

LESSON 5:

LIVING WITH A MENSTRUAL CYCLE

Overview: Pupils revise the menstrual cycle in more detail, and consider different experiences

Great For: Revealing how experiences of periods can differ; signposting pupils to support services if needed

Resources Needed:

Menstrual Cycle
Worksheets; pre-prepared
statements for What is
Normal?, scissors and glue

Prep Time Needed:

15 mins

Works best in:

Classroom

Number of participants:

Full Class; split into groups of 2-5 pupils

Time Needed:

50 minutes

Set Up:

Print and cut the Normal-not normal statements; Print
one set of worksheets per pupil (pages 3&4 of this PDF)

Age 13+

Learning Outcomes:

Pupils understand the physical and emotional changes across the menstrual cycle, and when to seek help; Pupils continue to develop self-care and empathy around menstrual experiences.

Who is this for: *This lesson would work well for students who have already had a lesson on the Menstrual Cycle (Lesson 2) in previous years. It provides opportunity for discussion, challenging myths and misconceptions and building empathy for menstrual experiences.*

CAN I
EXERCISE ON
MY PERIOD?

SURE YOU CAN.

CAN I EXPECT A
PERSONAL BEST?
MAYBE NOT.

LESSON 5:

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Introduction Introduce the topic to the class
5 minutes Establish ground rules (see Teachers' Guide)
Remind the class that periods can be a sensitive topic

Starter Activity Use Activity 3 – What is Normal? – see separate PDF.
20 minutes Each group (of 2-5 pupils) is given a pile of statements and is asked to sort them into piles – Normal; Not Normal and Not Sure

Go through each statement, asking each group in turn to say if it is normal or not normal. Explain why something is or isn't normal, and the appropriate action if they encounter something in their life.

Main Activity Explain that we will be recapping our knowledge of the menstrual cycle
20 minutes Give pupils one set of worksheets each. Ask them to cut out the four uterus diagrams and arrange the different phases in order and label them with the appropriate phase names. Glue into position

Ask the class to report back, describing the menstrual cycle – ask each group in turn to describe one phase starting with the Menstrual Phase. Correct any gaps in knowledge
[If time] Show pupils 'Your Period in 2 minutes' – a video by Glamour

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOi2Bwvp6hw> Ask them to consider the ways in which the menstrual cycle is portrayed in this video. What are the positive things about the video?; are the recommendations about eating and behaviour useful?; how might it be problematic to portray women and menstruation in this way? Discuss.

Plenary Remind pupils that everyone experiences the menstrual cycle differently
5 minutes Ask the groups if anything they learned surprised them

This is an opportunity to discuss common myths and misunderstandings and how they might affect people with periods

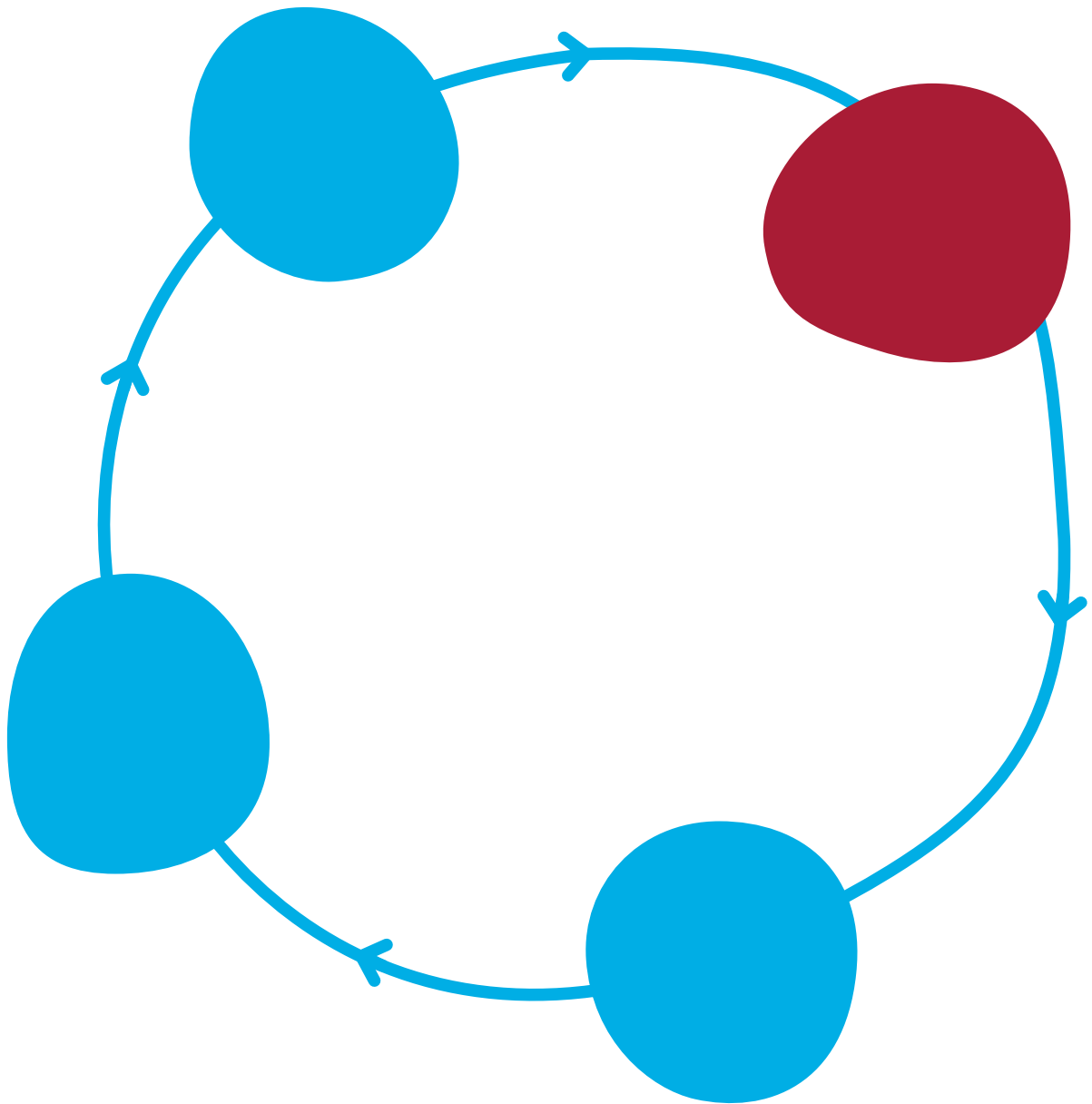
Remind class that everyone is different and that if a person's menstrual cycle related symptoms are not eased by looking after themselves and causing them to regularly miss school or stop them doing what they want to do then they should speak to a health professional they trust

REMEMBER

EVERYONE'S
PERIOD IS
DIFFERENT

LESSON 5: WORKSHEET 1

Cut out the phases of the menstrual cycle, and arrange them in order on this diagram.



LESSON 5: WORKSHEET 2

Cut out the phases of the menstrual cycle, and arrange them in order on the diagram.

LUTEAL PHASE

High levels of oestrogen and progesterone mean the womb prepares everything needed by a growing embryo. Without fertilisation, oestrogen and progesterone levels fall, and the womb starts to shed its lining as the next menstrual period

MENSTRUATION

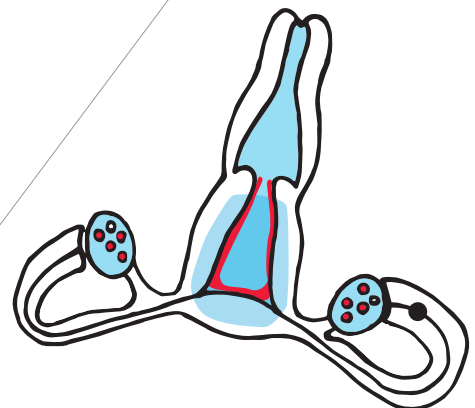
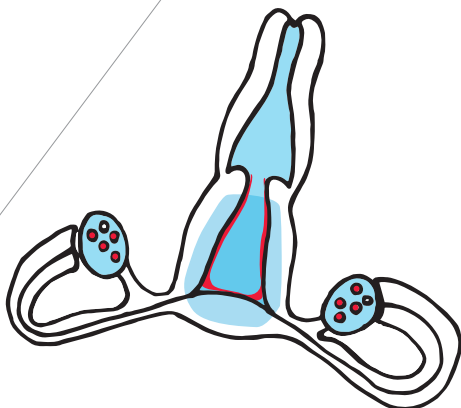
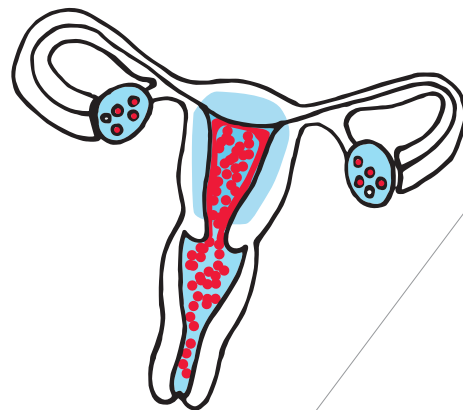
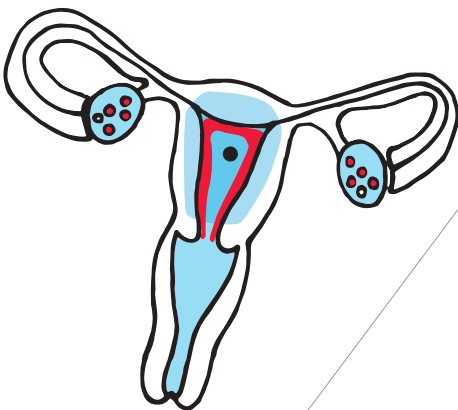
This is the period, when the womb lining breaks away and flows out through the vagina. Menstrual bleeding normally lasts between 3 and 7 days, brought about by low levels of oestrogen and progesterone

OVULATION

This phase begins when the ovary releases its egg. The egg stays viable once it is released for about 12 hours. Ovulation happens randomly between the two ovaries, and if one ovary is removed or missing then the remaining ovary ovulates every cycle

FOLLICULAR PHASE

Hormones from the pituitary gland stimulate eggs in the ovaries to start developing. Several develop at once, but eventually only the strongest egg is left growing. Its follicle (the fluid filled sac that protects it) starts to release oestrogen which causes the womb lining to thicken



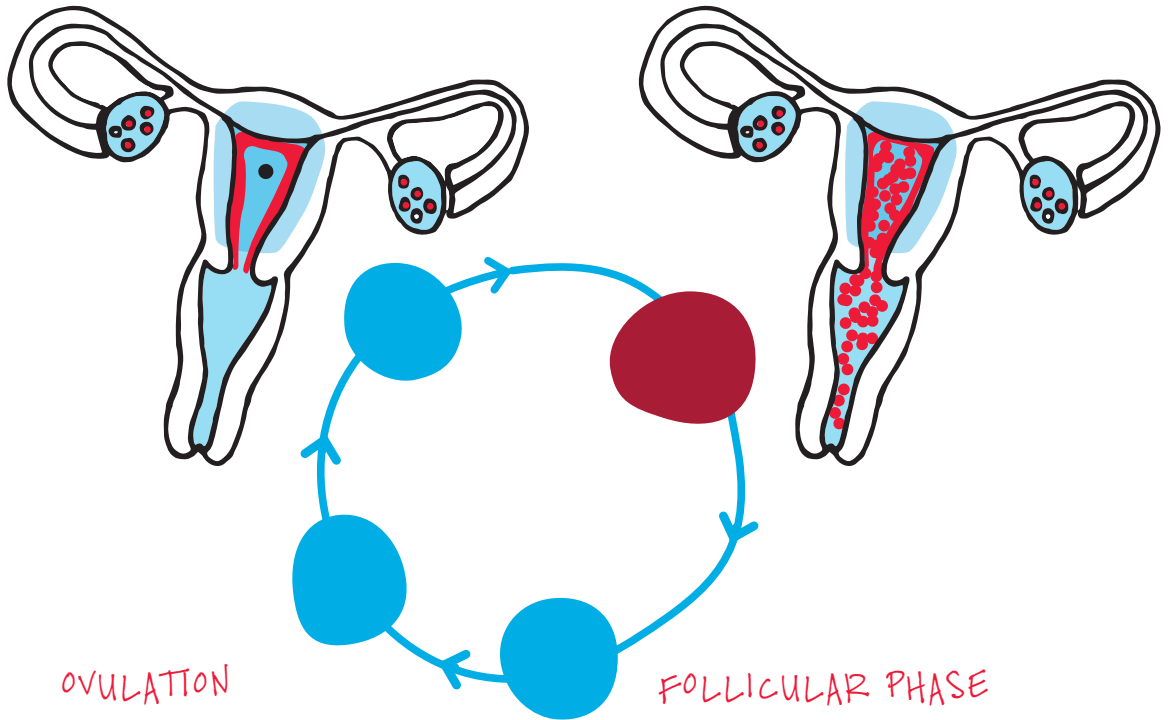
LESSON 5: WORKSHEET ANSWERS

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