



## Puberty kits

### Materials

- Examples of products related to puberty, i.e. pads, tampons, bra, shaver, antiperspirant deodorant, body spray, perfume
- Internet access
- Magazines with a focus on teens, lifestyle (e.g. *Dolly*)
- A3 cardex [one per student]

### Before you get started

- The topic of puberty may be an exciting and interesting topic for some. Be mindful that some students may feel embarrassed, uncomfortable or worried learning how their bodies are going to be changing. Increase the comfort of students through introducing this topic with excitement and fun.
- Students are likely to have many questions that they feel uncomfortable to ask. Providing a [question box](#) for students to place their questions in anonymously will ensure their questions are answered in a safe environment.
- The WA Department of Health has developed a free resource for parents: [Talk Soon. Talk Often. A Guide for Parents Talking to their Kids About Sex](#). It is recommended that teachers communicate to parents and explain the topics that will be covered such as healthy relationships, puberty, hygiene, emotions, resilience, etc. and that you are not teaching their child to have 'sex'.
- If you are using an educational video, students can often be distracted if the videos are obviously out of date, as evidenced by the clothes, hairstyles and quality of the video, although this could be used to add humour to the experience. Ensure that any multimedia used is current, relevant, appropriate and sufficient time is allocated for a discussion afterwards.
- Many teachers ask the question of whether or not they should separate the boys and the girls for such classes. Research shows that there is no significant difference for either strategy. You may choose to separate your class by gender, keep them all together or mix strategies by separating your class for certain activities. If you do choose to separate the sexes, ensure that both groups receive the same information. It is just as important for students to learn about their changing bodies as it is for them to learn what the other sex is going through in order to promote compassion. Remember when making this decision that all students need to overcome any potential discomfort in order to be able to effectively communicate sexual matters in relationships when they are older.
- Provide students with a copy of the booklet [Girls and Boys in Puberty](#) to take home and read.
- Refer to the Guide: [Puberty](#) for further content information related to this activity.

### Learning activities

#### Whole Class

This activity introduces hygiene products (e.g. deodorant) that are new and important to young people at this stage in their development. It also educates young people on the power of advertising, specifically how the media can be used to persuade young people to purchase on the basis of body image rather than practicality.

1. Show students a range of hygiene products (i.e. deodorant, shaver, body spray, tampons, etc.).
2. In pairs, using the teaching strategy [think-pair-share](#), students describe the purpose of these hygiene products.
  - *How are these items intended to be used?*
  - *Why are they used?*
  - *How do you feel about the possibility of using some or all of these products in the near future?*
  - *Which items would you describe as essential and which items are a luxury?*
3. Ask:
  - *Why is personal hygiene important when you reach puberty?*
  - *What are the main reasons we need to keep clean?* (to be pleasant to be with and to avoid the spread of disease)
  - *Who can you talk to about getting some of the items that you decided were essential if you don't have them already?*
  - *What hygiene measures are particularly related to menstruation?* (e.g. changing pads and tampons every three or four hours, not flushing down the toilet, not wearing pads in a swimming pool, changing tampons after swimming)

4. Review the physical, social and emotional changes associated with puberty and the implications they can have in regard to personal hygiene (refer to Year 6 Learning Activity: [Managing change and transition](#)).
5. View the body spray ad (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WEI7AQI9X8I&feature=youtu.be>) [0:30min]
  - Use the teaching strategy [think-pair-share](#) to define the key messages of the body spray advert.
  - Ask:
    - *What aspects of the ad do you find interesting? Why?*
    - *What is the underlying message being conveyed in this ad?*
    - *Does this ad make you want to purchase the product? Why/why not?*
6. View the antiperspirant deodorant ad (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5e6WcdM4C2U&feature=youtu.be>) [0:30min] and repeat questions above.
7. Facilitate discussion about how the advertising companies use sex and body image to sell body care products by comparing both ads:
  - *What are the different images being portrayed in both advertisements?*
  - *Why do you think the advertisers of the Impulse Diaries have chosen this scenario to sell their product?*
  - *Which product are you most likely to buy? Why?*
  - *How do these ads appeal to certain genders?*

8. Discuss the differences between antiperspirant deodorant and body spray. For example, antiperspirant deodorant reduces sweat and odour, it is longer lasting and is applied to underarms. Body spray is a fragrance, it has a short-term effect and can be applied all over the body.

### Independent or Small Group

This activity extends students' understanding of the impact media has on purchasing hygiene products by providing students the opportunity to examine and evaluate magazine advertisements of other hygiene products.

1. Using the [brainstorm](#) teaching strategy, students develop a list of essential items that need to go into a boy's and girl's puberty kit (e.g. deodorant, hot water bottle, menstrual pads, soap, shampoo, toothbrush and toothpaste, floss, clean underwear). Use a [T-chart](#) to record the feedback.
  - Reach agreement as a class and have students write the list appropriate to their gender in their workbooks.
2. Using the magazines and A3 cardex, students choose one item and cut out advertisements they find on this product (e.g. different brands or varieties of razors or tampons).
3. Students write:
  - the purpose of the item
  - why they might buy one brand of product over another
  - any questions they would like to ask about the product before they make the purchase.

### 3-2-1 Reflection

1. Discuss how the students may have formed beliefs regarding particular products and whether they are accurate or influenced by marketing and advertising.
2. Discuss the usefulness of the extra features (e.g. wings on menstrual pads or gel strips on razors) or the purpose of bright colours and attractive packaging.
3. Ask:
  - *What does it mean if you have lots of questions about a product?*
  - *How can you obtain accurate and unbiased information about a product?*
  - *Should you buy an item without getting your questions answered?*
  - *Should you buy a product just because your friends buy it?*
4. Answer any questions students have and clarify any misconceptions.
5. Discuss if a product is essential or a luxury, and how the pressure to buy certain items can add stress to families.

### External related resources

The practical guide to love, sex and relationships

A teaching resource from the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University.

## **Topic 1: Changes (Puberty)**

- Puberty – what to expect
- Physical, emotional, social, relational changes