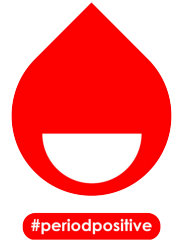


Periods – **true** or **false**? Answer key and teacher notes.



1. Most people start their periods by 10 years old. F

Periods can start any time during adolescence and some people start puberty a bit earlier or later than that. The average age for periods to start is just before age 13.

2. A period happens when the lining of the womb comes away and passes through the vagina and out of the vulva. T

True. The lining is called the *endometrium*.

3. During your period you lose about one pint of blood. F

False! You lose about 2-4 tablespoons, although some people happen to have regular heavy periods, and have to spend a little more time planning menstruation management. If your period is *suddenly* very heavy or painful and that's unusual, see your doctor.

4. Once periods start they always happen every 28 days. F

The menstrual cycle is *around* 28 days but many cycles are a few days longer or shorter. The part of the cycle between ovulation and menstruation is usually 14 days long for anyone so it's the bit right after menstruation that varies. Menstrual cycle length can change over a lifetime – for menstruators, charting your cycle in your planner or on an app can help you know your health a bit better and help plan for when to carry menstrual products.

5. During a period, bleeding lasts for about 5-7 days. T

Some cycles can be a little bit longer or shorter, but see your doctor if your periods are a lot longer or suddenly change.

6. Periods are always very painful and cause bad moods. F

Menstrual cramps are caused by the uterus pushing out the lining and can be painful. Some people find they have painful periods or have unpredictable moods right before a period, but others feel more creative or excited, or somewhere in between. It's not ok to assume someone has their period just because they are cross.

7. During a period, you should not play sports or go swimming. F

You will have to ensure you use a tampon or menstrual cup if you swim on your period, but otherwise exercise can relieve cramps and make you feel well in general. Some professional sportspeople find their performance may be affected by the stage of their menstrual cycle, and have started challenging the stigma around talking about this, to encourage more research to be done.

8. Periods stop when a person is about 50 years old. T

This is called the menopause and it is when the body gradually stops producing hormones needed for reproduction. Sometimes menopause can start earlier or much later than 50.

9. You definitely can't get pregnant during your period. F

If a menstruator happens to ovulate more than once in one regular cycle and an extra egg is released during menstruation, and sperm reaches the egg, then fertilisation and pregnancy may occur. Having sex on your period does not prevent pregnancy.

10. You can't have sex during a period. F

This is something menstruators and their partners can decide together, and negotiating this is a small part of practising good consent. Some people like to have sex or masturbate during menstruation. Some find it too painful or messy. It's a preference.