

Puberty Card Game

Answers

These notes offer guidance for the discussion of the Puberty Card Game answers. The notes do not have to be read to the class word for word - key information can be incorporated into the discussion where relevant.

1. A girl gets her first period when she starts secondary school

FALSE A girl may have her first period at any time between the ages of 8 and 16. It isn't necessarily a sign that something is wrong if she hasn't started by 16, but for peace of mind it might be a good idea to see the doctor if that is the case.

2. A period normally lasts 2 – 7 days

TRUE However this can vary from woman to woman. If periods last much longer or are very heavy it may be good to see a doctor, particularly if the periods cause tiredness. The patterns of periods may change over the course of a woman's life.

3. All boys have wet dreams

FALSE Some boys have a few wet dreams, some have a lot, some have none at all – this is all normal. A wet dream happens when a boy gets an erection during the night and ejaculates some semen sometimes without realising. An ejaculation is when strong muscles at the base of the erect penis contract and send the semen shooting out of the penis. On average an ejaculation produces about a teaspoonful of semen.

4. Girls can go swimming when they have their periods

TRUE Providing a girl is able to wear a tampon in the water, there is no reason not to go swimming. However some girls and women prefer not to use tampons, so this would rule out swimming for them.

5. Most boys' voices break during puberty

TRUE At puberty, the production of **testosterone** causes changes in several parts of the body, including the voice. The **larynx** and vocal chords enlarge which cause the voice to grow deeper. Generally, a boy's voice will start to change somewhere between the ages of 11 and 15 — although it can be earlier or later depending on when puberty starts.

6. The blood from a period and the semen from a wet dream are dirty

FALSE There is nothing 'dirty' about menstrual blood or semen. The flow of menstrual blood is connected to the menstrual cycle and the shedding of the lining of the womb. However it is important to remember that if we leave body fluids exposed to the open air for too long they will attract bacteria and begin to smell. Keeping clean and washing clothes/bed clothes is important. In some cultures and religions there are special rituals and traditions associated with menstruation.

7. A boy starts to produce sperm at age 12

FALSE A boy may start to produce sperm at any time between the ages of 9 and 15.

8. Girls who start their periods unexpectedly should go home from school immediately

FALSE Providing the young woman has access to sanitary wear and a fresh pair of pants if necessary, there is no reason for her to go home. Schools should have sanitary protection available for girls who start their period during the school day.