

Change Is Good!

A Lesson Plan from Rights, Respect, Responsibility: A K-12 Curriculum

Fostering responsibility by respecting young people's rights to honest sexuality education.

NSES ALIGNMENT:

Students will be able to:

PD.8.CC.1 – Describe the physical, social, cognitive and emotional changes of adolescence.

PD.8.AI.1 – Identify medically-accurate sources of information about puberty, adolescent development and sexuality.

TARGET GRADE:

Grade 6 – Lesson 1

TIME: 50 Minutes

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Lesson PowerPoint
- Prepared “*Change Is Good*” cards and header sheets (one set per group of 3 students)
- Letter-sized envelopes in which to place the sets of cards
- Scotch tape (one roll per group of 3 students)
- “*Change Is Good*” Answer Key
- **Homework:** “*Where Can I Learn More about Me?*” (one per student, in English or Spanish)
- **Optional Homework Handouts:** “*All About Puberty*” and “*What Is Puberty*” (for students who do not have Internet access)

ADVANCE PREPARATION FOR LESSON:

- Print out the “*Change Is Good*” cards and cut them up.
- Mix the cards up and place an entire set in an individual envelope. Be sure each group has a set of four header sheets for each category as well (see below).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Name at least one physical, social, cognitive and emotional change young people go through during adolescence. [Knowledge]
2. Identify at least two websites that contain additional medically- accurate information about puberty and adolescence for young people their age. [Knowledge]

A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE:

Language is really important and we’ve intentionally been very careful about our language throughout this curriculum. You may notice language throughout the curriculum that seems less familiar - using the pronoun “they” instead of “her” or “him,” using gender neutral names in scenarios and role-plays and referring to “someone with a vulva” vs. a girl or woman. This is intended to make the curriculum inclusive of all genders and gender identities.

You will need to determine for yourself how much and how often you can do this in your own school and classroom and should make adjustments accordingly.

PROCEDURE:

STEP 1: Introduce the class by saying, “**You are all at a time in your lives where your body is going through some amazing changes. For some of you, this may have started already; for others, these changes may not start for a few years yet. Some of these changes will make you feel really good about yourselves; it’s exciting to see yourself growing up! Other changes may feel weird, like you’re body’s a bit out of control at times. As we go through the lesson, and as you experience these changes, try to always remember that all of these changes are normal. They are all important parts of growing up that everyone goes through. This time of growth is called ‘puberty’ and it’s started by the natural chemicals in our bodies called ‘hormones.’**” (5 minutes)

STEP 2: On the board, write the words *Physical*, *Social*, *Cognitive*, and *Emotional* in a vertical line, one beneath the next. Say, “**Although**

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a great deal of emphasis tends to be placed on the physical changes of puberty, the changes we go through during this time are not simply physical, they are also social, cognitive, and emotional. Social changes have to do with how we interact with others. Cognitive changes have to do with how we think, process information, and learn. Emotional changes have to do with feelings and our awareness of what may or may not cause us to feel certain things.”

Ask the students if anyone can give you an example of a physical change of puberty. Write that on the board next to the word *Physical*. Ask what they think might change socially when you start adolescence/going through puberty. If they cannot think of one, say, **“You may end up spending – or wanting to spend – more time with your friends than with your family.”**

Next, ask what they think might change cognitively when they start adolescence/going through puberty. If they cannot think of an example, tell the class that an example of a cognitive change might be some temporary foggy in how they think – followed by a clearing of that foggy as they get older. Explain that an example of this foggy might include forgetting to bring things with them when they go to or from school. Finally, ask for an example of an emotional change. If they cannot think of one, tell them that they may end up feeling very strong emotions out of nowhere, both positive and negative. Say, **“While there’s a stereotype that only girls feel these strong emotions, students of all genders usually experience this at different times during adolescence.”** (12 minutes)

STEP 3: Tell the class that you will now be doing an activity in which they will be given a number of changes people go through during adolescence and puberty and they will work in small groups to decide which category of change they are. Divide the class into groups of three students per group, and provide each small group with an envelope containing a complete set of “*Change Is Good*” cards, four header sheets (*Physical, Social, Cognitive* and *Emotional*), and one roll of tape. Ask the students to spread the header sheets on the desk (or floor) in front of them. They should then take out the cards, read through them together, and decide which kind of change each is. Tell them that once they all agree, they should tape each card on the corresponding header sheet. Remind them to look up at the board if they forget the definitions of any of the header terms. Tell them they will have about 10 minutes in which to do this work. (13 minutes)

Note to the Teacher: *The Physical change header will have the most responses attached to it; feel free to add a second Physical header sheet, or instruct students to tape some cards to the front and some to the back of the sheet.*

STEP 4: After about 10 minutes, stop the students and ask for a group to volunteer to report back what was on their *Physical* changes sheet. Make corrections as necessary using the “*Change Is Good*” Answer Key. Have a second group read their responses to what was on their *Cognitive* changes sheet, making corrections as necessary. Ask a third group to go through their responses on their *Emotional* changes sheet, making corrections as needed. Ask a fourth group to go through their responses on their *Social* changes sheet, also making corrections as necessary. (18 minutes)

Note to the Teacher: *Sometimes these categories overlap. For example, hormones are physical but affect emotion. It’s okay if it doesn’t perfectly match the Answer Key as long as the responses are reasonable.*

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STEP 5: Distribute the homework sheet, “*Where Can I Learn More about Me?*” and tell the students they each need to complete this sheet with a parent or caregiver and bring it in for the next class. (2 minutes)

Note to the Teacher: *It’s good for students to explore these websites, so if you can, do this in class if you have a large population of students who might not have access to the Internet at home. There are also handouts to accompany the homework for students without Internet access.*

RECOMMENDED ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AT CONCLUSION OF LESSON:

Teachers will assess understanding through the large group activity which achieves Learning Objective 1. For a more individualized assessment, students can put their names on the envelope they received, place their sheets/cards in the envelope, and hand them in at the end of class.

The individual homework assignments will help assess the achievement of Learning Objective 2.

HOMEWORK:

“*Where Can I Learn More about Me?*” homework sheets, for each student to complete online at home with a parent/caregiver and return during the next class session. If the parent/caregiver is more comfortable reading in Spanish, please give the student the Spanish version. If a student does not have access to the Internet at home, please give them the optional homework handouts to help answer the homework questions.

Change Is Good Answer Key

PHYSICAL

- Grow taller (growth spurt)
- Grow hair under arms, on legs, around genitals
- Feel hungrier/Eat more
- Get acne
- Hair texture may change
- Hormone surges can make your moods go up and down
- Wet dreams
- Hips widen
- Grow breasts
- Menstruation/Period
- Voice cracks or deepens
- Muscle growth and/or weight gain
- Sweat starts to smell
- Feel kind of clumsy/ trip over your own feet sometimes

EMOTIONAL

- Anxiety and stress can increase
- May feel self-conscious about how your body looks
- Experience more intense feelings – happy one minute, upset the next
- Feel “paranoid” – “Everyone’s looking at/talking about me!”
- May feel really strong/ powerful because of how your body looks

COGNITIVE

- May want to try different, sometimes risky things
- Might have a hard time making up your mind/feel unsure
- Might have a hard time understanding instructions the first time they’re told to you
- Feel like you forget things people told you just a few minutes before

SOCIAL

- Peer pressure increases
- More interested in being with friends
- Start to become interested in others as more than friends/ finding a boyfriend or girlfriend
- May have more conflict with parents/caregivers
- Might start thinking, “Who Am I?” – try to start defining yourself as a person

Grow taller
(growth spurt)

Grow hair under arms, on
legs, around genitals

Feel hungrier/
Eat more

Get acne

Grow breasts

Hair texture may change

Voice cracks or deepens

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Hips widen

Wet dreams

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Muscle growth and/or weight gain

More interested in being with friends

Start to become interested in others more than friends/finding a boyfriend or girlfriend

Sweat starts to smell

May want to try different, sometimes risky things

May have more conflict with parents/caregivers

Anxiety and stress can increase

May feel self-conscious about how your body looks

Might have a hard time making up your mind/feel unsure

Experience more intense feelings - happy one minute, upset the next

Feel “paranoid” - “Everyone’s looking at/talking about me!”

Might have a hard time understanding instructions the first time they’re told to you

Feel like you forget things people told you just a few minutes before

Might start thinking, “Who Am I?” - try to start defining yourself as a person

Feel kind of clumsy/trip over your own feet sometimes

May feel really strong/powerful because of how your body looks

Physical

Emotional

Cognitive

Social

Where Can I Learn More about Me?
Homework (Lesson 6-2)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructions: With a parent or guardian, visit http://kidshealth.org/kid/grow/body_stuff/puberty.html and click on a few links that look interesting to you. Then please answer these questions:

3. Do you think what you found there reinforces what we talked about in class today? Why or why not?

4. How can you tell this is a reliable website for information about puberty?

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____