

Making babies

Year: Y6

Subjects and Issues

◆ Growing and changing ◆ Science ◆ Relationships Education (formerly SRE or RSE) ◆
Reproduction ◆ Relationships ◆ Conception ◆ IVF ◆ Adoption ◆ Surrogacy ◆ Pregnancy ◆ Birth

Please note, this session deals with how babies are conceived. It is now not uncommon for children to be conceived through IVF or other means. There may be children in your class who were conceived this way, in which case particular sensitivity will be needed.

Note re National Curriculum links: in the absence of Science Programmes of Study statements for this age group for some elements of this lesson, it is linked to relevant Y5 statements. SCARF provides a spiral curriculum and therefore provides age-appropriate information for Relationships Education at regular intervals in line with recommended good practice.

Introduction

Start by reviewing the class agreement or develop one if not already developed (see Teacher Guidance for further details of setting this up).

Ask the class why we all go through puberty? [So it may be possible for us to have children when we are older, if we want to.]

Activity 1 - Puberty for reproduction

With children working in small groups, distribute the Body Outlines for both a man and a woman. Recap what changes take place during puberty so that our bodies can reproduce. On IWB show outlines and ask class for suggestions, making sure to include:

- Eggs released (periods start) - female
- Hips widen - female
- Sperm produced (sometimes wet dreams) - male
- Erections happen - male

Explain that girls are born with all the eggs already inside their ovaries, whereas boys don't start producing sperm in their testicles until they start puberty.

Activity 2 – Conception

Explain that most babies are created when a man and a woman have sexual intercourse. Emphasise that this usually happens when a man and woman are in a loving relationship and agree to make a baby. This is when the sperm of the man meets with the egg of the woman inside the woman's body. [Use the IWB slides of both female and male Internal Reproductive Organs (labelled) to describe this process.]

In order for this to happen the man and woman often hug and cuddle and kiss, and feel very loving towards each other. They get very close to each other without their clothes on and touch each other's bodies so that the man's penis becomes hard and the woman's vagina becomes wet so that the man's penis can slide inside the woman's vagina.

During this whole process they will both get very excited. If a woman reaches the peak of her excitement, also called an orgasm, she will have a very pleasurable feeling where the muscles in her vagina contract.

If a man has an orgasm he will also have a very nice feeling and release millions of sperm from his penis into the woman's vagina. The sperm will then swim up inside the woman's body to find the egg.

If an egg and at least one sperm meet, the beginning cells of a baby can start to grow. Those cells will need to then implant into the side of the womb so it can grow into a baby over the next 9 months.

Watch animated film which shows this process very simply (The film is just over 1 minute long). It covers very basic intercourse, conception, implantation, pregnancy and birth.

Here is a copy of the script that accompanies the film, for your information:

1. Here is the egg leaving the ovary and travelling along the fallopian tube very slowly.
2. Here is the penis entering the vagina, this is known as sexual intercourse.
3. During sexual intercourse the man releases millions of sperm (about 300 million) into the vagina. Their job is to swim to the egg where one sperm will enter the egg and fertilise it. Twins occur when two eggs are released at once. Two sperm meet an egg each. Occasionally the fertilised egg splits into two - creating identical twins.
4. About six days later the fertilised egg, now known as an embryo, travels down the fallopian tube and implants itself into the lining of the womb. This is where the embryo will continue to grow (if the pregnancy continues).
5. Eventually around nine months later, the baby is ready to be born. Most babies are born head first and will leave the womb, travel through the cervix and down through the vagina. This is called labour. If this is not possible, maybe because the baby is in the wrong position, a caesarean will be carried out where a cut is made to the woman's tummy and womb and the baby will be taken out this way.

Allow for time after the film clip for children to ask questions about what they've seen.

You may also find it useful to supplement this film clip with the following film clips to reinforce the learning about how families are created:

Reproduction - Planned Parenthood (<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/pregnancy>)

How a baby is born (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZDP_ewMDxCo)

All the different ways couples can create a family (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcZJ7qSczcQ>)

Activity 3 - Conception and pregnancy timeline

Next, with children working in the same small groups, hand out the *Conception and pregnancy timeline* cards - one set per group. NB: ensure that each set is shuffled before children begin work (i.e. not in the correct order when they start).

Children work together to arrange the cards in the right order.

When the children have completed this task display the IWB showing the correct order, so that each group can check their answers.

Legal facts

Ask the children if anyone knows how old a person (male or female) has to be to have sexual intercourse. [16 years old]

Explain that:

- This is to protect children from adults who might try to have sex with children under 16 years old.
- Even if **one** of the people is 16 or over, it is illegal before this age.
- It's important that anyone under 16 years old should tell a trusted adult (e.g. parent or teacher) if someone is trying to have sex with them.

Other options

Ask: what if the two people in a relationship and wanting to be parents are a man and a man, or a woman and a woman? Or what if a man and woman aren't able to make babies themselves through sexual intercourse: how else can people make babies or become parents?

Elicit responses to include:

- **Adoption** [where an adult or adults take on legal responsibility for a baby or child whose birth parents are not able to care for them.]
- **Surrogacy** [a way for a couple who cannot make a baby themselves to become parents, with a surrogate mother being pregnant with their child. A surrogate is a woman who agrees to become pregnant, either by: putting a man's sperm inside her vagina to meet one of her own eggs to make a baby (artificial insemination) or where a specialist doctor places an embryo into her womb created by the egg and sperm through IVF* of the couple wanting a baby or donated egg and/or sperm. Surrogacy is legal in the UK provided that the surrogate receives no payment.]
- **IVF*** [where specialist doctors fertilise the egg of the woman with the sperm of the man, but outside of the body. The fertilised egg creates an embryo which is then put back inside the woman so she becomes pregnant and grows the baby inside her uterus/womb.]
- Sometimes a couple use either an egg or sperm - or both - donated from someone else, (if they can't make a baby with their own for some reason).

* IVF - In vitro fertilisation: a process where the egg from a female is combined with the sperm from a male outside the body, in vitro (Latin word for glass - hence the term test-tube babies).

Plenary

Ask the children:

- Does conception always occur as a result of sexual intercourse, or can it be prevented? [Explain that if a man and a woman want to have sex but not make a baby they can use something to stop the egg and sperm meeting, such as a condom - a rubber or plastic tube that fits over a man's penis and catches the sperm when it comes out.]

Summarise the session:

1. Sexual intercourse is legal only for those aged 16 and over in a **consensual** relationship (meaning both people want to have sex).
2. If anyone under 16 years old is in a situation where someone (of any age) wants to have sex with them they should tell a trusted adult (e.g. parent, teacher).
3. Not all babies are created through sexual intercourse, and not all babies have a mum and a dad; there are a number of different family structures, including; two mums, two dads,

one mum or dad, or a granny and /or grandad, for example.

Extension (optional)

The children could look in the media and television programmes, including cartoons, for examples of different family structures and create a class collage.

Learning Outcomes

Children will be able to:

- Identify the changes that happen through puberty to allow sexual reproduction to occur;
- Know a variety of ways in which the sperm can fertilise the egg to create a baby;
- Know the legal age of consent and what it means.