

# Our Changing Bodies

## Lesson Plan

**Resource:** H&PE Elementary Resources

**Unit:** Human Development and Sexual Health

**Grade(s):** 5

**Lesson:** 1 of 5

## H&PE Curriculum Expectations

**2019 H&PE Curriculum Expectations:** A1.3, A1.4, A1.5, D1.3

## Materials

- Access to a shared document (chart paper and markers or online interactive tool)-
- Sticky notes (paper or online interactive tool)
- **Teacher Resource: Anecdotal Recording Chart**
- Teacher Resource: Changes During Puberty (*included at the end of the lesson*)
- Teacher Resource: External Reproductive System Answer Key (*included at the end of the lesson*)
- Teacher Resource: Internal Reproductive System Answer Key (*included at the end of the lesson*)

## Learning Goals

- We are applying our self-awareness and communication skills to show respect for our body and for others.
- We are learning to identify the body parts of the reproductive systems and explain the physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty.

## Overall Assessment

Using the Teacher Resource: Anecdotal Recording Chart, observe and note students' ability to identify the reproductive body parts and the physical and emotional changes which occur during puberty.

## Minds-On

Share the learning goals with the class and co-construct success criteria with students.

Use the following teacher prompts to lead a group discussion to establish common ground rules/agreements (consider displaying the common ground rules/agreements in the learning space for reference throughout the unit).

- **Teacher prompt:** "We will be talking about how our bodies change as we grow. It is important that we all learn about these changes, so we know what's happening with our bodies as we grow. Some of you may be very familiar with these changes and talk about them at home and for some of you, this may be new, and you may feel a little shy or uncomfortable. These are normal feelings. We are going to come up with some rules together to make everyone more comfortable."
- **Teacher prompt:** "What would make you feel more comfortable and willing to share? What rules or agreements do we need to make to create a safe and inclusive learning space for everyone?"

*Student responses:*

- - "We need to listen to each other and respect what others say."
  - "Don't use put downs; be sensitive to others' feelings and careful about making careless remarks."
  - "We need to be respectful of each other's differences."
  - "It's okay to pass if we don't want to speak."
  - "We need to feel that it is ok to ask questions we have; don't ask personal questions of others."
  - "We need to use correct names of body parts and terminology to show respect for our body."

- “We need to remember to discuss puberty topics responsibly outside the classroom, so we have a respect for confidentiality.”
- “When we refer to another person, use “Someone I know...” rather than the person’s name.”
- “It’s ok to make a mistake. What is important is that we are treating each other with respect and kindness.”
- “It’s okay to have fun.”

Consider using a question box throughout the unit for students to ask questions anonymously and then answer the questions at appropriate intervals in the lesson/unit.

## Action

Display pictures of flowering plants, various plant seeds (e.g., maple key, acorn, inside of a tomato) as well as animals with their young (e.g., ducks and ducklings, bear and cubs and a human parent with a young child) for students to view. Ask students to identify what each of the objects displayed in each picture have in common (e.g., these are animals with their young, plants produce seeds so that there will be more plants next growing season, most living things have the ability to reproduce.) Using Direct Instruction, explain that like all living things, humans have the ability to reproduce. The changes that happen at puberty prepare a person’s body for reproduction.-

Write the following words for students to view: vulva, vagina, cervix, uterus, fallopian tubes, ovaries, endometrium, and clitoris, scrotum, urethra, testicles, prostate gland, seminal vesicles, and vas deferens. Using an [Elbow Partner](#) strategy, have students identify what these words represent and any terms with which they are unfamiliar (e.g., these are all part of our reproductive system, these are all part of how humans are able to reproduce, some of these words describe parts of an internal reproductive system that some people have and other words describe parts of an external reproductive system that some people have, some of these words describe parts of the reproductive systems of intersex people [consult the Notes to Teachers section for the definition of “Intersex”). These body parts mature and develop as we grow.

Use the following teacher prompts to lead a large group discussion to identify the internal and external reproductive body parts introducing the words, the genitals and the importance of using correct terminology.

- **Teacher prompt:** “How did you feel when you read these words? Did you know most of them or were many of them new for you? How do you feel when you hear, say and talk about the words that describe the human reproductive systems?”

*Student responses:*

- - “It doesn’t make me feel uncomfortable or shy to use the correct terms because we use them at home.”
  - “I was uncomfortable with using the words. I wasn’t sure of the correct names.”
  - “I am not used to using them to talk about my body.”
  - “I felt a little embarrassed to say them aloud.”
  - “I hadn’t heard of some of them. I don’t know what a lot of them mean.”
- **Teacher prompt:** “Why do people use slang words for body parts related to reproduction and sexuality? Why is it important to use the correct terms?”

*Student responses:*

- - “They may not know the correct term, or they may not feel comfortable using the correct words.”
  - “They want to hide their feelings of being uncomfortable with the topic.”
  - “Some slang words are offensive.”
  - “Using the correct scientific term lessens confusion and misunderstanding.”
  - “It shows respect and care for our body and for others.”-

Consider referencing the Teacher Resource: External Reproductive System - Answer Key and Teacher Resource: Internal Reproductive System - Answer Key as a visual illustration of the parts of each reproductive system.

Remind students that knowing and using these terms will be important when talking about how the body changes at puberty and will help them talk about their concerns and questions with their health care provider and other trusted adults. Consider having students rate their comfort level on a scale from 1 to 5.

Divide students into groups of four and provide them with access to a shared document. Use a [Graffiti Strategy](#) and the following teacher prompt for students to generate and record ideas about the physical and emotional/social changes that people might experience during puberty.-

**Teacher prompt:** “There are many changes that take place in the body as children mature and become adults. These changes begin during puberty. Some of these changes are physical - we can see them on their bodies, and some are emotional and social. Generate a list of all of the physical and emotional/social changes that you can think of that people might experience as their body grows and matures.”

Using Direct Instruction, explain that the pituitary gland (which is located at the base of the brain, behind the bridge of the nose) is important in controlling the body’s growth and development. It produces and releases chemical “messengers” into the bloodstream. These chemicals are called hormones and cause physical changes. (*Adapted from: Region of Peel, Healthy Sexuality Program. (2011). [Growing Up! A handbook on puberty and maturing.](#)*)

Continuing with Direct Instruction, use the following teacher prompts to describe the most common changes that occur at puberty and when the changes take place.

**Teacher prompts:**

- “Some people are assigned a sex at birth based on their sexual anatomy and some may not have been assigned a sex at birth. It is a choice parents make.” (*Adapted from The Law Foundation of Ontario. (2020). [Making gender and name changes on identity documents.](#)*)
- “During puberty, some body parts mature and develop. For people assigned female at birth, the body parts that develop may include the vulva, vagina, cervix, uterus, ovaries, fallopian tubes, endometrium, and clitoris. They may also develop breasts and menstruate for the first time. An increase in weight and an increase in body fat sometimes occurs and is normal.” (*Adapted from: Region of Peel, Healthy Sexuality Program. (2011). [Growing Up! A handbook on puberty and maturing.](#)*)
- “For people assigned male at birth, the body parts that develop may include the penis, scrotum, testicles, urethra, prostate gland, seminal vesicles, and vas deferens. They may also become more muscular, get deeper voices, grow facial and body hair, and their penis and testicles may grow larger.” (*Adapted from: Region of Peel, Healthy Sexuality Program. (2011). [Growing Up! A handbook on puberty and maturing.](#)*)

- “Some people may have been assigned male or female at birth but are born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the typical definitions of male or female. They might appear to be female on the outside but have mostly typically male anatomy on the inside or appear male and have typically female anatomy inside. They might experience puberty differently or may go through puberty later. This is all healthy and normal during puberty.” (*Adapted from: Planned Parenthood. (n.d.). [What happens during puberty if I'm intersex?](#)*)-
- “There are typical age ranges when these changes occur, but it is normal for each person to develop at their own rate. Changes may start in people who were assigned female at birth between ages 8 and 13, and in people who were assigned male at birth between ages 9 and 14. For some individuals, the changes will begin earlier and for others, the changes will start later. These changes take place when the body is ready, and this is normal.” (*Adapted from: Region of Peel, Healthy Sexuality Program. (2011). [Growing Up! A handbook on puberty and maturing.](#)*)
- “At puberty, nearly all people experience some growth of hair under the arms, on the legs, and on the pubic area, while the amount, colour, and texture of hair varies from person to person. No two people are exactly the same and this is also true of the development of body parts during puberty; genitals vary in shape, size and colour and that is normal.” (*Adapted from: Region of Peel, Healthy Sexuality Program. (2011). [Growing Up! A handbook on puberty and maturing.](#)*)

Instruct students to add to their list of physical and emotional/social changes as they are shared.

Display the Teacher Resource: Changes during Puberty for students to reference. Continuing with Direct Instruction, describe the changes that occur at puberty, encouraging groups to add to their list.

Provide students with sticky notes or access to a shared document. Have students work alone or with their group members to write questions they have about changes in puberty. Provide students with prompts, if needed, such as, “How long do periods last?”, “How do I know if the changes I am experiencing are normal?” Review and respond to student questions at appropriate times during the lesson/unit.

Remind students that everyone may not experience these changes and some changes depend on their anatomical make-up (e.g., people with a uterus may menstruate). Some people may experience breast changes during puberty because of the production of sex hormones. Many of these changes are temporary such as hard breast buds and tenderness. For people with a uterus, breast growth is typically permanent. For those with testicles, it is usually temporary. Some people may never be overly concerned about their looks or interested in dating. Similarly, not everyone experiences the same emotional and social changes at the same time. It is important to remember that all individuals are unique so they should not compare themselves with others or be worried if the changes they are experiencing are not the same as others their age. (*Extracted from: Alberta Health Services. (2021). [teachingsexualhealth.ca](https://teachingsexualhealth.ca)*)

## Consolidation

List the following sentence stems for students to view:

- One way I followed the ground rules during this lesson was...
- Three changes that occur during puberty are...-
- Learning about my body and the changes that occur at puberty helps me by...
- One question I still have about my body and the changes that happen at puberty is...

Using an **Exit Card** strategy, have students respond to one or more of the sentence stems to reflect on their learning.

## Notes to Teachers

Consider using a question box throughout this unit for students to ask questions anonymously. Then answer the questions at appropriate instructional moments during the unit.

The language of “boys” and “girls” or “male” and “female” is gender interpreted, and often assigned based on a person’s biological sex at birth. It excludes individuals who are intersexed and/or whose gender identity does not align with their assigned biological sex. It is more accurate to talk about anatomy rather than gender and use “bodies with” or “people with” language when referring to developments and changes in puberty. Using this language supports an inclusive classroom in which diversity is recognized and provides a strong model to help students understand that bodies are unique, come in all shapes, sizes, types, and all bodies are good bodies.

Teachers should be sensitive to the students in their class and varying comfort levels with content. Note that students may be uncomfortable based on differences in knowledge, norms or physiological responses (e.g., fainting, increased heart rate) when discussing or viewing images of body organs, changes at puberty, or blood. Consider strategies to increase student comfort with the topic such as providing students additional time through the lesson to build their comfort level, having students work individually or in pairs, using a question box, reviewing ground rules, and inform students that it is ok to take a break if they are experiencing these types of responses.

Hygiene habits, norms and practices will vary from family to family. It is important to be aware of, and respect and accept these differences. Be sensitive to the fact that not everyone can afford to have their clothes laundered regularly, have multiple changes of clothes, etc. Similarly, students may not have access to regular opportunities to bathe or may not be able to afford a variety of hygiene products. Teachers need to be alert to ensure the classroom climate is positive and caring. Consider seeking out local sources of support for students to access hygiene items free of charge.

Teachers should be aware of student disclosures and/or triggers, and know appropriate actions to take (i.e., have a social worker or child and youth worker participate in the lesson, be available to meet with students as needed, know reporting procedures to administration and children’s aid society, etc.).

Intersex is a general term that refers to someone who is born with reproductive or sexual anatomy that doesn't fit the typical definitions of people with internal or external reproductive systems . (*Adapted from: Intersex Society of North America. (2021). [What is intersex?](#)*)

For additional information about puberty, consult your local public health unit website or visit these websites:

- [Centre for Sexuality](#)
- [kidshelpphone.ca](#)
  - [Puberty and people assigned male at birth](#)
  - [Puberty and people assigned female at birth](#)
- [Intersex Society of North America](#)
- [Sex & U](#)
- [The Shore Centre: The Penis and Testes](#)
- [The Shore Centre: Vulvas and Vaginas](#)

For background information about sex assigned at birth visit [Caring for kids](#).

Consider including video or picture book resources available and approved by your board to deepen student understanding of the lesson content and/or to consolidate their learning.

### Teacher Resource: Changes During Puberty

<b>Reproductive System</b>	<b>Physical Changes</b>	<b>Emotional and Social Changes</b>
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<p>External</p> <p>*Physical and emotional changes may begin as early as age 9 and until 17 years old.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testicles and scrotum grow larger. -</li> <li>• Fine, straight hairs start growing at the base of the penis which then eventually becomes darker, thicker and curlier pubic hair.</li> <li>• Vocal cords increase in size causing voice to deepen.</li> <li>• Height and weight may start to increase.</li> <li>• Development of sweat glands may lead to increased perspiration.</li> <li>• Pimples may occur.</li> <li>• Shoulders may begin to broaden.</li> <li>• Penis grows larger in width and length.</li> <li>• Testicles begin to produce sperm; ejaculation occurs for the first time.</li> <li>• Body hair growth occurs under the arms, above the lip, and on the chin and chest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mood changes as the body's hormones fluctuate.</li> <li>• May begin to experience more emotional highs and lows.</li> <li>• Sometimes feeling lonely and isolated.</li> <li>• Relationships change as the mind and body mature (e.g., interested in dating, friends become very important).</li> <li>• Wanting to be liked.</li> <li>• Wanting more independence.</li> <li>• Sexual thoughts and feelings.</li> <li>• Become concerned about looks.</li> </ul>
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<p>Internal</p> <p>*Physical and emotional changes may begin as early as age 9 and until 16 years old.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Height and weight increase drastically.</li> <li>• Breast buds appear, nipples become raised and this area may be tender. The nipple and dark area around it (areola) eventually may stick out from the rest of the breast before the areola flattens, breast contour and development is complete.</li> <li>• Fine straight hairs start growing close to the labia which then becomes darker, thicker and curlier pubic hair in front of and around the sides of the genital area.</li> <li>• Hips may start to widen in relation to the waist.</li> <li>• Vagina begins secreting clear whitish fluid called vaginal discharge.</li> <li>• Ovulation and menstruation may begin as early as age 9.</li> <li>• Development of sweat glands may lead to increased perspiration.</li> <li>• Underarm hair appears.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mood changes as the body's hormones fluctuate.</li> <li>• May begin to experience more emotional highs and lows.</li> <li>• Sometimes feeling lonely and isolated.</li> <li>• Relationships change as the mind and body mature (e.g., interested in dating, friends become very important).</li> <li>• Wanting to be liked.</li> <li>• Wanting more independence.</li> <li>• Sexual thoughts and feelings.</li> <li>• Become concerned about looks.</li> </ul>
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(The content from the Teacher Resource: Changes During Puberty was adapted from:

- Kids Help Phone. (2021). [\*\*Puberty and people assigned male at birth.\*\*](#)
- Kids Help Phone. (2021). [\*\*Puberty and people assigned female at birth.\*\*](#)
- SickKids. (2010). [\*\*Puberty in boys.\*\*](#)

- SickKids. (2010). [Puberty in girls.](#) )

## Teacher Resource: External Reproductive System Answer Key

Figure 1: External reproductive system – internal and external organs

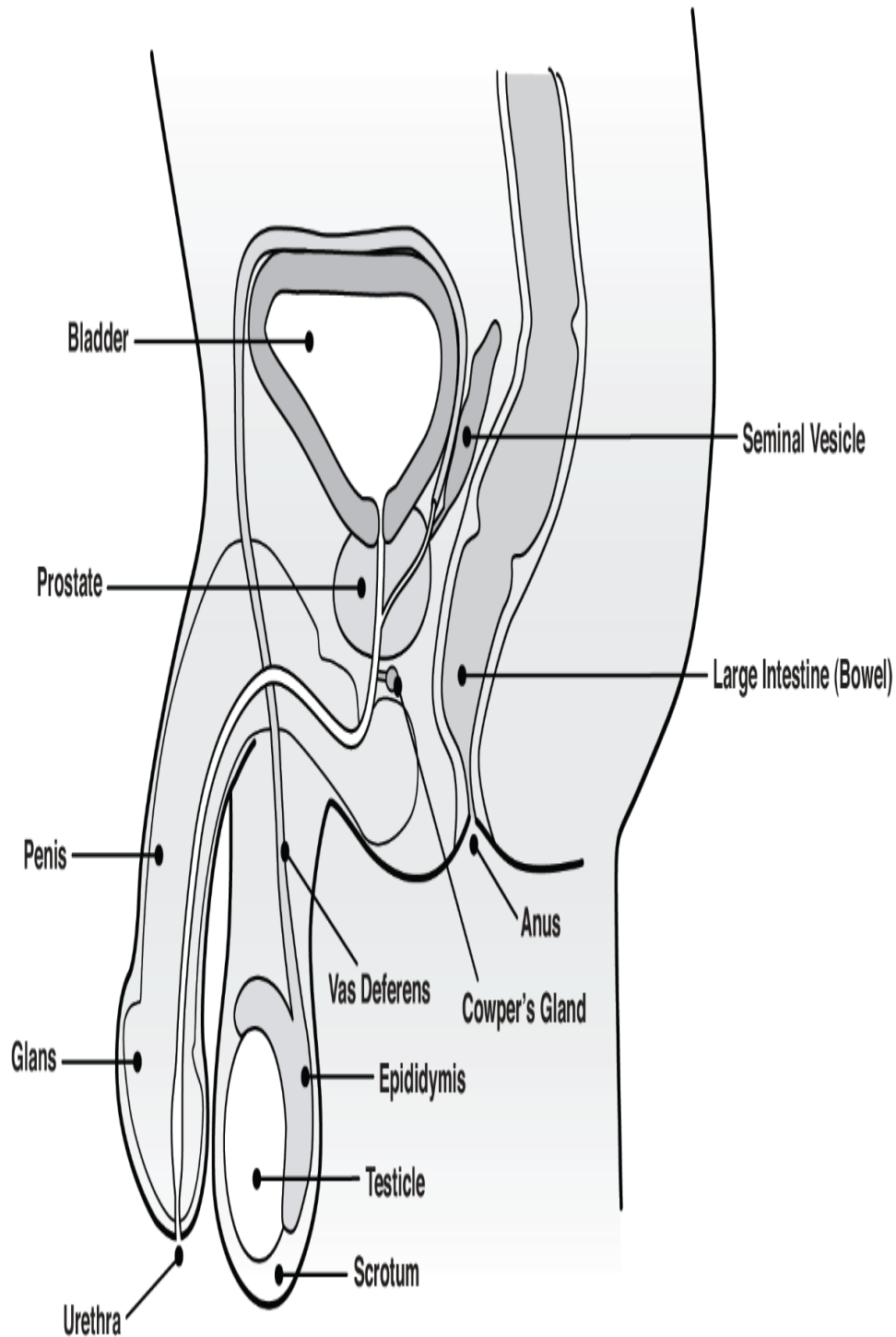
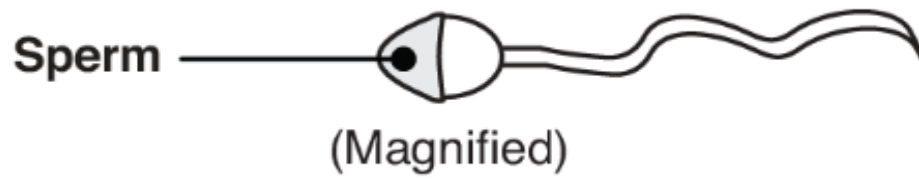
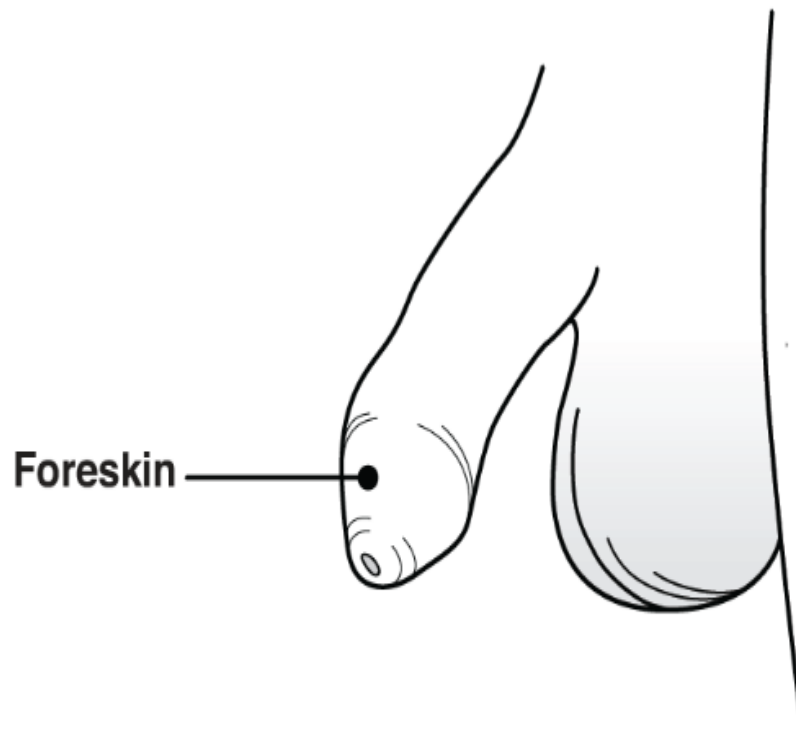


Figure 2: Sperm



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Figure 3: Uncircumcised penis

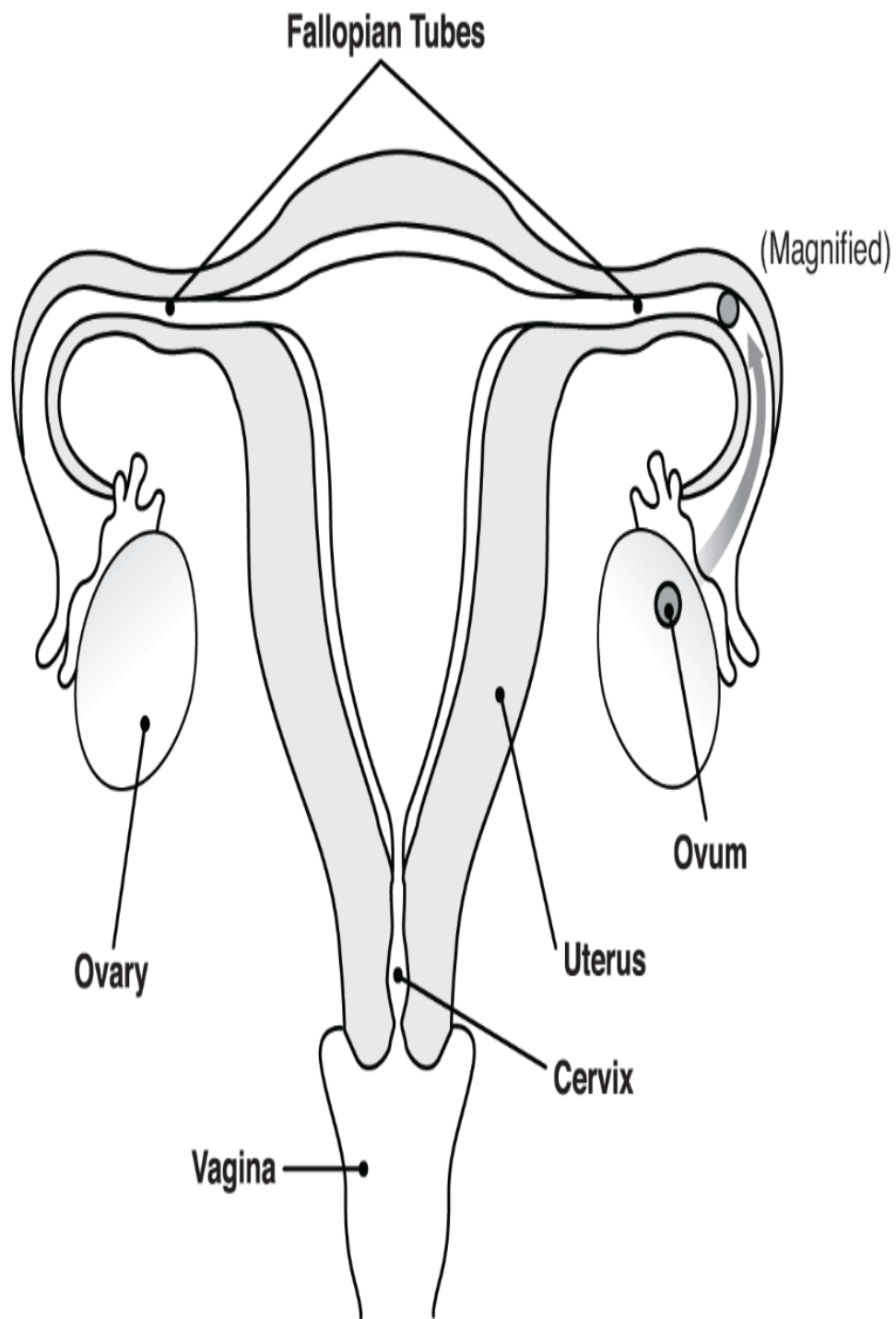


UNCIRCUMCISED  
PENIS

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Teacher Resource: Internal Reproductive System Answer Key

Figure 1: Internal reproductive system - internal organs



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Figure 2: Internal reproductive system - external organs

