

**Sample Script to Explain the
Female Reproductive System
Teacher Resource ONLY**

Yesterday, we talked about puberty. Remember that puberty is the time of life when the sex organs mature into adulthood. Females usually reach puberty around the age of 11-12 which is about one year earlier than males do. During puberty, the production of estrogen, which is the female sex hormone will increase. Estrogen is a hormone that is produced by the ovaries. Estrogen causes changes to occur in the female's body during puberty and also helps to regulate the female's menstrual cycle. Everyone goes through puberty to help prepare the body for adulthood and to also prepare the body to reproduce (or in other words to be capable of having a baby).

There are 5 main parts in the female reproductive system. These parts include the Ovaries, there are two ovaries in the female body. The ovaries hold the female reproductive cell which is called the ova. The ova is also sometimes called the egg cell or the ovum. The ova or egg cell is very small; it is about the size of a grain of sand. Another reproductive system body part is the Fallopian tubes, which are the tubes that connect the ovaries to the uterus. There are two fallopian tubes in the female body. The uterus which is in the center of the reproductive system. The Uterus is where a baby grows and develops. The cervix, which is the opening of the uterus and the vagina, which is the muscular passage way from the uterus to the outside of the body.

Now we are going to talk a little more about these body parts and also about some of the processes that take place in the female body. One of the first signs for females that puberty has begun is pubic hair beginning to grow and breasts starting to develop. Usually these two changes will start about 2 years before the period starts. The period is referred to as menstruation and is a part of the menstrual cycle. The menstrual cycle lasts for 28 days and repeats every month. A female will start the menstrual cycle when she reaches puberty.

Females have a menstrual cycle and periods because of their reproductive systems, which allows them to become pregnant in adulthood.

Now we are going to take some time to review what happens during the 28 day menstrual cycle every month. On day one of the menstrual cycle, the female has her period, also called menstruation. During menstruation, the inside lining of the uterus sheds, so blood and tissue from the uterus will pass through the female's vagina to the outside of the body. A female will use a maxi pad or a tampon during this time to collect the blood that passes from the body. A female will menstruate, or have her period, for about 4-7 days. The length of the period is different for each female.

At the end of the first 7 days of the menstrual cycle, menstruation will stop. At this point, the inside lining of the uterus will stop shedding and will now begin to build back up and thicken. The lining in the uterus is starting to build up to prepare for a pregnancy. Every month the body will go through this process to prepare the uterus to hold and nourish a baby. While the lining is beginning to thicken, an egg cell is maturing in the ovary and is

preparing to be released. Each month, halfway through the menstrual cycle, between day 13-15, one mature egg cell will be released from an ovary and will be swept into the fallopian tube. When an ova is released from an ovary, it is called ovulation. One way to remember this is that the “o” words go together. An OVA is released from an OVARY during OVULATION. The ova will travel the length of the fallopian tube and into the uterus. If the egg is fertilized by the male reproductive cell, called the sperm, the egg cell will attach to the inside lining of the uterus. Most of the time this will not happen though. If the egg is not met by a sperm cell, the egg cell will dissolve, or in other words break down, when it reaches the uterus. At this point, the lining of the uterus is still thickening. Hormones will signal to the body that the female is not pregnant. This will prepare the body to begin to menstruate again. On day 28, the current cycle will end and the cycle will then start over on day one when menstruation, or the period begins.

When a female first begins her menstrual cycle, it is normal for the cycle to be irregular. It can take a year or two for the female’s body to settle into a regular cycle for the menstrual cycle.