

Teaching Resources

NOTES FOR KS2 AND KS3 TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS

Age 9+

Explore themes of: Puberty | The female body | Mental health and wellbeing

Body Image | Confidence | Relationships

Subject Checklist: PSHE/RSE | Biology | Literacy | Art and design

Note: It is advised that teachers read through this pack to check it is suitable for their setting. The pack is primarily aimed at girls however the questions and activities could be adapted for mixed groups at the teacher's discretion.

[Purchase You Grow Girl](#)

Resources written by Shapes for School



About the book

NHS GP and *This Morning*'s resident doctor, Dr. Zoe Williams, is here to explain everything girls need to know about puberty – plus lots more.

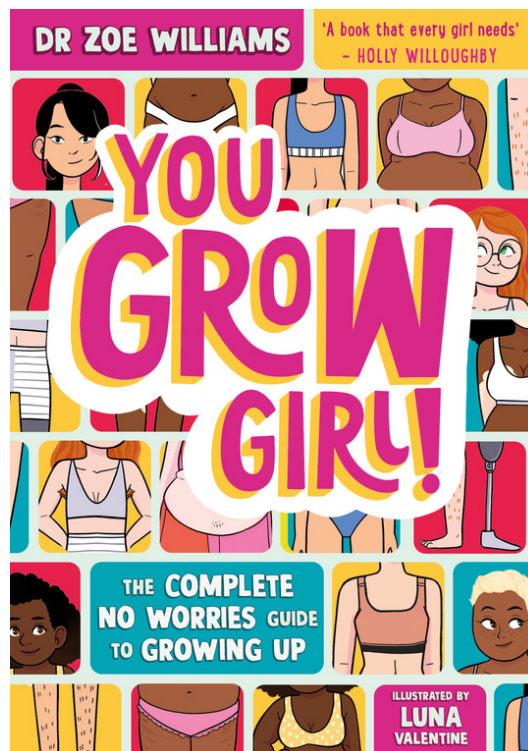
Growing up is exciting, but it can also be a strange and confusing time. This book will help you ride your rollercoaster more smoothly!

We'll cover the usual things such as periods and body changes, but also equip you with the knowledge you need to flourish and thrive in today's world, from self-care and recognising healthy relationships to talking about your mental health with confidence.

Packed with easy-to-understand information, myth-busting advice and fun illustrations, this is the ultimate growing-up guide for girls aged 9+ who want to feel empowered, informed and positive about becoming the very best version of themselves.

Content includes:

- Looking after your body, from healthy eating and hygiene to body confidence and exercise
- Mental health awareness, self-care and hobbies
- Managing relationships, from family and friends to crushes
- A sensitive, age-appropriate introduction to sex, consent and privacy
- Navigating the online world, including social media, bullying and cyber safety
- Case studies of amazing and inspiring women



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Contents

Theme 1 – Your body

Activities: Write down or discuss questions about puberty; label a diagram of the vulva.

Objectives: Know the key changes that take place for females during puberty; be able to name the different parts of the external female genitalia.

Theme 2 – Managing your emotions

Activities: Annotate an 'Emotions Pool'; create a 'Mood Dip Menu'.

Objectives: Understand that it is normal to experience a wide range of emotions and that emotions may be particularly heightened during puberty; know a range of strategies to help manage 'mood dips'.

Theme 3 – Body image

Activities: Create a collage of all the amazing things your body can do.

Objectives: Consider different factors that may influence body image including the portrayal of women in magazines, online and adverts; appreciate your body for what it can do rather than how it looks.

Theme 4 –Relationships

Activities: Sort emotions into those that may be felt in a healthy relationship and those that might be felt in an unhealthy relationship.

Objectives: Be able to describe the difference between a healthy relationship and an unhealthy relationship; know where to go to get help and support if in an unhealthy relationship.



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Theme 1: Your Body

Discussion Questions

Have a read of extract 1 and then discuss the following questions.

1. Why do you think it's important to learn about puberty?
2. 'Puberty is the same for everybody' – true or false?
3. In what ways do you think the time in your life when you go through puberty might be wonderful and in what ways might it be challenging?
4. What kind of person do you want to be in ten years' time?
5. What changes is your body likely to go through during puberty? Make a note of any questions that come to mind based on what you've read. You may like to discuss your questions with your class, or your teacher may provide an anonymous questions box for you to put your questions in. As you continue to read *You Grow Girl*, you will find the answers to many of your questions. Remember, if you are unsure about anything, you can always speak to a trusted adult such as a parent, carer, doctor, nurse or teacher.

Activity: The vulva

The more you know about your body as you go through puberty, the more confident you will feel. So, it's time to learn about the external female genitals, aka... the vulva!

Have a read of extract 2. Now, see if you can label the diagram of the vulva in activity 1 using the following key words:

- Vaginal opening
- Urethral opening
- Anus
- Clitoral hood
- Labia Majora or outer lips
- Mons Pubis
- Labia minora or inner lips
- Perineum

When your diagram is complete, can you point to:

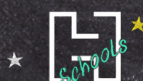
- The parts that protect the vulva
- The glans clitoris
- Where you pee from
- Where you might choose to insert a tampon or menstrual cup
- The part that protects the clitoris
- The soft tissue between the vaginal opening and the vulva



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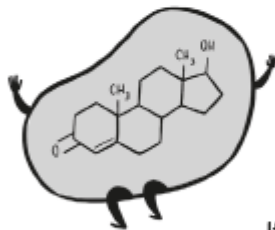
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Extract 1

CHAPTER 1

PUBERTY, AKA WHAT IS HAPPENING TO MY BODY?!

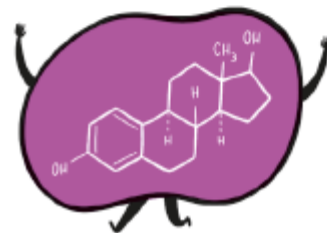
First things first, what even is puberty? Well, in a nutshell, puberty is when your body transitions from being a child's into an adult's. This is a **MASSIVE** thing, so it's not at all surprising that it can feel like a physical and emotional rollercoaster.



Puberty usually starts between the ages of eight to thirteen in girls and nine to fourteen in boys. If a girl starts showing signs of puberty before eight, it's called early puberty and it's recommended that she see her GP.

If you think this is happening to you, ask a parent, carer or other trusted adult to help you contact your doctor.

Nobody can tell you exactly what your experience of puberty will be like because it's completely different for each and every one of us, and it can be both a wonderful and challenging time. But I am here to reassure you that you will get through those challenges and you can come out the other side feeling happy and confident with the person you've become.



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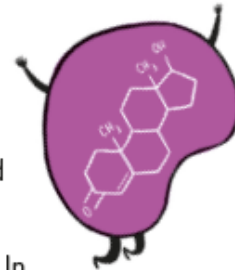


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Extract 1

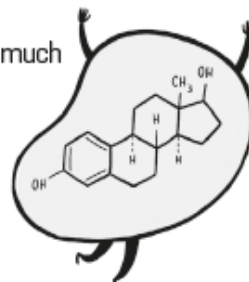


During puberty, you will notice things about yourself and those around you changing – from the way you look and feel, to the different relationships you have with people. In this chapter I'm going to talk you through the physical changes happening in your body. I'm a firm believer that knowledge is power, so once you have a better understanding of what's happening to you physically, you'll feel fully equipped to handle those changes, and you will have a better understanding of any emotional changes you might experience too. This is one of my main reasons for writing this book, as I so wish I'd had this kind of information when I was growing up!

HORMONES

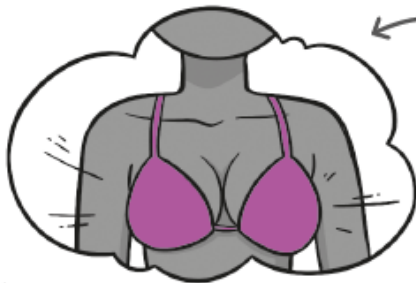
Speaking of emotional changes, you may have noticed that your mood has already started swinging up and down and all around. One minute you're on top of the world and the next it feels like the end of the world! Please don't worry; this is perfectly normal. Let me repeat that in upper case for emphasis: **PLEASE DON'T WORRY; THIS IS PERFECTLY NORMAL!** Mood swings during puberty are mainly caused by chemicals known as hormones – be warned, you'll be getting to know these guys very well throughout this book.

Once girls enter puberty, they begin producing much more of a hormone called oestrogen, and boys begin producing more of a hormone called



Extract 1

testosterone. These hormones cause your body to start changing in several different ways. We are all perfectly unique, so we will experience changes to different extents to other people. Here are some pictures to show how your body will change . . .



BREASTS – you will start to develop breasts and your nipples will get larger



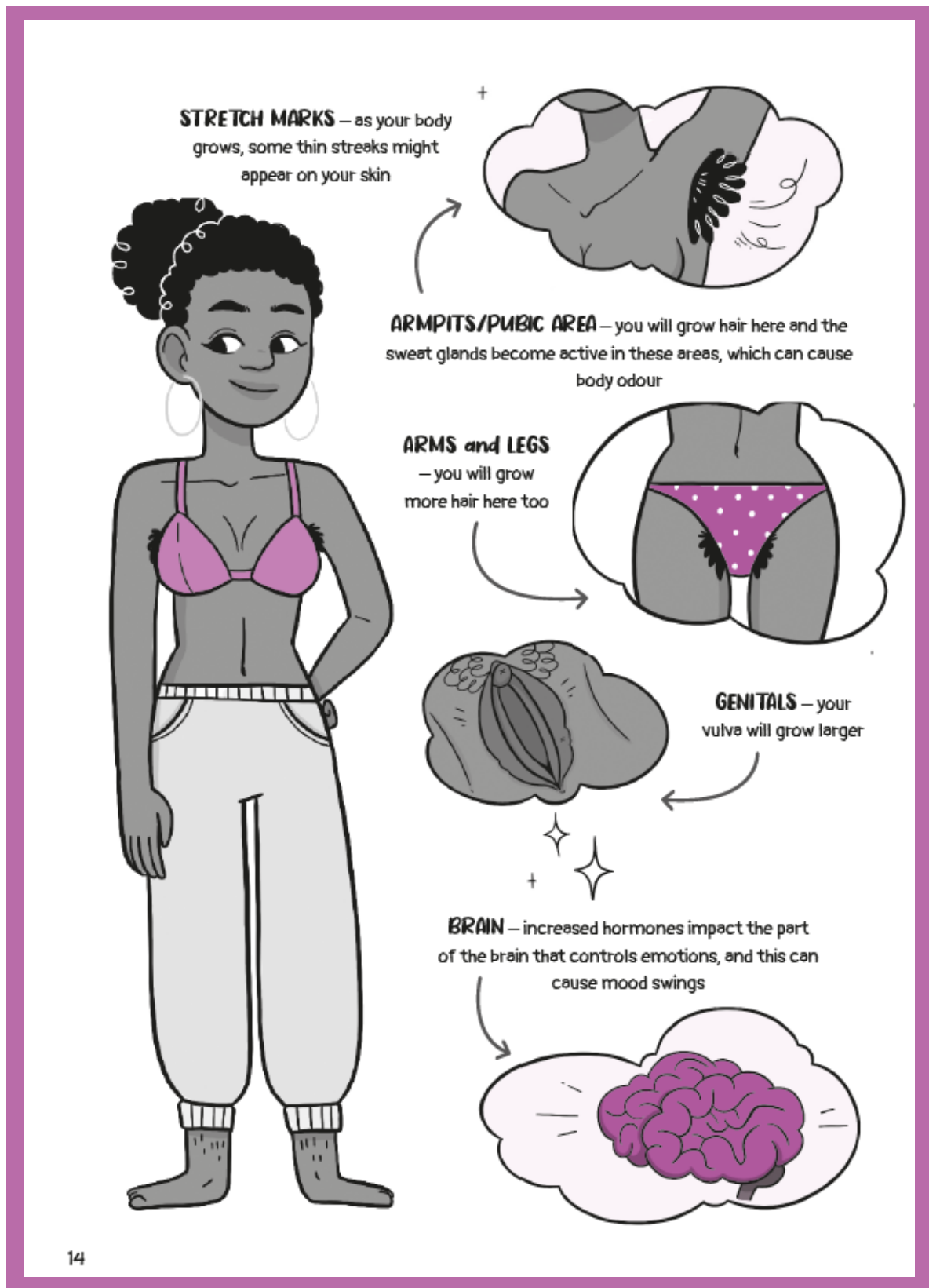
SKIN – increased sebum (oil) production in the skin can cause skin and hair to feel greasier and can cause acne on the face, neck, chest and back

BODY – your body will become taller and might become curvier around the hips and breasts

PERIODS – you will start your menstrual cycle



Extract 1



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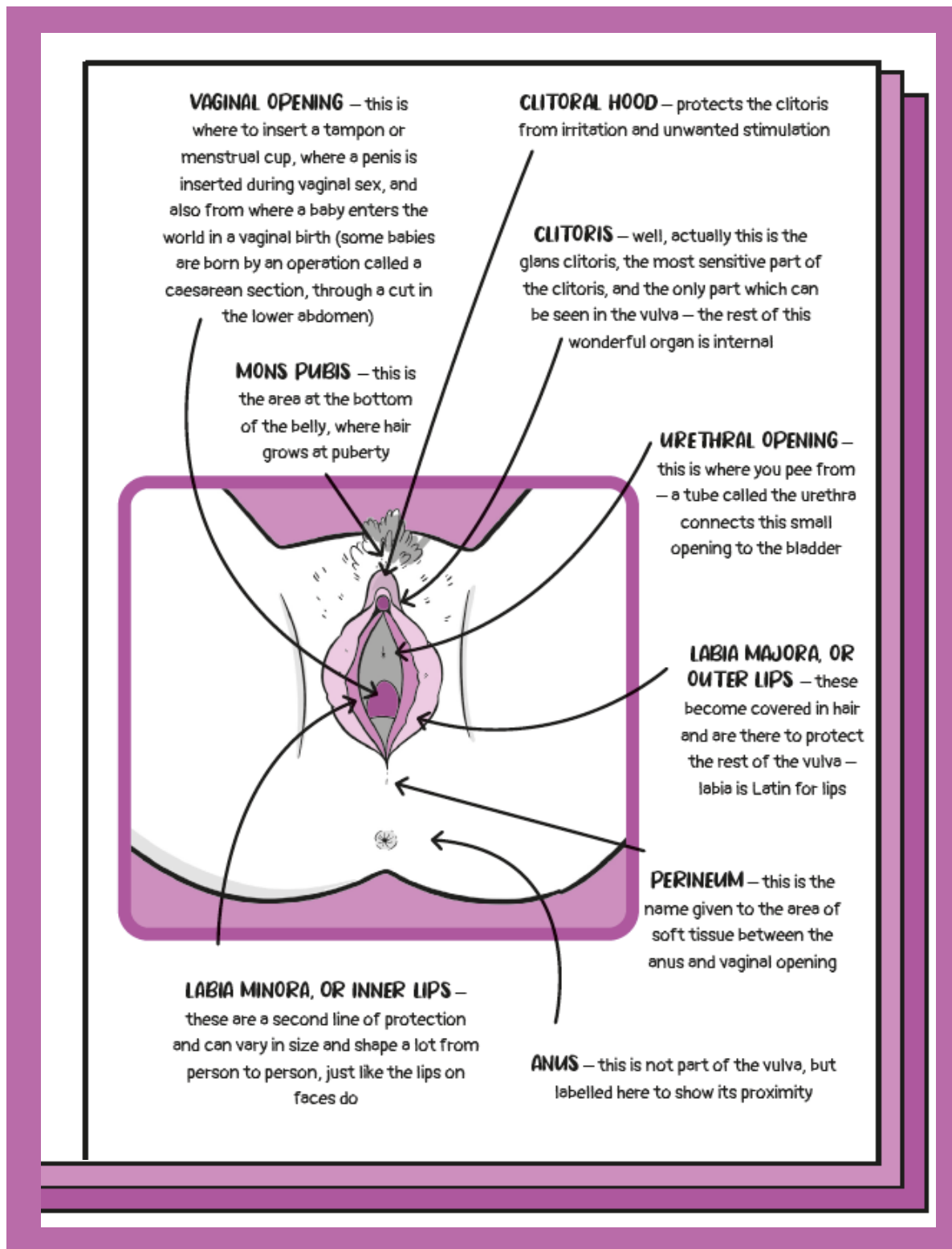


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Extract 2



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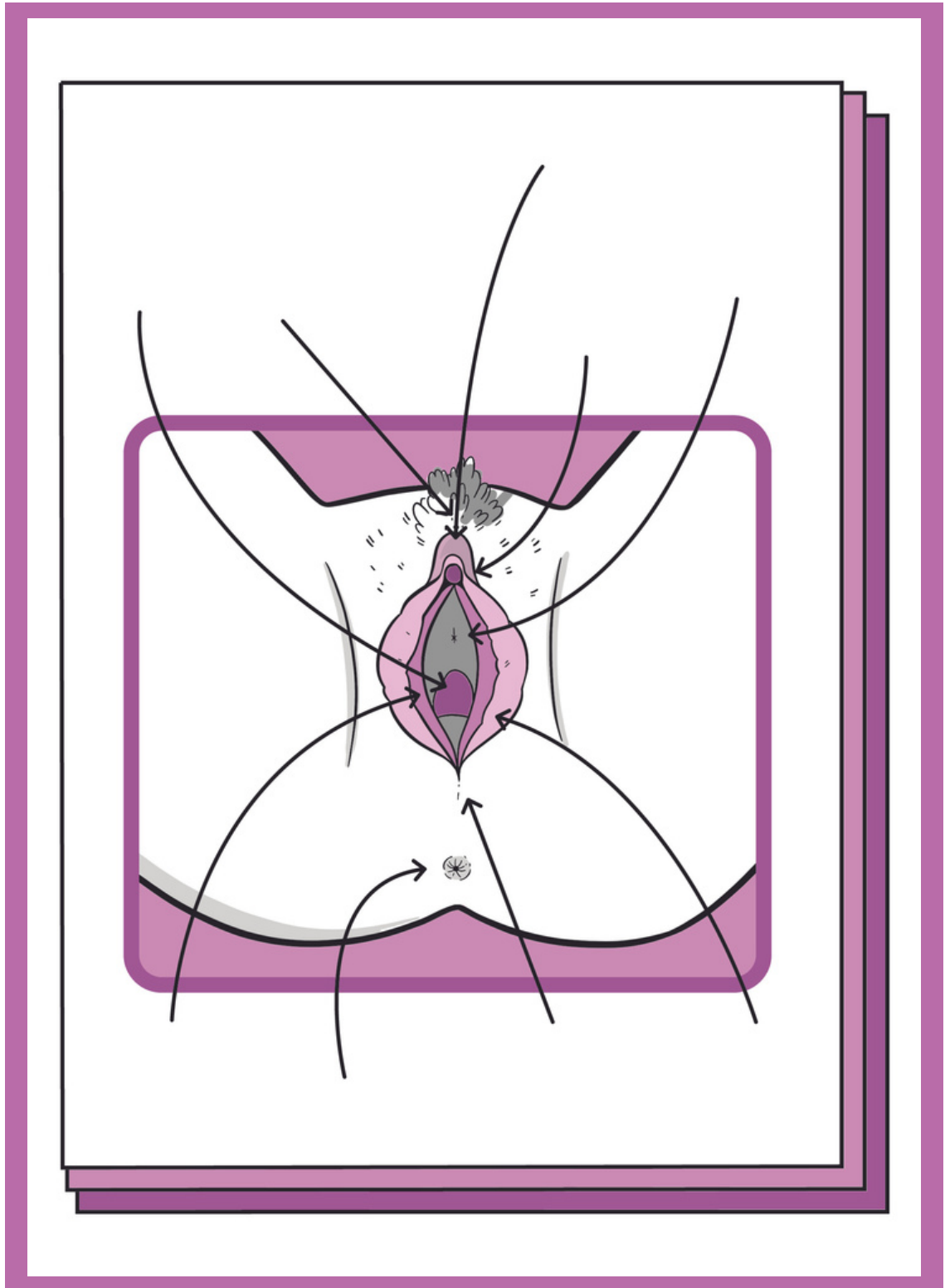
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Activity Sheet 1



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Theme 2: Managing your Expectations

Discussion Questions

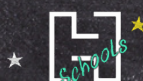
1. Can you describe some of the physical changes that happen during puberty?
2. What emotions do you think people might experience during puberty?
3. What do you think Dr Zoe means when she says that you might feel like your emotions are 'all over the place'? Have you ever felt like this?
4. Think back over the past couple of weeks, what emotions have you experienced? (Probably quite a few!?) Write all the emotions you have experienced in the emotions pool below. You can look at the image in extract 3 for ideas. If you feel comfortable, you might like to share your emotions words with your class. It can sometimes be useful to see that other people feel similar things. Remember, it is completely normal to experience a wide range of emotions!
5. In extract 4 Dr Zoe gives some top tips for when your mood dips. Can you choose one of Dr Zoe's tips to try together as a class?



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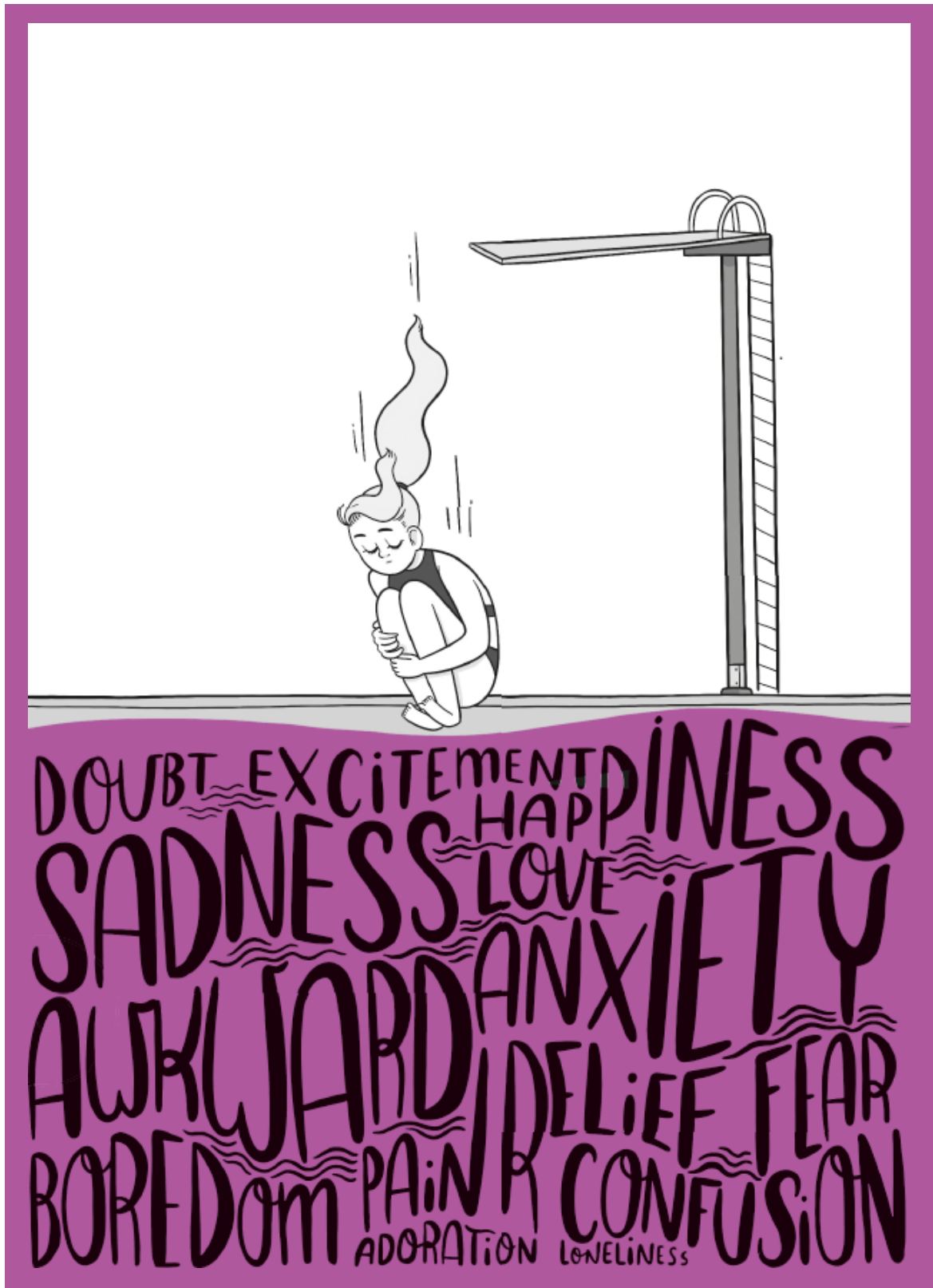
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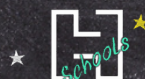


Extract 3



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Extract 4

CHAPTER 3

WONDERFUL YOU AND GROWING YOUR CONFIDENCE

Well, after all of those physical changes you're likely to experience in puberty, it's hardly surprising if you end up feeling like your emotions are all over the place. Periods, spots, PMS, vaginal discharge – coupled with school, homework, friends and family – it's a lot! But puberty doesn't have to be a hormonal horror story, I promise. Before we dive into this pool of emotions, here are some of my favourite tips for when your mood dips . . .

Managing your emotions

Acceptance

Firstly, there are no 'bad' feelings. You're allowed to feel sad or grumpy or angry at times, and actually, I've found that when you accept these so-called negative feelings, they leave a whole lot quicker than when you fight them. As the saying goes, what you resist persists. So the next time you're feeling down, just say to yourself, 'I'm feeling down today, and that's OK.'



Extract 4

Distraction

Distraction can be another great way to lift yourself out of a funk. Binge on a fave TV series, lose yourself in a video game or put on some music and dance round your bedroom. Go for a walk. All can be great ways of taking your mind off things.

Write it out

Write your feelings on to the page. Journaling can be a great way of alleviating the pressure. And if you're feeling cross or sad about something someone's done to you, why not write them a letter that you'll never send but just as a way of getting things off your chest.



Breathe yourself calm

A really quick and simple way of calming your emotions is through your breathing. Focus on breathing slowly and deeply, in through the nose and out through the mouth. I guarantee that after a minute of this you'll be feeling calmer.



Theme 2: Managing your Expectations

Activity: Mood Dip Menu

You are going to create a menu of different things you can do to help when you are experiencing a mood dip!

Which of Dr Zoe's tips do you think you might find helpful? Do you know any other strategies you can use when you are feeling difficult emotions? What helps you feel calm and happy? Write a list of options on your menu. You could add symbols or pictures too.

When you have finished your menu, share it with a friend. Does their menu give you any good ideas? When do you think you might use your menu?

Mood Dip Menu



Theme 3: Body Image

Discussion Questions

1. Can you explain what the phrase 'body image' means?
2. In what way do you think pictures in magazines, adverts and online might affect how young women feel about their bodies?
3. Do you think boys experience similar pressures to girls when it comes to body image?
4. Look at extract 5. Do any of Dr Zoe's fun facts about the body surprise you?
5. What might you say to somebody who is struggling with their body image?

Activity: My amazing body

Your body is incredible and it allows you to do so much. You are going to create a collage of all the wonderful things your body allows you to do!

Begin by thinking about things you enjoy doing or activities that have meaning for you. You might like to include things like dancing to your favourite song, holding your baby cousin, making a pizza, playing with a pet or watching a sunset. Draw pictures of each of these activities or cut out images from magazines to create your collage.

How do you feel when you look at your collage? You might find that focusing on all the things your body allows you to do helps you to feel positive about your body. There is so much to feel grateful to your body for.



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Extract 5

Body image

Our bodies are amazing. They do so much for us and carry us through life, so it's a real shame when they become a reason for us losing confidence. But during puberty when your body is changing so much, it can be hard adjusting and you can end up feeling really self-conscious about the curves that are suddenly starting to appear in random places, not to mention the hair and the spots.

We also live in a culture that's obsessed with appearance, so it can be really hard to stay immune to this. You probably know this but so many of the images you see around you in adverts, in magazines and online have been manipulated, airbrushed and filtered so you can't see all the things that every human body has – like stretch marks and spots and cellulite in all sorts of places. This makes us think that there is something wrong with our bodies but there isn't at all. In fact, a lot of the images we see around us would be impossible to achieve in real life! As a result, a lot of teen girls and women end up using filters on their social media photos, which mask these so-called blemishes, and it can make us feel ashamed of our true selves.

A great way to counteract everyone's obsession with appearance is to focus on how amazing our bodies are instead. Sport and exercise can play a great role here. When you are able to run a certain distance or jump a certain height, it helps you appreciate your body for what it can do rather than how it can look.



Extract 5

Rugby really helped me become more positive about my body and less obsessed with how I looked. As soon as I was in the changing room showers with all those amazing women and their vastly different bodies – complete with stretch marks, cellulite, spots and pubic hair – I recognised that I was in awe of those real women because of what their bodies could *do* on the field, much more than the fake images of women who looked a certain way in magazines.

Here are some fun facts about your body to help you appreciate it more . . .

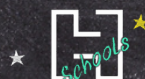
- Every second your body produces 25 million new cells
- There are around 60,000 miles of blood vessels in your body – enough to go around the world twice!
- There are 22 different bones in your skull
- You have between about 2 million and 5 million sweat glands on your body
- Humans are one of the best creatures in the world at, long-distance running
- Weight for weight, your bones are stronger than steel



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Theme 4: Relationships

Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of a healthy relationship you have in your life, perhaps with a parent, carer, sibling or friend? How do you feel when you are with this person?
2. What does it mean to 'take advantage' of somebody? Can you think of an example?
3. What is the best way to respond to an unhealthy relationship?
4. Dr Zoe shares an experience she had in a relationship when she was younger. If you could go back in time and speak to her then, what advice would you give her?
5. Can you name one trusted adult that you could talk to if you were worried that you or a friend were in an unhealthy relationship?

Activity: Healthy and unhealthy relationships

With a partner, write out each emotion below on a piece of paper. Now, for each emotion, discuss whether you think this is an emotion you may experience in a healthy relationship and or an emotion you may experience in an unhealthy relationship. See if you can sort the emotions into two groups. Can you think of any more emotions to add to each group?

When you have finished, have a look at your two groups. What colour do you think best represents each group?

Now, look at the unhealthy relationship emotions. If a friend confided in you that they were in a relationship which made them feel some of these emotions, what could you do?

Finally, look at the healthy relationship emotions. How could you help people you are in a relationship with (such as your friends and family) feel these emotions when they are with you?

Comfortable
Judged
Confident
Tense
Calm
Safe
Powerless
Humiliated

Ashamed
Accepted
Scared
Relaxed
Happy
Nervous
At ease
Belittled



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