

## Periods quiz: True or false?

## Teacher guidance

- 1. Girls are born with thousands of eggs inside their ovaries.**  
**TRUE.** Girls are born with thousands of eggs inside their ovaries. From puberty onwards, one egg is released approx. every month from the ovaries. It travels down the fallopian tube to the womb. This is called ovulation. If the egg is not fertilised by a sperm, it will dissolve with the lining of the womb and be released in blood through the vagina. This is a period.
- 2. It's normal for a girl to start her period anytime between the ages of 8 to 17.**  
**TRUE.** Periods can begin anytime between 8-17 years old, although many girls start between the ages of 11 to 13. It is important to know that a girl is totally normal if she starts her period early (8 years) or when she is older (16-17 years). Everyone is different. If a girl is over 17 and her periods have not started, it may be worth checking this out with a doctor.
- 3. All girls bleed for the same amount of time when they have their periods.**  
**FALSE.** Everyone is different. Some girls bleed for two days, others for eight days. A girl's periods can also change over time, lasting for a longer or shorter time and can be heavier or lighter.
- 4. A period happens because a girl's body has too much blood in it.**  
**FALSE.** A period happens as a result of the biological process a female body has for releasing an unfertilised egg along with the womb lining, which builds up each month after ovulation. It is also a sign that the girl's body is healthy and everything is working normally.
- 5. If a girl finds period pains very painful it's best to 'grin and bear' it.**  
**FALSE.** Periods shouldn't be too painful to bear and girls shouldn't have to experience them in silence. Period pain varies from person to person and from one period to the next. It's usually caused by contractions (tightenings) of the womb muscle. Exercise, relaxation, or a hot water bottle on a girl's stomach may help. If it's really bad, she could see her doctor to help.
- 6. Tampons and sanitary towels come in all shapes and sizes.**  
**TRUE.** There are all sorts of tampons and sanitary towels (thin highly absorbent pads) available. They vary in size, absorbency and shape. One isn't better than any other. They are just all different. Each girl will find the right one to suit them.
- 7. Period blood can be smelly once it leaves a girl's body.**  
**TRUE.** It only starts to smell once it leaves the body and comes into contact with air. It's a good idea to change sanitary towels every 2-4 hours throughout the day while having a period. Tampons **MUST** be changed as often as directed on the pack (usually at least every four to eight hours) to avoid toxic shock syndrome - a bacterial infection that has serious consequences.
- 8. Sometimes a girl can feel grumpy or moody around the time of period starting.**  
**TRUE.** It is common for girls to become more emotional and sometimes tearful in the days/week leading up to a period. This is because of the change in hormone levels at this time. It's a good idea to recognise what is happening and for girls to look after themselves during that time. If it gets really bad, a girl could see her doctor for help or advice on how to deal with it.
- 9. Tampons can get lost inside girl.**  
**FALSE.** A tampon cannot get lost inside the vagina, as it is just a "dead end". It will stay there until it's removed. The string of the tampon is firmly attached to the tampon and will not break off.
- 10. It's a good idea to practice putting tampons in before girl starts their periods.**  
**FALSE.** It's not a good idea to practise putting a tampon in until a girl actually has a period. Tampons can cause dryness and irritation if the girl's body is not ready. Most girls start using sanitary pads first as they are easier to use and allow a girl to see what sort of period they have and how long it lasts. Girls could also log it in a diary. This way they might start to see a pattern and be able to predict roughly when they will have their next period (although to begin with they can be a bit irregular). As a girl becomes more confident they can use tampons, which can be particularly useful if they want to do physical activities, like swimming.