growth on more of your body.

True
 False

4. You know you may be entering into puberty when

Your sweat has an odor, or a stronger odor than before.
 You have a zit (pimple) or two or more.
 You feel uncoordinated.
 You suddenly love doing homework.

5. Which one of the following is not usually a sign of puberty?

You need to use deodorant.
 You (as a girl) are suddenly much taller than the boys in your class.
 You (as a boy) notice your shoulders getting wider.
 You suddenly get better grades in school.

What Do You Know? (About Puberty)

6. Which one of the following is not a sign of puberty for girls?

- You notice growth in your breasts.
- You have your first menstrual bleeding.
- You become interested in volunteering in your community.
- You may experience new or increased sexual feelings.

7. Which one of the following is not a sign of puberty for boys?

- You notice that your penis, scrotum, and testes are growing.
- You notice that your voice is changing.
- You develop an interest in preventing water pollution.

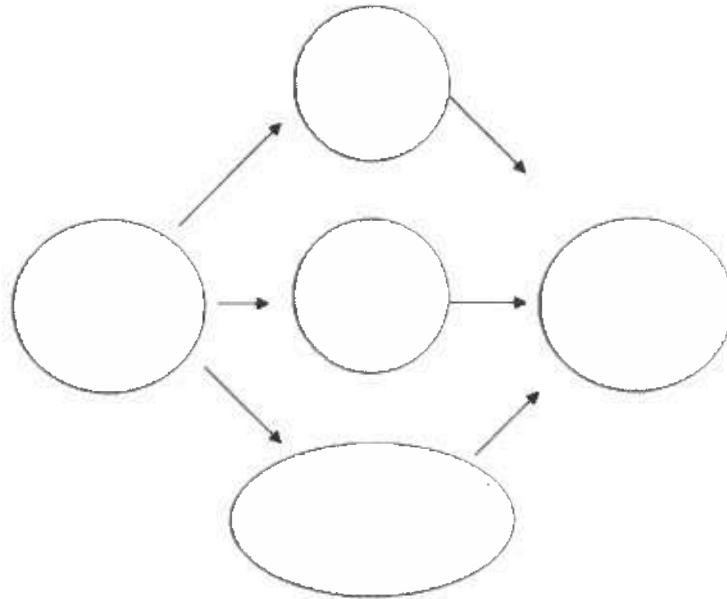
8. It is typical of puberty to

- Be more emotional and have changing moods.
- Be more self conscious about your appearance.
- Want to spend more time with your friends even though you still care about your family.
- None of the above

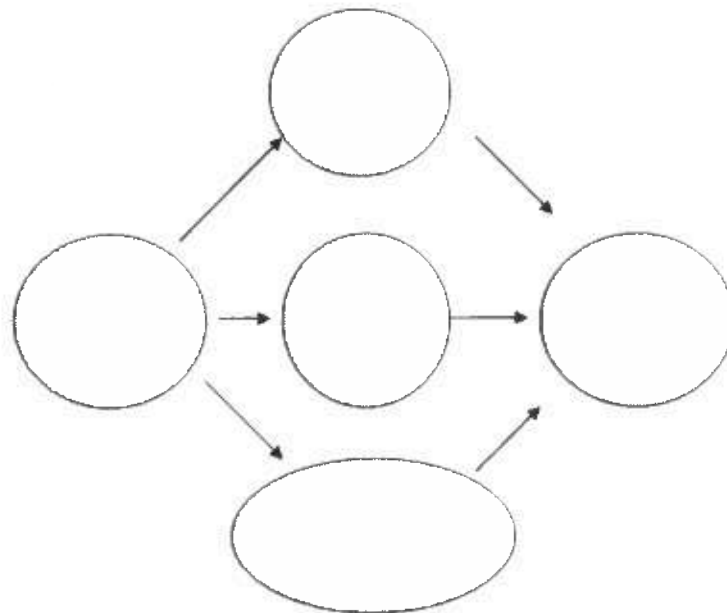
Please write below one or more questions you would like answers to about puberty:

Hormone Effects

Changes in Girls



Changes in Boys



Name: _____

**Between the ages of 10 - 16, boys notice:**

broad shoulders muscle growth
hair under the arms, on arms, legs,
chest, face, and in the pubic area
growth of the penis and testicles
breast tenderness
a deeper voice
wet dreams

Between the ages of 9 - 16, girls notice:

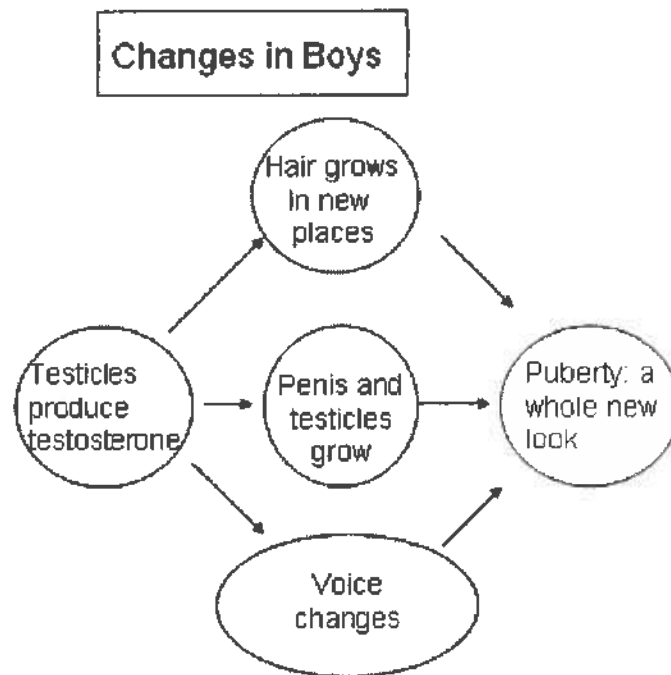
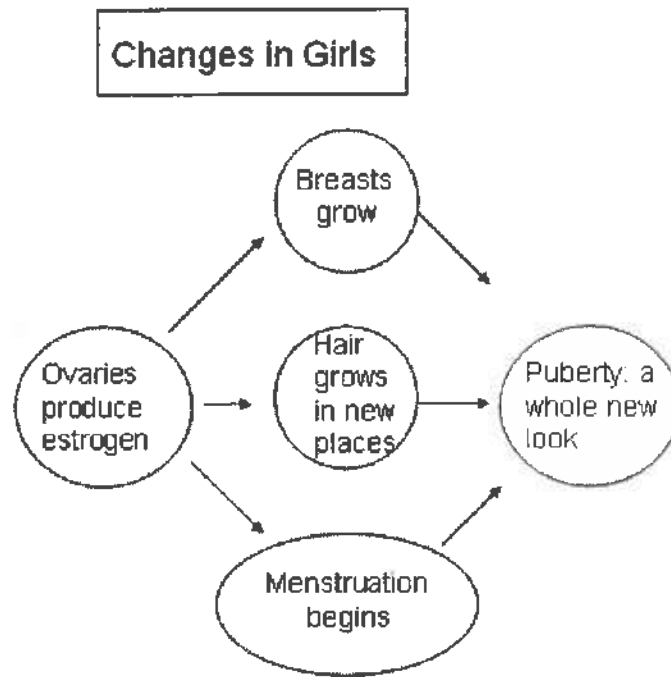
broad hips
a narrower waist
hair under the arms, on legs, and in the pubic area
growth of the vulva
breast growth
vaginal discharge
menstruation

Boys and girls notice:

a growth spurt
more perspiration
body odor
oily skin
pimples



Hormone Effects



Family Letter: Puberty

Dear Parent or Guardian,

Our class will be studying the changes of puberty that usually begin about this time in students' lives (puberty can begin as early as age 8 or 9). Our coursework will involve identifying and discussing the physical, emotional, and social changes that typically occur as a result of the hormone changes taking place. This area of study is part of the National Health Education Standards recommendations for topics and skills to be covered in classroom health education.

We're providing you a brief overview of what we'll be studying so that you will be prepared for questions your child may ask and so that you may take this opportunity to discuss these important life changes with him/her.

Passage Into Puberty

- We'll take a look from the student's perspective:
 - "What's happening inside me? I'm suddenly growing taller, my voice keeps cracking - that's SO embarrassing, I'm going to need a bra soon, I'm getting hairier and my sweat has an odor."
- We'll review the biological and social perspective:
 - Hormone changes trigger the start of a new phase in your life called "puberty." Here's what's happening behind the scenes: in girls the ovaries increase the production of the hormone estrogen; in boys the testicles increase the production of the hormone testosterone. These hormones are responsible for a number of changes including the development of sex characteristics (breast development and a menstrual period in girls, and growth of the penis and testes in boys) and secondary sex characteristics (voice changes, new hair growth on certain areas of the body, sweat and body odor).
 - Hormones also contribute to emotional changes, mood changes, sensitivity, self-consciousness.
 - These physical and emotional changes contribute to the social changes experienced by most students during this age: more withdrawal from the family, more conflicts with the family, and more time and interest in friends even though adolescents still care about their family.

You can find more information on this topic online by searching "Puberty." We will be looking at the Nemours website as part of our class work. This site has information for parents also.
http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty.html

