

Learning objective	Success criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explain what a period is and what happens when you have one. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can explain what a period is. I can recognise that periods are a natural part of growing up for girls. I can identify ways periods can be managed and who to talk to for support.

Before the lesson

This lesson includes the option to upload an image of the class's PSHE agreement to the *Presentation: PSHE agreement* (see Teacher knowledge).

Watch

Pupil video: What is a period?

Have ready

- Presentation: PSHE agreement* (optional – see Teacher knowledge).
- Presentation: Agree or disagree?*
- Presentation: Say the name.*
- Presentation: Priya's story.*
- Small pots or cups containing the pre-cut *Activity: What do you know about periods?* (one between two).
- Period products such as pads, tampons, period pants and menstrual cups (see Teacher knowledge).
- Strips of paper (two each – see *Wrapping up*).
- Wonder box (see *Wrapping up*).
- Whiteboards and pens (extension – see *Adaptive teaching*).
- The book 'How to Grow Up and Feel Amazing! The No-Worries Guide for Boys' by Dr Ranj Singh (optional – see *During the week*).
- The book 'You Grow Girl! The Complete No Worries Guide to Growing up' by Dr Zoe Williams (optional – see *During the week*).
- Link: Childline – Periods* (optional – see *During the week*).
- Link: Childline – Puberty and your body* (optional – see *During the week*).

***These are external websites and we do not have control over their content - please check before showing them to the children.**

Print

Print in advance of the lesson.

- Activity: What do you know about periods? (pre-cut, one between two).
- Answer sheet: What do you know about periods? (one per table).
- Resource: Word bank (support – see *Adaptive teaching*).

Teacher knowledge

Subject knowledge

- For most people, periods can start at any time between the ages of 8 and 17. This varies from person to person and is normal.
- The link: Childline – Puberty provides age-appropriate guidance. Teachers can use this to support learning and share it with families for reassurance.
- For reliable, adult-facing information to support teachers and parents when responding to questions, use the link: NHS – Starting your periods- **this link has been selected for the teacher only and is not intended to be shown to pupils.**
- The child-facing links listed in During the week are appropriate for pupils. Teachers may wish to review these in advance: Childline – Periods and Childline – Puberty and your body. *
- If it is appropriate for the class and you know of children who have started their periods already, you may wish to share that some girls experience physical changes, such as tummy aches, soreness or bloating, and emotional changes such as feeling sensitive, moody, angry or tired. These changes can happen in the week leading up to a period as well as during the week of the period itself. Reassure children that having a period should not stop them from taking part in everyday activities, such as playing, learning or going outside. Explain that if period pain stops someone from doing these things, they should tell a trusted adult so they can get help.

Health and hygiene

- Use the terms ‘period products’ or ‘menstrual products’. Avoid older terms such as sanitary or feminine hygiene, which may imply periods are dirty.
- When discussing periods, explain the importance of personal hygiene using clear, factual language.
- Avoid words such as dirty or unclean. Focus on practical ways periods can be managed comfortably and safely.
- Signpost to Childline resources if children require further support.

Misconceptions

Some children may think that:

- ‘Period blood means someone is injured or sick’ – period blood does not come from an injury. It is part of a normal, healthy process in the body.
- ‘Periods are something to be embarrassed or ashamed about’ – periods are a normal part of growing up. Talking about them kindly and respectfully helps everyone feel comfortable.
- ‘Learning about periods is only relevant for girls’ – it is important for everyone to learn about periods. Understanding helps people support others and reduces stigma.

Lesson organisation

Period products

- The link: Period product scheme for schools and colleges provides free period products and can support both teaching and access.
- When preparing the lesson, ensure a range of period products is available for demonstration, where possible. This supports understanding and choice. This may include:
 - pads in different sizes;
 - tampons;
 - menstrual cups;
 - reusable products, such as reusable pads or period pants;
 - examples from different price points;
 - environmentally friendly options, where appropriate.

PSHE agreement

This lesson has the option to upload an image of the class’s PSHE agreement to the *Presentation: PSHE agreement*.

Uploading images to a presentation

- Access presentation mode.
- Prepare your lesson with your chosen resources.
- Upload the image by selecting the cloud icon.
- Select the upload image button.

This image will now appear in the *Presentation: PSHE agreement* to display within the lesson.

Cautions

If you know a child has specific issues, consider discussing the lesson with them in advance and adapting it as needed. They might benefit from adult support. If problems emerge during the lesson, consult your Senior Leadership Team. It is the teacher's responsibility to check all resources and lesson content to ensure it is suitable for their class setting.

Ensure this lesson is delivered in accordance with your school's RSE policy and that parents/carers have been informed as appropriate.

Sensitivities

• This lesson focuses on the changes that typically happen during puberty. References to 'girls' and 'boys' refer to biological sex. It may be appropriate to alter the language to refer to female and male bodies to ensure the lesson is inclusive and appropriate for all children in the class.

SEND

• Teaching children with SEND about periods requires clear language, reassurance and repetition. Some pupils may find abstract ideas challenging. Use simple explanations, such as: a period is when a small amount of blood comes out of the body about once a month.

Cultural and personal beliefs

• Some families may have specific cultural or religious views about menstruation. Acknowledge this respectfully while presenting factual, inclusive information.

• Encourage children to speak with trusted adults at home or school if they have questions.

Creating a safe space

• Some children may feel embarrassed or anxious discussing periods and some pupils may already have started their periods.

• Maintain a calm, respectful and non-judgemental atmosphere throughout the lesson, allowing children to raise concerns and ask questions.

• Ensure the children know who they can talk to for support, including trusted adults in school and appropriate online resources.

• When discussing products or experiences, use phrasing such as: "Some people prefer...", "while others prefer...".

Recap and recall

Optional: remind the children of the PSHE agreement created in the [Introductory lesson: Setting rules for RSE & PSHE lessons](#) and recap the agreed rules. If needed, upload an image of the agreement to the *Presentation: PSHE agreement*.

Show the *Presentation: Agree or disagree?* Read the statement out loud. In pairs, ask the children to discuss whether they agree with any of the statements and to explain their reasoning.

Presentation: Agree or disagree?

Upload your own image on presentation mode

Take feedback. Answers could include:

- **Agree:** everyone has strong feelings sometimes and there are ways to help yourself feel better.
- **Agree:** learning to manage feelings independently helps people grow up.
- **Disagree:** even if feelings are normal, they can still feel too big to manage alone.
- **Disagree:** talking to someone can help make sense of feelings.
- **Disagree:** keeping feelings to yourself can sometimes make them worse.

Attention grabber

Remind the children that it is important to know the correct names for private parts so that they can talk about them correctly. Show slide 1 of the *Presentation: Say the name*. Read the definition and ask the children to recall the name of the body part in their head and then move onto the next slide, say the name and ask the children to repeat it.

Presentation: Say the name

Upload your own image on presentation mode

Repeat for the remaining slides.

Main event

Show the *Presentation: Priya's story*. Read the story aloud.

Ask pairs to discuss:

1. **How did Priya feel at first?** (Upset and surprised.)
2. **Why might she have felt like this?** (Answers may include: she might not have expected to start her period; she might have felt worried because she saw blood; she might have felt embarrassed and she might have been unsure who to tell or what to do.)
3. **What made her feel better?** (Remembering that her teacher said this happens to girls as their bodies grow and change.)

Explain that Priya had started her **period**. A period is when some **blood** comes out of the vagina about once a month. Periods happen to girls.

Play the *Pupil video: What is a period?*

Pupil video: What is a period?

Explain that there are different types of period products for girls to use.

Show a range of period products, including **period pads**, **period pants**, **tampons** and a **menstrual cup**. Hold up each item, say its name and ask the children to repeat it.

Explain how each product is used:

- **Period pads (disposable and reusable):** worn inside underwear to soak up blood. Disposable pads go in the bin; reusable pads are rinsed and washed.
- **Tampons:** placed inside the vagina to soak up blood. They have a string for removal and go in the bin after use.
- **Menstrual cups:** placed inside the vagina to catch blood. They are removed, emptied and cleaned.
- **Period pants and swimwear:** have a built-in padded area to soak up blood and are rinsed and washed after use.

Point out that most girls use period pads and pants when they first start their periods but might want to try other options as they get older. Explain that used period products should always be placed in a bin and never flushed down the toilet. Explain that bins are available in school toilets and public toilets. At home, children can ask a parent or carer where to dispose of products.

Reassure the children that periods can start unexpectedly and this is nothing to worry about. Explain that a trusted adult can help such as a teacher or teaching assistant in school, a school nurse or a parent or carer.

What do you know about periods?

Explain to the children that they are going to see what they can remember from their learning about periods. Hand out pots containing the pre-cut strips from the *Activity: What do you know about periods?* (one pot per pair). Place a copy of the *Answers sheet: What do you know about periods?* face down on each table.

Ask the children to take turns to:

1. Pick a paper strip.
2. Read the question aloud.
3. Share an answer.
4. Check using the answers sheet.

Explain:

- **Correct answers:** the child keeps the strip.
- **Incorrect answers:** the strip is returned to the pot.
- **'Start again!' strips:** return all collected strips to the pot.

As pairs finish, invite them to look more closely at the period products.

Wrapping up

Remind the children that only girls have periods and that periods are a normal part of growing up.

Hand out the strips of paper (two each) and ask the children to write one thing they have learnt and one question they still have to add to the wonder box.

Give the children a moment to think quietly about the enquiry question: **What is a period?**

Wonder box

Remind the children to use the wonder box if they have any comments or questions. Explain that if they need an adult to help them, they should write their name or initials on their note.

During the week

Books

- 'How to Grow Up and Feel Amazing! The No-Worries Guide for Boys' by Dr Ranj Singh.
- 'You Grow Girl! The Complete No Worries Guide to Growing up' by Dr Zoe Williams.

Links

- Link: Childline – Periods. *
- Link: Childline – Puberty and your body. *

Vocabulary

menstrual cup

A small, flexible cup placed inside the vagina to collect period blood.

nipples

Small, darker bumps on the chest.

penis

The part of a boy's body used for going to the toilet.

period

When blood comes out from the vagina as part of the menstrual cycle, usually about once a month.

period blood

The blood that comes out from the vagina when someone has their period.

period pad

A soft, flat piece of material worn in underwear to soak up period blood.

period pants

Special underwear to soak up period blood.

scrotum

The soft bag of skin that hangs below the penis.

tampon

A small, soft product placed inside the vagina to soak up period blood.

testicles

Small round parts inside a little bag of skin called the scrotum, just under the penis.

vagina

Part of a girl's body that is inside, between her legs.

vulva

The part of a girl's body on the outside between her legs.

Assessing progress and understanding

Adaptive teaching

Pupils with secure understanding indicated by:

- Explain what a period is using clear, age-appropriate language.
- Recognise that periods are a natural part of growing up for girls.
- Identify ways periods can be managed, such as using pads or period pants.
- Identify trusted adults they could talk to if they had questions or concerns about periods.

Pupils working at greater depth indicated by:

- Explain why periods happen using simple scientific vocabulary from the lesson.
- Explain how to support or reassure someone who has just started their period.
- Confidently challenge misunderstandings or unkind attitudes about periods using factual information.

Pupils needing extra support:

- Could use the *Resource: Word bank* to recall and use correct vocabulary about periods by referring to definitions during discussion and the game activity.
- Could play the *Activity: What do you know about periods?* without the 'Oops' strips to focus on understanding key facts by simplifying the game rules.
- Could listen to explanations of period products and ask questions verbally to build understanding by discussing ideas instead of reading or writing extended responses.

Pupils working at greater depth:

- Should explain why periods happen using simple scientific vocabulary from the lesson (for example, uterus, blood, monthly cycle).
- Should explain how to reassure or support someone who has just started their period, using examples from the lesson.
- Should confidently challenge misunderstandings or unkind attitudes about periods by giving clear, factual explanations.
- Could write notes on a whiteboard during the *Pupil video: What is a period?* to write their own accurate questions and answers for the blank strips on the *Activity: What do I know about periods?*