

# Puberty - what can I expect, what's normal and why does it happen?



It was a normal, school day. The class were answering their names to the register, in their usual way. All the girls and boys voices sounded about as high-pitched as each other, until Miss asked, 'Is Simon present?' An awkward half-low, half-high, squeaky voice replied... *'uhyeess Miiiss.'*

**Challenge:** What has happened to Simon's voice?

**More challenging:** Is this normal or is this something to be embarrassed about? Explain.

**Mega Challenging:** Define the term 'puberty' in no more than thirty words.

# Puberty - what can I expect, what's normal and why does it happen?

## Key terms:

Puberty – a time when adolescents' bodies start to change in order for them to become capable of reproduction.

## Learning Outcomes:

Identify the changes both males and females experience during puberty.

Describe the importance of these changes and why they happen.

Explain the meaning of new key scientific terms related to puberty.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rsj6dW6qKRc>

Watch the clip and answer the questions at your challenge level:

What is the 'silver-lining of puberty'?

What is your brain trying to do through puberty?

What are the emotional consequences of puberty?

Give three ways we can make it easier to cope:

What are hormones?

How do they affect men?

How do they affect women?

Why does your brain create so many new cells at this time?

Why is it so important to get enough sleep during puberty?

Why is puberty actually an important and special time?



# Who does this happen to and why?

What happens during puberty, to who and why?

There are many changes to the body during puberty, but all of them happen for a good reason: they are making your body develop into its adult form and thus making you capable of sexual reproduction. So, what are these changes? Which ones happen to girls, which to boys, and which to both? Create a key and colour code the categories according to what you think. We will go through the correct answers afterwards.

Categories:

Females

Males

Both

Body changes info:	Male / Female or both?	Explain why this development is essential and important (use clip, info and your own ideas)
During puberty, hair starts to grow in the armpits and around the pubic area - where your private parts are. This can happen quite early on in puberty, and can often coincide with your body starting to sweat more. Some studies have shown that not shaving the hair off means your body actually sweats less. Although it may seem as though this has no purpose - some scientists think this is to trap pheromones (subtle, chemical smells) which attract the opposite sex.		
Teens start to develop. The way just to the opposite sex can find them sexually attractive. The purpose of these glands is to be able to produce milk for breastfeeding babies (lactation). Breasts only produce milk during pregnancy and whilst breastfeeding.		
Sudden growth spurts happen. This is the most immediately noticeable development and often happens before the others. Females often have their growth spurts before males, some starting as young as 9. This to give your body more space to fill out and develop as it needs to, as you become an adult.		
Periods usually start between the ages of 9-16. This means the vagina has a monthly bleed which is perfectly normal, one last getting rid of the lining of the uterus every time an egg isn't fertilised - which is all of them unless a child is conceived. It lasts about 4-7 days and can be painful. You may be more irritable during this time too.		

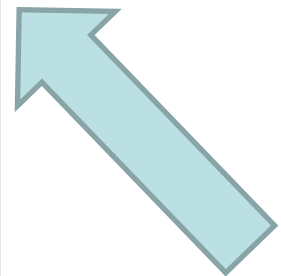
Sometimes you might notice after being asleep the penis has let out some junk. This is perfectly normal, it contains semen, the fluid containing sperm cells. Contrary to popular belief this happening does not mean you've had a sexy dream - although you may have. It's just the penis practicing what it's supposed to do. This is the same when you get erections too - it's just the penis practicing - although at this point it may be a bit overenthusiastic!

You may feel miserable one minute, excited and happy to love the next and then so tired you could sleep for days. These are all perfectly normal atreia, caused by the levels of hormones in your body rising and falling. By the time you are in your twenties these will have levelled again and you will usually feel quite stable.

Remember when happened to Simon? Well the voice breaking is nothing to be embarrassed about. To some it happens publicly, almost over a few days, for others it can take years. The hormone testosterone is behind this - these produce the masculine features in the body that many women, and some men find sexually attractive.

Perhaps the worst thing about puberty is the effect it can have on your skin. Acne is the nightmare of the average teenager. Having bad acne does not indicate you are any less clean than someone who doesn't - but you may have to take extra care with your skincare routine. This is the side effect of all the chemicals in your body doing important jobs. Again, for most people, by your twenties it should have cleared - although you will still get the odd spot.

Sexual feelings - you may have more of an urge to be closer, kiss and touch your peers. If this is the case and they are happy to reciprocate, just make sure you know what is appropriate when and where and how to use contraception and stay safe. Remember - sex under the age of 16, or with someone under the age of 16 is illegal in the UK. Sexual feelings are your bodies way of making you want to have sex, in order to reproduce.

**Challenge:** Colour code or key the statements in the correct columns depending on whether you think they are changes which happen to male bodies, female bodies or both.

**More challenging:** Explain why you think this happens to the body. You can use your notes from the clip for this task.

**Mega challenging:** Analyse - what could we do to make this transition easier and not at all embarrassing for ourselves and our friends?

# Review - what did we think for each one?

## What happens during puberty, to who and why?

There are many changes to the body during puberty, but all of them happen for a good reason, they are making your body develop into its adult form and thus making you capable of sexual or asexual reproduction. So, what are these changes? Which ones happen to girls, which to boys, and which to both? Create a key and colour code the categories according to what you think. We will go through the correct answers afterwards.

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**Mega challenge:** After completing the 'more challenging' task - explain the definitions of testosterone, oestrogen and progesterone. Now hypothesise what might happen without these.

# True or false? Puberty quiz.

## Pair up!

1. Boys usually start puberty before girls.
2. Girls are able to conceive shortly before their very first period.
3. All boys get wet dreams.
4. If you don't have sexual feelings it means you're weird.
5. All girls have their growth spurts before boys.
6. Boys and girls get hairier legs during puberty.
7. Period blood is the lining of the uterus.
8. Only boys voices change in their teenage years.
9. Puberty means you are ready to have sex.
10. Puberty means your body is preparing itself to be able to reproduce.



# True or false? Puberty quiz.

## Mark another team's sheet!

1. Boys usually start puberty before girls. **FALSE**
2. Girls are able to conceive shortly before their very first period. **TRUE**
3. All boys get wet dreams. **FALSE**
4. If you don't have sexual feelings it means you're weird. **FALSE**
5. All girls have their growth spurts before boys. **FALSE**
6. Boys and girls get hairier legs during puberty. **TRUE**
7. Period blood is the lining of the uterus. **TRUE**
8. Only boys voices change in their teenage years. **FALSE**
9. Puberty means you are ready to have sex. **FALSE**
10. Puberty means your body is preparing itself to be able to reproduce. **TRUE**



# Plenary

**Challenge:** Using the information you have learned today, create a leaflet for Year 6s about the changes they will encounter in puberty.

**More challenging:** Explain clearly why these changes happen and why we shouldn't worry about them.

**Mega challenging:** Include information about where hormones come from, why they are needed and also include the terms testosterone, oestrogen and progesterone.



## Learning Outcomes:

Identify the changes both males and females experience during puberty.

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