Introduction

Grades 4-6, Lesson #1

Time Needed

20-30 minutes

Student Learning Objectives

To be able to …

1. Distinguish between definitions of "sex" and "sexuality."
2. List and explain at least four ground rules.
3. Identify why ground rules are necessary (to protect people's feelings).
4. Sort sexuality questions into logical categories (pregnancy, puberty, etc.) as a step toward having a comprehensive picture or context into which the unit's learning can be placed.

Agenda

1. Define “sexuality”.
2. Explain purpose of the unit.
3. Use case study and class input to set ground rules.
4. Discuss slang vs. medical/correct terms.
5. Introduce “anonymous question” cans (boxes, envelopes.)
6. Use “Introduction Worksheet” to summarize lesson.

This lesson was most recently edited September 28, 2012.

Materials Needed

Classroom Materials:

- Nine coffee cans, manila envelopes or shoe boxes, each with a label and a slot in the top for anonymous questions on each of the nine topics of the unit (or however many topics you plan to address).
- *Introduction Lesson Visual: Anonymous Question Roots* (contained in this lesson and also available online as a PowerPoint slide: www.kingcounty.gov/health/FLASH)

Student Materials: (for each student)

- *Introduction Worksheet*
- Several slips of scrap paper and a pencil

Activity

1. **Explain that you are beginning a unit on "sexuality."**
   That the word is probably new to some students, so you'll define it. Go on to explain that some people think "sex" and "sexuality" are the same, but that they aren't. "Sex" is the smaller word and the narrower concept. It is sometimes used to mean gender (e.g. on forms where it asks your name, birth date and sex) and it is sometimes used to mean particular behaviors…"Sexuality" includes those ideas, but it also includes how a person feels about him or herself, what they feel about being male or female, whether they know how to love, how to trust, how to communicate. A person's sexuality has to do with whether they can make friends, whether they can keep friends. And when people study sexuality they also learn about how people change from children into adults, how babies are made, how they're born, and how they grow.

2. **Explain the purpose of the unit.**
   Tell them you are doing this unit so that they will have correct information about things like bodies and growth; so that they will feel good about growing up; so that they'll feel more comfortable asking questions of their parents or doctors; so that they'll understand and appreciate themselves, their families and one another; and so that they will not be as likely to ever be sexually abused.

3. **Tell the class that you want to share a Case Study with them, and get their reactions to it.**

   Read aloud:

   "The class was beginning a unit on 'sexuality' that day. They came in from recess and Mr. Clark asked everybody to calm down and get ready to work. But everybody was a little nervous and excited, and it took a long time before the jokes and laughter let up. When it was quiet, Mr. Clark asked whether anyone knew what kinds of things they'd be studying in this next unit called 'sexuality.' Marco raised his hand and asked, 'What about the reproductive system?' A few people giggled. Then Shawna raised her hand. She asked whether the class would learn about menstrual periods. Four or five people began to roar with laughter and Michelle said 'How dumb!' Shawna started to blush. When the laughter kept up, tears came to her eyes and she finally got up and left the room."

   Open a discussion about the Case Study. Some questions for the class to consider are:

   "Why do you think some people laughed?"
   "How did Shawna feel?"
   "Do you think other people will raise their hands from now on? Why not? How will they feel about speaking in class?"
   "If you were the teacher how would you handle the problem?"
   "How could the problem have been avoided in the first place?" .
   "Do you think this kind of thing could happen in OUR class?"

   "How can we keep it from happening here? Why don't we develop a contract for how we'll treat each other during this unit?"

Have students develop ground rules.

List them on the blackboard. Feel free to add to their list. You may want to include some of these:

"No put-downs." (including one's self)
"Any question is a good question."
"Protect people's privacy." (i.e., questions about friends and family members should NOT include their names or identities. It's more considerate to ask "Someone I know had an acne problem. What causes that?" rather than "My sister had an acne problem...")
"It's OK NOT to ask questions or share personal beliefs."
"It's OK NOT to answer a question." (In fact the teacher may choose to "pass" on a question if it is too personal or inappropriate for classroom discussion.)
"Be considerate of other people's feelings."

4. Discuss slang & "baby talk."

Students may use slang or baby talk in the classroom for two reasons: Sometimes, the individual is testing you. ("Will she be shocked if I ask what's really on my mind?" "Does he know the meaning of slang terms?") Sometimes, he doesn't KNOW the standard or MEDICAL term. In either case, we recommend a matter-of-fact, non-judgmental substitution of the MEDICAL term. It will diffuse the need to test. And it will offer important information.

SO

Encourage students to ask questions regardless of whether they know the standard/medical words for things. Explain that you will always try to include the MEDICAL word in your answer and to spell it for them on the blackboard.

5. Introduce the Anonymous Question Boxes/Cans.

As a way of outlining the agenda for the unit, hold up each question box or can and read the topic aloud: Families, Self-esteem, Sex Roles, Making Friends, Decision-Making, Sexual Exploitation, Puberty, Reproductive System, and Pregnancy.

Explain that the class will spend one or more lessons on each of these topics. Define the topics, using the Teachers' Glossary (Appendix G) or your own words.

Use *Introduction Lesson Visual: Anonymous Question Roots* (using a document camera or in PowerPoint) to offer your students a starting point as they try to think of questions. Or write the question roots on the board:

"Is it true that..?"
"How do you know if...?"
"What do they mean by...?"
"Is it normal to...?"
"What causes...?"
"What should you do if...?"

Give each student several slips of scrap paper and a pencil. Ask them to write at least one question and drop it in the appropriate box or can. (If everyone is writing, nobody feels like the Only One). Explain that they should NOT write their name on the slip, unless they would

prefer to talk with you privately about their question. Only one question on each slip (which makes it easier for you to sort the questions), but it is OK to use as many slips as they like. Explain that spelling doesn't matter at this point. Explain that, as each lesson arrives, you will answer the questions from the appropriate can, so it's OK to add questions whenever they think of them. If anyone isn't sure which can is appropriate for a particular question, they can raise their hands and you'll help them figure it out. Allow them five or ten minutes to write questions.

6. Wrap up the Lesson.

Hand out the "Introduction Worksheet" and have students work in pairs filling it out. Allow five (5) minutes.

Related Activities For Integrated Learning

A. Language Arts
Have students begin a glossary, to which they will add throughout the unit. Terms from today's lesson might include:
"sexuality", "privacy", "considerate", "puberty", "reproductive system", "self-esteem, "exploitation", "sex roles" and "anonymous"
Individuals or teams can write their own definitions and pronunciation keys or look the words up.

B. Art
Students may volunteer to make posters listing classroom ground rules and/or labels for your anonymous question boxes/cans.

C. Language Arts
Have students write a story about a problem they experienced when another student or a teacher was inconsiderate of their feelings. They should include how they handled the problem or how they would have liked to have handled it.

D. Communication Skills
Offer students the option in groups or individually of "storytelling" about someone inconsiderate of their feelings, etc.

Homework

Students' options:
- Take home today's worksheet and discuss it with an adult in their family. [1]
- Bring in 4 more questions for the Question Cans.

[1] See "Preparing Parents", page 4-5

Introduction Lesson Visual

Anonymous Question Roots

"Is it true that..?"

"How do you know if...?"

"What do they mean by...?"

"Is it normal to...?"

"What causes...?"

"What should you do if...?"

Introduction Worksheet

NAME _____ **DATE** _____

Our ground rules are:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Sometimes people use slang or baby talk to ask questions, because that's all they know. That is better than NOT asking questions, but in this unit we're going to learn the _____ words for things.

Topics we will talk about include:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____