

Lesson one: My feelings



Lesson aim:

Pupils can anticipate how their emotions may change as they approach and move through puberty.



Learning outcomes:

- I understand how puberty may affect my emotions
- I have considered how my changing emotions may affect me
- I know how to respond to overwhelming emotions



Resources required:

- Resource sheet: Roller coaster
- Counters
- Water bottles, 2/3 full of water
- Craft materials (glitter, dissolvable paint, beads)

Key words: puberty

Teacher notes:

Some pupils may already be experiencing puberty. Puberty can start from the age of eight years, being triggered by a range of hormonal changes that help the transition from childhood to adulthood. If pupils try to focus on the physical changes of puberty tell them that they will be learning about this in the following lesson.

Begin the lesson by...

Explaining that the next two lessons will be about puberty. Puberty is the process of change when your body matures from a child to an adult. The focus of this lesson is on the emotional changes that puberty can trigger, whilst the next lesson will focus on the physical changes. Explain that puberty is an exciting time as they will develop and experience new emotions. Reassure pupils that all emotions are OK but some are more comfortable than others. Remind pupils of the working agreement.



Activity one: Emotional rollercoaster

Tell pupils that puberty is affected by hormones, and that these hormones affect your emotions. Explain that during puberty hormones can change quickly and frequently, causing emotions to change quickly and frequently. This can result in feeling like you are on an emotional rollercoaster. Reassure pupils that it is a natural experience:

- **Unexplained mood swings** (having different feelings that change very fast)
- **Low self-esteem** (not feeling very good about yourself)
- **Aggression** (feeling very angry)
- **Depression** (feeling very down and hopeless)

Ask pupils to suggest as many different emotions as they can. Write the emotions on the board.

Discuss as a class which emotions feel comfortable (circle in green) and which feel uncomfortable (circle in blue).

Give each pupil a rollercoaster track. Explain that the rollercoaster track represents the cycle of changing emotions that can be experienced during puberty. Ask pupils to reflect on the different emotions written on the board and write/illustrate with expression faces some of these at different points on the rollercoaster track.

Ask the class if any pupils thought of additional emotions to those already identified on the board, and add any extras in a different coloured pen to extend pupil knowledge of the range of emotions that can be experienced.

Reassure the class that no emotion is bad or wrong but some emotions are more comfortable than others.



Activity two: Emotional triggers

Explain to pupils that puberty can cause emotions to change. Reflect on the selection of emotions written on the board. Choosing both comfortable and uncomfortable emotions ask pupils to suggest the things that could trigger those emotions. If they focus on external influences such as 'someone saying something unkind about you', then encourage them to consider the internal influences such as:

- Hormones
- Fatigue
- Hunger
- Stress/anxiety

Give each pupil a counter. Divide the class into pairs. Tell the pairs to take it in turns to move their counter around each other's emotional rollercoaster, stopping at each emotion to share examples of the ways in which someone may behave towards others if they are experiencing that emotion. Reassure the class that no emotion is 'bad', but some emotions are more comfortable than others. However, some behaviours are unacceptable to exhibit towards another person, therefore it is important to manage your behaviour as well as possible.



Activity three: Managing emotions

Explain to pupils that finding activities which are fun and healthy can support them to manage the changing emotions that puberty can cause. Ask pupils to suggest an activity that would help them to cope with each emotion that has been written on the board.

Suggested answers: *physical activity, art, music, talking, reading, relaxing bath*

Acknowledge that what works for one pupil may not work for another. It is helpful to have a range of different strategies to choose from.

Give each pupil a small water bottle $\frac{2}{3}$ full of water. Invite pupils to select from a range of craft material, choosing items and colours that represent and reflect how they feel when they are angry, and add these to the bottle.

Ask pupils to think of a time when they felt very angry about something. Reassure pupils that this is a personal reflection. They will not be asked to share what the situation was. Tell pupils to shake their bottle. This swirling water and added craft items represent an angry storm, demonstrating how their anger can stir up inside of them. Ask pupils to think of something that they like doing to help them feel calm. Tell pupils to put their bottles on the desk and watch the angry storm calm down as they think about this.



Extension:

Divide the class into pairs. Tell the pupils to exchange a 'high-five'. Explain that, like someone offering you a high-five, every action has a reaction. In a similar way our emotional responses towards other people can cause an emotional reaction.

Next tell pupils to work in their pairs to look at the highest and lowest point of each other's roller coaster and create a role-play that demonstrates how the emotions might cause someone to behave and others to react towards them.

Finish the lesson by:

Providing pupils with an opportunity to ask questions. Ask pupils to share some of the emotions that they have discussed in the lesson. Ask pupils to suggest a strategy they could use to help them manage strong emotions so they avoid unhelpful behaviours. Remind pupils that puberty is the process that the body goes through to change from being a child to an adult. Reassure pupils that puberty is a natural process that can trigger emotional and physical changes. Signpost pupils to who they can talk to in school if they have any concerns or questions about what has been covered in the lesson.



Assessment:

Activity one: Pupils identified a wide range of emotions that may be experienced during puberty, reflecting both comfortable and uncomfortable emotions on an emotional rollercoaster.

Activity two: Pupils demonstrated clear awareness of how their emotions might cause them to behave and developed an understanding of the impact that this has on others through discussion.

Activity three: Pupils replicated uncomfortable feelings by creating an emotional storm and identified strategies that they could use to help them manage uncomfortable and overwhelming emotions.

Evidence of assessment: Emotional rollercoaster; thunderstorm bottles.



