

FETAL DEVELOPMENT

Lesson 3

6
GRADE

LEARNER OUTCOME¹ W-6.3:

Identify and describe the stages and factors that can affect human development from conception through birth.



MATERIALS:

1. HANDOUT: Reviewing the Stages of Fetal Development
2. ANSWER KEY: Reviewing the Stages of Fetal Development
3. SLIDE: Promoting Healthy Fetal Development



INTRODUCTION:

Students explore the factors that can affect human development from conception through birth.



APPROACHES/STRATEGIES:

NOTES:

A. Ground Rules

Ensure ground rules are established before beginning this lesson. For classes that have already established ground rules, quickly reviewing them can promote a successful lesson.

B. Review of Stages of Fetal Development

Students independently review the stages of fetal development.

1. Distribute the handout Reviewing the Stages of Fetal Development.
2. Ask students to number the stages in the correct order.
3. Review the handout using the Reviewing the Stages of Fetal Development answer key.
4. Use the following question to debrief this activity:
 - Is there a stage of development that you think is most

(5 min)

(5 -10 min)



Pictures of the developing fetus may be confusing for some students and they may need other examples and it is important to use simple language and pictures.

important? Why?

C. Exploring Factors Affecting Fetal Development

Students discuss the importance of prenatal health.

1. What are some things that can affect the development of the baby in the uterus?
 - Smoking (Maternal or second hand smoke), maternal alcohol and drug use, maternal nutrition, maternal self care.
2. What can the mother do to provide the unborn baby with the best possible conditions for fetal development?
 - Avoid smoking and second hand smoke.
 - Avoid alcohol and drugs.
 - See her doctor early in the pregnancy. Many women see their doctor before they get pregnant to have a checkup and to make sure they are in the best health possible.
 - Eat a well balanced diet.
 - Get lots of rest and exercise.
3. What can the father do to provide the unborn baby with the best possible conditions for fetal development?
 - Help his partner to be healthy by setting a good example (i.e., not smoking).
 - Cook healthy meals.
 - Help with housework to give the mother more time to rest.
 - Attend doctor visits.
4. What can other people do to provide the unborn baby with the best possible conditions for fetal development?
 - Set a good example (i.e., not smoking).
 - Provide help around the house to give the mother more time to rest.
 - Open doors, carry groceries, or offer a seat on the bus to a pregnant mother.
5. Who else can help?
 - Doctor
 - Public Health Nurse
 - Special programs (nutrition, alcohol/drug abuse)

D. Promoting Healthy Fetal Development

Students create posters or pamphlets for various audiences providing them with advice about healthy fetal development.

1. Display the overhead Promoting Healthy Fetal Development.

(10 - 15 min)



For students with differing abilities, the degree of detail that the teacher addresses in describing pregnancy and birth is contingent upon the cognitive level of the students.



For students who may be at high risk or have differing abilities, it is very important to emphasize the damage that alcohol, drug, or tobacco use and poor nutrition etc. can cause on the unborn baby. You may choose to use a picture of a baby in a mother's uterus and circle the organs that each drug could damage during different times of the pregnancy.

(20-25 min)

2. Students must create promotional material (poster, pamphlet or presentation) that addresses healthy fetal development using the guidelines.
3. Display the promotional material in the classroom.
4. Debrief this activity using the following questions:
 - Who needs to hear the promotional message you have created?
 - Where, other than in our classroom, could promotional materials such as these be displayed?



Some students may have a mother or other family member who is pregnant but not in a traditional relationship. Some may also have few social supports, so it may be important to refer them to appropriate services.



Some cultures practice certain rituals during pregnancy, some are harmless and some may be harmful. Some cultures do not believe in the need to seek prenatal care which can be harmful. There are many such practices, rituals, beliefs and offerings that are meant to protect a mother from a variety of influences. You may consult with a cultural community liaison to learn more about such practices.



QUESTION BOX:

(10 min)

If time permits, address student questions.



TAKE IT HOME:

Encourage students to share their promotional materials with an adult at home.



Keep in mind that all students do not live in a “traditional” family nor do they have equal opportunities for open discussion within their “family.” Although it is best for students to complete this assignment with a supportive parent or guardian, it may not be possible. Be sensitive to the needs of your students.



SELF REFLECTION:

During the lesson, were:

- Ground rules being followed?
- Good practices established regarding group work and discussion?

What will you change for future classes with this group?

What will you change for future use of this lesson?



STUDENT ASSESSMENT:

During the lesson, did students:

- Knowledge:**
- Identify factors that can affect fetal development?
 - Describe ways to ensure healthy fetal development?
- Skills:**
- Work to create promotional materials outlining the importance of healthy fetal development?
 - Participate in class discussion exemplify listening and appropriate speaking skills?
- Attitudes:**
- Acknowledge that there are many people who can help ensure healthy fetal development?
 - Accept that they can aid in the process of healthy fetal development.



You may want use the promotional material created by the students for formal evaluation.

¹Alberta Education. (2002). *Health and life skills guide to implementation: Kindergarten to grade 9*. Retrieved from <http://education.alberta.ca/media/352993/pos.pdf>