



Learner Outcome

W-4.3 Describe physical, emotional and social changes that occur during puberty; e.g., menstruation, secondary sexual characteristics, changing identity and moods.

How To Use

This lesson plan contains several activities to achieve the learner outcome above. You may choose to do some or all of the activities, based on the needs of your students and the time available. Some of the activities build on the ones that come before them, but all can be used alone.

For a quick lesson, combine activities A, B and G.

If you choose not to do all the activities, use your professional judgement to assess which outcomes you have covered and which may need additional activities.

Classroom Activities & Timing

- A. Ground Rules (5-10 minutes)
- B. Puberty Kit Discussion (20-30 minutes)
- C. Then, Now and Beyond Worksheet (20-30 minutes)
- D. The Me to Be Collage (30-45 minutes)
- E. Puberty Changes Kahoot! Quiz (15-20 minutes)
- F. Advice Corner Interview
- G. Question Box (5-10 minutes)

See also the [Differing Abilities](#) lesson plans on Puberty.

Required Materials

[Puberty Kit](#)

HANDOUT: Then, Now and Beyond

[KAHOOT! QUIZ](#) and ANSWER KEY: Puberty Changes

HANDOUT: Advice Corner

All the student handouts are also available in the [Grade 4 Workbook](#).

Background Information for Teachers

Knowing what will happen during puberty is the first step towards adapting well to adolescence. Learning facts about bodies and growing up can help students to stay healthy, take good care of themselves and make good decisions.

Developing positive coping strategies and developing self-confidence is essential to adolescent development. Sharing about ourselves is a good way to encourage self-confidence. Accepting and embracing the change that comes with growing up involves knowing one's self and making a personal plan for the future.

Language is complex, evolving and powerful. In these lessons, [gender-neutral language](#) is used to be inclusive of all students, including those with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. This includes the use of 'they' as a singular gender-neutral pronoun. The lesson plans use the terms 'male' and 'female' when referring to biological sex (sex assigned at birth), such as when discussing reproductive anatomy. A person's reproductive system can be male, female or intersex (not clearly defined as either male or female).

People are assigned a sex at birth based on their reproductive anatomy. Sex assigned at birth is independent of gender identity. Gender identity is a person's internal sense of identity as female, male, both or neither, regardless of their biological sex assigned at birth.

For many people, their gender matches the sex they were assigned at birth (cisgender). Others may identify as being transgender or gender diverse if their gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. A person's gender identity can be girl, woman, boy, man, transgender, gender fluid, gender queer, agender

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or others. The intention in this material is to use language that reflects these many possibilities.

A. Ground Rules

Ensure [ground rules](#) are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can help ensure a successful lesson.

B. Puberty Kit

This activity encourages students to identify tools they can use to help with some of the more challenging aspects of puberty.

There are two options for obtaining the tools needed to teach this activity:

- Buy or collect items to make a puberty kit using the [list of materials](#). The kit can typically be assembled for around \$20 using items from a dollar store/thrift store.
- Print a copy of the [pictorial Puberty Kit](#)

It may also be possible to borrow a puberty kit for use in the classroom from your school nurse or zone sexual health education team, however this option may or may not be available in your area.

Be familiar with the contents of the kit and the discussion points for each item, before beginning the activity. Print the complete list of items and explanations [here](#).

1. Pass out the items/pictures from the kit until all are distributed.
2. Give students a few minutes to discuss their item with their neighbour.
3. Ask one student to hold up their item or picture and share what they think the item has to do with puberty. Encourage them to guess if they are unsure. Encourage other members of the class to add their own ideas about the item.
4. Add any information still missing, clarify any incorrect information and answer questions about each item, before going on to the next item.

C. Then, Now and Beyond Worksheet

Students may need encouragement to see the positive aspects of puberty and growing up. Envisioning who they hope to be in the future is part of this process.

1. Distribute the handout **Then, Now and Beyond**.
2. Have students complete the handout individually. They may need some prompting about using their memories to complete the Then column and using their imagination to complete the Beyond column. In the What I Look Like category, encourage them to think broadly and include aspects such as hairstyle, height, shoe size or favourite clothing.
3. When students are finished, have them share their answers with a partner or in a small group.
4. Debrief this activity by asking students:
 - What did you learn about yourself?
 - What do you like about the future you?
 - Who are the people that will be part of your support system in junior high/middle school?

D. The Me to Be Collage

Students will celebrate the person they will become during puberty.

Consider numbering displayed collages and asking students to guess who they think each collage belongs to. A prize may be given to the student with the highest number of correct guesses.

1. The students will collect pictures and words that represent who they hope to be in grade 8 (when most of them will have at least begun going through puberty) and use them to make a collage. Emphasize to the students that they collect pictures about their hopes, goals, friends, activities or skills, not just about how they might look.
2. If you completed the **Then, Now and Beyond** activity, students can use their answers as ideas for the pictures to collect.
3. You can choose to make collages out of magazine/newspaper pictures or use pictures found online.
4. If students are bringing pictures from home, have them make a list of what they need to remember to bring the next day.

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5. When the students are finished, display the collages throughout the classroom.

E. Puberty Changes Kahoot! Quiz

This quiz can be a great review, wrap-up of the unit or a fun energizer in between other activities. For more information on using Kahoot!, visit getkahoot.com

1. Open the Kahoot! Quiz: [Grade 4 Puberty Changes](#)
2. As a class, answer the quiz questions and discuss the answers together. You can play the quiz in individual or team mode.

F. Advice Corner Interview

Students use the knowledge they learned during the puberty kit activity to answer some difficult questions about coping with puberty.

1. Distribute the handout **Advice Corner**.
2. Have students complete step one in class.
3. Ask students to take the handout home and complete step two with a parent, guardian or other supportive adult.
4. Explain that this is not a graded assignment and there are no right or wrong answers.
5. Take time to debrief this activity next class with questions such as:
 - What did this activity teach you about puberty?
 - What are some other questions that young people might have about puberty? How can we answer them?

Keep in mind that not all students have equal opportunities for open discussion with family or other adults in their life. Although it is best for students to complete this assignment with a supportive parent or guardian, it may not be possible. Be sensitive to the needs of your students.

Due to the sensitive nature of human sexuality topics, it is recommended that homework is reviewed or discussed but not graded.

G. Question Box

Answer any questions from the [question box](#) in the previous lesson. Have students submit any new questions and address them next class.

Addressing the questions at the next class allows you time to review the questions and prepare responses.

Self-Reflection

During the lesson, were:

- ground rules being followed?
- good practices established regarding group work and discussion?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?

Student Assessment

During the lesson, did students:

Knowledge:

- identify various changes that occur during puberty?
- describe ways to cope with change?
- identify support systems that can help during puberty?
- develop of picture of a future self?

Skills:

- work together to brainstorm examples of puberty change?
- exhibit appropriate listening and speaking skills during class discussion?

Attitudes:

- acknowledge that changes will occur during puberty?
- accept that change is part of puberty?
- demonstrate comfort discussing elements of sexuality?
- acknowledge the positive aspects of puberty?

Then, Now and Beyond

Fill in the chart with information about yourself. Use your imagination to fill in what you think might be true for the grade 8 column.

	Then (grade 1)	Now (grade 4)	Beyond (grade 8)
The most important people in my life			
What I look like			
My favourite shows/movies			
My most prized possession			
How I behave			
My worst fear			

ANSWER KEY: Grade 4 Puberty Changes Quiz

Correct answers are in bold text.

1. Who experiences hair growing in new places during puberty?
 - Only males
 - Only females
 - **Anyone**
 - No one
2. Who starts to care more about their appearance during puberty?
 - Only males
 - Only females
 - **Anyone**
 - No one
3. Who starts having body odour during puberty?
 - Only males
 - Only females
 - **Anyone**
 - No one
4. Who starts having wet dreams during puberty?
 - **Only males**
 - Only females
 - Anyone
 - No one
5. Who starts having sexual thoughts and feelings during puberty?
 - Only males
 - Only females
 - **Anyone**
 - No one
6. Who may start to get acne during puberty?
 - Only males
 - Only females
 - **Anyone**
 - No one

7. Who gets their period during puberty?

- Only males
- **Only females**
- Anyone
- No one

8. Who sometimes feels lonely and confused during puberty?

- Only males
- Only females
- **Anyone**
- No one

9. Who grows shorter during puberty?

- Only males
- Only females
- Anyone
- **No one**

10. Who might become interested in having a girlfriend or boyfriend during puberty?

- Only males
- Only females
- **Anyone**
- No one

Advice Corner

Now that you know more about puberty, you may find that your friends come to you for advice on all sorts of things. What will you tell your friends who ask the questions below?

Step One: Pick 3 questions you know the answer to. Write your answer in the space provided.

Step Two: Interview a parent, guardian or other supportive adult to find out how they would answer the rest of the questions. Write the adult's answers in the space provided.

I don't like my hair because it's too oily. What suggestions do you have?

Lately I am not getting along with my parents like I used to. What should I do?

I feel so bad - my friends told me that I stink after gym class. What can I do?

Name: _____

Sometimes I feel like I just don't fit in. What should I do?

I have lots of pimples on my face. What should I do about them?

Sometimes I feel happy and the next minute I feel angry. Why do I feel this way?

All my friends seem to be going through puberty already and I'm not. I feel left out and I don't want to be treated like a little kid. What can I do?