

Year 6

Families and committed relationships

Lesson 1: Starting a family



Note: the content of this lesson covers the non-statutory aspects of the primary Relationships education guidelines

Lesson context and overview

This is the first of three lessons exploring aspects of sex education. This lesson introduces human reproduction and also explores other ways of starting a family.

Curriculum links

Relationships education

Sex education (primary)

Paragraph 67 of the DfE guidelines on teaching Relationships education and Health education:

It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The Department of Education continues to recommend therefore that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born.

Resources

Presentation slides

Pupil worksheets: *Stages of reproduction*; *Filling the gaps about human reproduction*

If you do not already use one, provide an anonymous question box for use in this lesson
Slips or paper or post-its for questions

Note: it is advised to show the video 'Ask the expert: starting a family' at the beginning of this lesson, or to introduce the topic if you feel less confident in doing so. Lesson activities can then be used to reinforce information given in the video. Ensure you have viewed the video and slides before teaching this lesson.

Key vocabulary

sexual intercourse, sex, fertilise, conception, foetus, sperm, egg, pregnant, IVF, adoption, Caesarean section

Learning objectives

We are learning about:

- human reproduction: how babies are made.

Learning outcomes

We will be able to:

- dispel myths about human reproduction
- explain the facts of human reproduction.

Essential teaching guidance

Please ensure you have read the guidelines on creating a safe teaching and learning environment before delivering these lessons. To create a climate of trust for safe and effective learning, ensure that ground rules are established or revisited before delivery.

If pupils ask questions or share details that cause safeguarding concerns (including inappropriate sexual language, or indications of knowledge of sexual behaviour that is inappropriate for their age) please refer to your school's safeguarding policy and procedures. Questions should be encouraged and welcomed throughout this lesson. Please refer to activity 3 below, and to the teacher guidance on ways to manage and respond to any tricky questions.

Starter/baseline activity

Introduce pupils to the objectives and the key vocabulary for the lesson. Introduce the topic of starting a family by asking pupils for anything they know about families that they have learned from their lessons in this topic (e.g. characteristics, diversity, change, family members, etc). Tell the class that today they are going to learn about how people start a family. Make clear that this is an important decision and big commitment for a couple. Remind pupils that conceiving a baby can occur because of the changes that have happened to their bodies during puberty.

Ask pupils to discuss in pairs anything they know, or any stories they have been told about how babies are made or how they come into the world. This is an ice-breaking activity, so encourage pupils to talk about funny stories they may have heard.

Examples could include:

- the stork delivers babies
- babies are found on the doorstep
- you can order a baby online.

Note: depending on the cohort, you may prefer to do this activity with pupils writing what they know or have heard about conception on slips of paper, and then an adult reading these out anonymously to the class. Remember that some pupils will believe myths they may have been told, so respond to these without judgement.

Core activities

1. Use the video to help explain human reproduction to the class, then use presentation slides 4-8 to reinforce information, explaining any of the points in more detail if pupils need more clarification. Alternatively, you may choose to show the slides first, then the video.

Ensure the following information is clarified, reinforced and understood:

- Everyone is made from a male cell (sperm) and a female cell (egg).
- At puberty, boys begin to produce sperm and girls begin to release eggs. (menstruation).
- Having a baby is life-changing and is a very big responsibility.
- It only takes one sperm and one egg together to make a baby.
- Babies are usually made through sexual intercourse, or 'sex' for short.
- Sexual intercourse is when two people agree to get closer to each other in a particular way.
- Sexual intercourse to make a baby is when the male puts his penis inside the female vagina and sperm is released inside her body. The sperm race towards an egg, and when one of these sperm meets with an egg, the egg is fertilised. The egg then embeds in the female's womb and starts to grow and develop as a foetus (the name for a baby when it begins growing). This process is called conception.
- When a woman is going to have a baby, she is pregnant.
- The foetus will grow for nine months (40 weeks) until it is a baby and is ready to be born.
- Babies are either born vaginally (through the vagina) or through an operation called a Caesarean section (C-section)
- Sometimes two people may not be able to make a baby in this way and may choose a different way to start a family.
- IVF is a medical process that can help couples who can't conceive naturally.

- Some couples choose to adopt a baby or child if they want to start a family but can't conceive naturally. Many couples also adopt or foster children after having children of their own.
- Some people and couples choose not to have children.
- Some people raise a child on their own.

After discussing the slides, organise pupils into pairs or small groups and ask them to complete the *Filling in the gaps about human reproduction* worksheet. Ask groups to feed back their answers and discuss these with the class.

2. Using the *Stages of reproduction* worksheet, ask pupils to cut out the stages of conception and birth and present them in the correct order.

Discuss answers with the class and ensure pupils have opportunities to question anything they may not understand. Ensure any continuing misunderstandings or myths are dispelled.

Note: The question box is an essential part of the Year 6 Families and committed relationships lessons. It enables reinforcement of learning and allows time for pupils to reflect and come back with further questions following discussions at home or with friends. It enables questions to be shared in a safe place where children receive the correct answers.

3. Provide each pupil with a question slip (e.g. a post-it note or a piece of paper). Encourage them to write down any questions they may still have and place their slips in the question box provided. Emphasise to pupils that they are in a safe space and that they should not try to look at questions from peers – this is an opportunity for everyone to ask questions that they might have individually.

Remind pupils:

- No question is a silly question.
- Nobody will be in trouble for asking a question about this topic.
- If they don't have a question, they should write 'no question' and post that in the box.
- All questions will be answered, either as part of the lesson or during the next lesson, or, if necessary, with individuals (refer to the accompanying teacher guidance on responding to questions).

Plenary

Discuss any further information or clarification that pupils might need. You may also wish to introduce appropriate sources of additional information here, such as books (e.g. *Let's Talk About Where Babies Come From* (Walker Books)).

Ask pupils to name trusted adults they could speak to if they needed to know anything more.

Assure pupils that the question box will remain in the classroom at all times in case they have any further questions they would like to ask.

Assessment

Use the stages of conception and birth worksheet outcomes to assess pupils' understanding of the facts of human reproduction.