



What's "Normal" During Growth?

Grade-6

Lesson

1

Lesson Objectives – 1. Students identify at least two important facts related to normal growth. 2. Students explain why patience is needed while their bodies are growing.

	Time	Page
Prepare Students	5 min.	106
Attention Grabber	5 min.	106
Explain/Demonstrate/Practice		
True & False Quiz.....	10 min.....	107
Review	5 min.	108
Total Time	25 min.	

- Equipment & Materials**
- ✓ The "Normal Growth Quiz" in Appendix 6-1A, p. 109.
 - ✓ The "Normal Growth Answer Key" in Appendix 6-1B, p. 110.
 - ✓ Pencils

- Teacher Preparation**
- Prior to the start of this lesson:
- ✓ Make one copy for each student of the "Normal Growth Quiz/Answer Key."
 - ✓ Refer to the "Normal Growth Quiz/Answer Key."
 - ✓ Gather pencils—one per student.

This lesson addresses the following content standards:

Michigan Standards		National Standards	
Physical Education	Health Education	Physical Education	Health Education
None	Standard #1	Standard #6	Standard #1

This lesson relates to Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health Education:

Grade 6 Lesson V1-4: Food for Growth.

Additional Preparation

This lesson may generate discussion that reveals a risk of eating disorders among students. Before presenting the lesson, verify procedures for referring a student for evaluation and intervention.

Key Message & Background Information for Teachers**Key Messages:**

My body will change in its own unique way as I grow.

Background Information:

Growing from childhood to adulthood can be difficult for many children. Researchers have identified "dissatisfaction with their bodies" as a serious problem among children and adolescents. This can become a problem for children as young as five. Helping children understand and anticipate normal patterns of growth may help ease concerns and prevent unhealthy behaviors aimed at controlling body size and shape.

Prepare Students**5 min.**

Gather students in a group.

Introduce the lesson:

- Today we are going to be talking about what are normal changes in sixth grade bodies as they are growing.

Attention Grabber**5 min.**

Tell students:

- Each of you looks different today than you did one year ago. Each of you will look different from how you look today in one year. You've reached the age where bodies are changing.
- One of the things that changes is the length of your arms.
- For fun, let's take a quick look at where you are at.

Have the students stand up and raise their right hands as high as possible. Have them look around at one another and eventually line up against a wall in order of the height of their raised hands.

Tell students:

- The changes in your arm length and height are just a couple of the changes that are happening to students around your age. Everyone in this class is at a slightly different point in the change process, but the process everyone goes through is very similar.
- Our bodies all grow and change at different rates, and it can be frustrating at times. It is important to be patient with your body and understand that everything will eventually be okay!

True & False Quiz

10 min.

Explain/Demonstrate

Practice

Tell the students what they are going to do:

- Being in a growing body can be stressful, especially if the ways or speed that you're changing are totally unexpected or don't seem to be the same as other kids.
- Today we're going to do an activity to learn more about normal changes in bodies when they're growing.

Have the students divide themselves into groups of three or four.

Give each student one copy of the "Normal Growth Quiz" and a pencil.

Tell the students:

- I will be reading 12 statements. Each group is to decide among themselves whether each statement is true or false.

Begin the quiz. Read the first statement and ask students to decide whether the statement is true or false. Give the groups time to discuss their answers. Then give the answer and provide a brief explanation (when available in the key).

Continue the quiz through the remaining 11 statements.

Normal Growth Quiz/Answer Key

	Statement	Discussion Points
1	Girls' hips widen during adolescence	TRUE. The hips widen because the bones in the hips move to make room for future pregnancy.
2	Both boys' and girls' feet, arms, legs, and hands grow more slowly than the rest of the body during adolescence.	FALSE. The feet, arms, legs, and hands often grow faster than the rest of the body.
3	Girls' voices deepen and may "crack" unexpectedly during adolescence.	FALSE. Voice changes happen to boys, not girls.
4	Both boys' and girls' skin gets oilier and acne may develop during adolescence.	TRUE.
5	Girls' overall body fat decreases during adolescence.	FALSE. The reverse is true. Boys and girls start their growth spurts with about the same amount of fat in their bodies. But the hormones of adolescence cause some fat tissue to be deposited in girls' bodies during adolescence. This is not only normal, but necessary for the completion of their development and to be able to bear children.
6	Boys' overall body fat increases during adolescence.	FALSE. The reverse is usually true. Boys usually start adolescence with slightly more body fat than when their adolescent growth is complete.
7	Boys' growth spurt generally begins earlier than girls' during adolescence.	FALSE. In general, girls' growth spurts begin earlier (average age 9 or 10) than boys' (average age 11 or 12). However, every body is different. Many young people begin their growth spurt well before or well after the average.
8	Boys' breast tissue sometimes swells during adolescence.	TRUE. About half of all boys experience temporary breast development while they're growing. Remember, this is temporary (often lasting about 6 months) and is not at all related to breast development in girls.
9	Girls develop roundness around their hips and stomach during adolescence.	TRUE. Natural chemicals in the body, called hormones, cause fat tissue development.
10	The weight of a person's bones increases during adolescence.	TRUE. The weight that is gained in adolescence is not only from fat, much of it is from increases in bone and muscle.
11	Boys and girls are less hungry during adolescence.	FALSE. Immediately before and during periods of growth, boys and girls generally feel extra hungry. It is important to listen to your body and eat when hungry so that your body can grow. Remember that the kind of food you eat influences your growth and health. Be sure to make the healthiest food choices possible.
12	Facial features, such as noses and mouths, grow at different rates during adolescence.	TRUE. Facial features (in both boys and girls) grow at different rates during adolescence. A nose that seems out of proportion needs to patiently wait for the rest of the face to catch up.

Distribute the "Normal Growth Answer Key" to each student.

Review

5 min.

Say to the students:

- Your bodies contain genes that hold a plan that controls the pattern of your growth.
- Your body's plan for you is slightly different from everyone else's plan.
- Even though you know that your body has a plan, you can still get frustrated, since you don't know exactly what that plan is. You have to be patient and trust your body to follow the instructions, even though you don't know what those instructions say. That takes a lot of patience. Hopefully you've learned some facts today that help you understand the process better.

Ask the students the following questions:

- What did you learn from the quiz that you didn't know before, that you think might help you be less frustrated as you continue to grow? (Students should respond by reviewing the facts learned from the quiz.)
- Why is it important to be patient with your body while you're changing and growing?

Normal Growth Quiz

Read each statement aloud and let student teams decide if the statement is true or false. Note: Answer key appears below.

1. True False Girls' hips widen during adolescence.
2. True False Both boys' and girls' feet, arms, legs, and hands grow more slowly than the rest of the body during adolescence.
3. True False Girls' voices deepen and may "crack" unexpectedly during adolescence.
4. True False Both boys' and girls' skin gets oilier and acne may develop during adolescence.
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12. True False Facial features, such as noses and mouths, grow at different rates during adolescence.

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