

## ACTIVITY 4:

# DO YOU THINK THEY HAVE PERIODS?

**Overview:** Pupils decide whether someone is likely to have periods based on an image

**Great For:** Getting pupils to think about menstruation across the life cycle

<b>Resources Needed:</b>	Pre-prepared piles of statements (see overleaf)
<b>Prep Time Needed:</b>	10 mins
<b>Works best in:</b>	Classroom
<b>Number of participants:</b>	Full Class divided into small groups
<b>Time Needed:</b>	15 mins
<b>Set Up:</b>	Print and cut one set of photographs per group (pages 2-3)

Age 13+

### Learning Outcomes:

Pupils are able to develop self-care and empathy around menstrual experiences.

**Activity:** Give each group a set of photographs and working together; ask them to decide whether the person in the photo has periods or not. Ask them to sort the photos into piles of 'Definitely', 'Definitely Not' and 'Not Sure'.

Go through the photographs in turn, asking groups to explain where they placed each photo and why. Use this as an opportunity to talk them through the answers.

[If possible] Use My Period cards 9 – 13 (female life cycle); 7 (cycle variation); and 45 (trans\* periods). Hand one card to each group and ask them to look over it. Does it change how they have ordered their cards? Ask each group to explain their card to the rest of the class.

### KEY POINT 1

You can't tell by looking at someone whether they have periods or not. Not all women have periods and not all people who have periods are women – some trans\* and non-binary folk do too.

### KEY POINT 2

People's experience of periods differ across their lives. Most women will have periods fairly regularly from menarche (first period) to menopause (last period). However, there are many factors that can affect the menstrual cycle and cause periods to stop or become irregular. These include:

- Pregnancy and breast feeding
- Stress and poor health
- Some medical conditions
- Some contraceptives
- Being overweight or underweight
- Prescription drugs
- Illegal drugs
- Having a hysterectomy (which is where your womb is surgically removed)

## ACTIVITY 4: PHOTOS FOR DO YOU THINK THEY HAVE PERIODS?

Print and cut the following photos.





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Print and cut the following photos.



## ACTIVITY 4: ANSWERS FOR TEACHERS



**Maybe:** Most people start their periods between the ages of 8 and 16. The average age is 12 in the UK.

Although there are some physical signs that someone might be about to start having periods (e.g. breasts beginning to grow), you can't tell just by looking at someone whether they have started their periods or not.



**Probably Not:** Human males don't have periods because they don't have the same reproductive organs as females (a womb, ovaries, etc.).

But not all men were born as men. Many trans men still have periods. You can't tell if someone is trans\* just by looking at them, so you can never tell whether someone who looks like a man has periods or not.



**Maybe:** Most women between menarche (first period) and menopause (last period) have periods. But there are lots of reasons why women don't have periods including:

- Stress and poor health
- Some medical conditions
- Some contraceptives
- Being overweight or underweight
- Prescription drugs
- Illegal drugs
- Having a hysterectomy (which is where your womb is surgically removed)

## ACTIVITY 4: ANSWERS FOR TEACHERS



**Maybe:** You can never tell by looking at someone whether they have periods or not. Many people who use wheelchairs have periods – it will just depend on their medical condition and their age like everyone else.



**Definitely Not:** When you are pregnant hormones are produced to stop ovulation and your normal menstrual cycle. Some women experience light bleeding in the early months of pregnancy, but heavy bleeding when you are pregnant can be a sign that something is wrong.



**Maybe:** After someone has had a baby – even a caesarean birth – they are likely to bleed for 4-6 weeks. This is called lochia.

The menstrual cycle can take a while to return to normal. During breastfeeding your body releases hormones that suppress ovulation. It may be 6 months or more before the menstrual cycle returns to normal.



## ACTIVITY 4: ANSWERS FOR TEACHERS



**Maybe:** Just as you can never tell how old people are from looking at them, you can never tell if they've reached menopause



**Maybe:** Just as you can never tell how old people are from looking at them, you can never tell if they've reached menopause



**Definitely Not:** While you can never totally tell for sure, most older people do not have periods.

## ACTIVITY 4: ANSWERS FOR TEACHERS



**Probably Not:** It is very rare for people to start their periods before the age of 7, although there are some cases.

The average of age of puberty has been getting steadily lower since the early 20th century, when girls had their first period at age 16 or 17. Now the average age for a first period is closer to 12, with some studies reporting that about 10 to 15 percent of girls enter puberty at age 7 or younger, a phenomenon known as precocious puberty.



**Definitely Not:** Human babies almost never have periods



**Probably Not:** Human males don't have periods because they don't have the same reproductive organs as females (a womb, ovaries, etc.).

But not all men were born as men. Many trans men still have periods. You can't tell if someone is trans\* just by looking at them, so you can never tell whether someone who looks like a man has periods or not