

Lesson Plan: Solo Sexuality and Masturbation

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| Course: Individual and Family Dynamics 120 | Grade: 12 |
| Unit: 2 | Lesson Title: Solo Sexuality and Masturbation |
| Curriculum Connections | |
| General Outcomes: 2.4 Students will identify and explore factors contributing to personal growth and development | Specific Outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will develop an awareness of personal sexuality and responsible sexual behavior |
| Facts for Educators | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solo sexuality involves masturbation, but also refers to the internal experience of sexuality and the external expression of that internal experience. Solo sexuality is a person’s primary sexual relationship that remains with them for their entire life. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/underneath-the-sheets/201906/solo-sex - Youth can be sexual agents, experience sexual motivation for pleasure, and masturbate (Prause, 2019). - Many young people use pornography for the purpose of masturbating (Attwood, Smith, & Barker, 2018). - Many NB teachers are unsure of how to address masturbation as a topic in sexuality education (Burkholder, Byers & O’Sullivan, 2022). - A pleasure-based approach to sexuality education can help foster healthier student relationships (both with themselves and their partners). This approach can help students identify their own sexual needs, preferences, boundaries, and desires. It can contribute to their ability to say “no” to sex when it does not feel right and to say “yes” to sex when it does (Mark, Corona-Vargas & Cruz, 2021). - Human sexual responses (such as vaginal lubrication and erections) start early in life. As puberty hits, touching one’s genitals becomes more pleasurable for many folks and a desire to masturbate can increase https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zblCphevryg - Sexual fantasies often begin in adolescence and often happen before someone’s first sexual experience https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8ZN8h8FN4 | |
| Inclusivity for 2SLGBTQI+ Students | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include discussions around masturbation for transgender and queer folks. ● Disrupt: Queer and trans youth may not necessarily obtain masturbatory pleasure from the opposite sex. Some may not identify with their assigned genitalia. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o This: Some folks have vulvas. Some folks have penises. Some folks are born with both sexual organs, or they may not be defined. o Not This: Referring to male masturbation only in terms of penises, female masturbation only in terms of vulvas, and ignoring non-binary students. https://mashable.com/article/inclusive-masturbation-education - Include discussions around different types of self-pleasure. ● Disrupt: Pleasure can be found on different parts of the body, and youth can fantasize about things other than heterosexual penetration. For instance, folks with penises can masturbate without giving themselves an erection (muffing). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o This: Every body responds to and achieves self-pleasure differently https://transreads.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/FTW.pdf | |

Inclusivity for Students with Disabilities

- Although many folks with particular physical disabilities can be autonomous in their sexual practices, some experience difficulties/limitations with masturbation (Dupras, 2012).
- There are many affordable and body-inclusive sex toys to help folks with physical disabilities masturbate: <https://crippingupreviews.blogspot.com/p/about-me.html>
<https://mashable.com/article/sestech-disability-masturbation-handi>
- Youth with intellectual disabilities also experience sexual needs/desires. Some may be unable to communicate/act on these desires, or may need extra support (Eastgate, 2008).
- Many people with intellectual disabilities use masturbation as their main form of sexual expression (Eastgate, 2008).

Topics to Explore with Students

- Solo sexuality
- Masturbation and self-pleasure
- Sexual fantasies
- The tabooed history of masturbation
- Safe and healthy masturbation practices

Popular Media

CBC's About Sex: Fantasies <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8ZN8h8FN4>

CBC's About Sex: Masturbation <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbICphevryg>

Magical Caresses Masturbation: A Short Story of a Great Taboo

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmFKGtjXZ_g

Sex Ed for People with Disabilities-Masturbation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csMVOylqLkU>

Questions to Ask Students

- How has popular media shaped your understanding of masturbation?
- Where do you look when you have questions about self-pleasure?
- What boundaries do folks need to set for themselves around self-pleasure?
- Have you noticed if people around you talk about masturbation?
- Do you think there are particular stigmas associated with masturbation?
- What do you think are the benefits of self-pleasure?
- How is solo sexuality more than just masturbation?
- Why do you think it is important to carve out a sense of sexual self?

Activity Suggestions

Activity #1: Introductory Video

1. Start by showing this short, animated film (published in 2022) which looks back at the story of humans and solo sexuality, from prehistory to today.
 - Magical Caresses - Masturbation: A Short Story of a Great Taboo
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CmFKGtjXZ_g
 - Roy, J., Noël, C., & National Film Board of Canada (Montreal). (2022). *Masturbation: a short story of a great taboo*. National Film Board of Canada.
 - You can use this video to jumpstart an initial conversation around masturbation: **How has the story of masturbation changed over time? According to this video, who has historically been punished for acts of self-pleasure? Is masturbation still seen as an appropriate act for some folks, and not for others? Is masturbation still a taboo topic?**

Activity #2: Masturbation (self pleasure/solo sexuality)

- Here is some information to include in your lesson on masturbation! You can drop these statements into a PowerPoint, for instance, and generate some discussion around them:
 1. Watch **CBC's About Sex: Masturbation** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zblCphevryg>
 2. Lead a conversation around the following discussion points/questions:
 - **Solo Sexuality** refers to masturbation, but it also refers to your internal experience of sexuality and an external expression of that internal experience. It can include romantic and sexual fantasies, learning about your turn-ons and turn-offs, your relationship to pleasure, and how you engage your mind and body to express sexuality. **Why do you think it is important to carve out a sense of sexual self?**
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/underneath-the-sheets/201906/solo-sex>
 - Masturbation is when someone self-stimulates their own genitals using their hands and/or sex toys to bring themselves sexual pleasure. The choice whether to masturbate is personal, but it is something that is completely healthy and normal for folks to do. **Where do you look when you have questions about self-pleasure?**
 - Self-pleasure can be just as valuable as having a sex life with others. There is no right way to masturbate, and many people masturbate in different ways and frequencies. Everyone decides what suits them best! It is also a great opportunity to learn about your body and your preferences (Saliars et al., 2017). Knowing what gives you pleasure and being able to communicate this knowledge to your sexual partner(s) can lead to more pleasurable sexual experiences. **Have you noticed if people around you talk about masturbation?**
 - Some people get aroused for self-pleasure by reading erotica, looking at images, watching pornographic videos, or creating personalized, sexual fantasies using their imagination. **How has popular media shaped your understanding of masturbation?**
 - Although masturbation is a common and regularly practiced sexual activity, there is still substantial stigma around it (Csako et al., 2022). **Where do you think this stigma come from?**
 - There are health benefits: For some folks, masturbation can improve their ability to experience an orgasm (Rowland, Hevesi, et al., 2020), and help with relaxation, stress-reduction, and sleep quality (Burri & Carvalheira, 2019; Lastella et al., 2019). **What are some common myths you have heard about masturbation?** *You can prompt students with the following myths: it's harmful, masturbation always involves an orgasm, folks with penises masturbate more than folks with vulvas, people in relationships don't masturbate, it can lead to infertility, and folks only masturbate when they are alone (some folks incorporate mutual masturbation in their sexual repertoire with others).*
 - Remember to practice good hygiene: Washing your hands before and after with a mild soap and having clean, trimmed nails. If you use a sex toy, ensure the toy is clean by washing it with a mild soap before and after. You can also use a condom, lube, and/or dental dam for extra cleanliness during self-pleasure with sex toys. **What boundaries do folks need to set for themselves around self-pleasure?**

Activity #3: Sexual Fantasies

- Here is some information to include in a complementing discussion around sexual fantasies! Drop these statements into a PowerPoint and generate some discussion:
 1. Watch **CBC's About Sex: Fantasies** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8ZN8h8FN4>
 2. Lead a conversation around the following discussion points/questions:
 - Sexual fantasies are mental images or scenarios envisioned for the purpose of sexual excitement. They are generally much more diverse/individualized than what popular media shows. They don't always involve sex (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8ZN8h8FN4>). In

fact, one of the most common forms of fantasizing are romantic fantasies, which involves contexts of tenderness and intimacy (Lehmiller, 2018).

- Sexual fantasizing is an important part of healthy sexuality (Maniglio, 2011). **Is it okay to fantasize about people other than a partner? Is it okay to fantasize about people you don't know in real life?**
- Having sexual fantasies is completely normal and can play an important role in the exploration of personal desires and arousal (Stockwell & Moran, 2014). The frequency of sexual fantasies fluctuates between person to person, and from one phase of life to another.
- Popular media has contributed to a progressive normalization of sexual fantasizing, which was previously seen as an abnormal activity (Joyal et al., 2015). **Have you noticed ways in which popular media has normalized sexual fantasizing?**
- Thinking about a sexual fantasy during masturbation or during sex is common. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8ZN8h8FN4>
- Sexual fantasies let folks invent and test different imaginary scenarios in total safety. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8ZN8h8FN4>
- Having a fantasy doesn't necessarily mean you have to make it happen in real life—most sexual fantasies remain imaginary! But if you want to experiment with one your fantasies with your sexual partner, first consider whether experience could be hurtful or embarrassing to you or your partner. **What boundaries need to be considered when asking a partner to play out a sexual fantasy?** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8ZN8h8FN4>

Activity #4: Group Activity

- The following activity can be done in person or on Google Docs!
1. Post 5 pieces of chart paper around your classroom, each with one of the following 5 statements written at the top (if you are running this lesson on Google Docs, drop these five statements into 5 separate documents):
 - **Statement 1:** Sexual fantasies let folks invent and test out different imaginary scenarios in total safety. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CL8ZN8h8FN4>
 - **Statement 2:** The sexual relationship you have with yourself is just as important as the one you share with others. Learning about your sexual preferences, relationship to pleasure, and how you utilize your mind and body to express sexuality is a lifelong journey. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/underneath-the-sheets/201906/solo-sex>
 - **Statement 3:** Popular and social media have long depicted sexuality as a privilege for people who are white, heterosexual, young, single, and able-bodied (Tepper, 2000).
 - **Statement 4:** Masturbation is a type of sexual exploration that has long been socially undervalued and stigmatized (Tiefer, 1996).
 - **Statement 5:** Even though masturbation is generally a solitary activity, it is still greatly influenced by a person's sociocultural, familial, and educational contexts (Kaestle & Allen, 2011).
 2. Divide your class into 5 groups. Assign each group a statement. They have 2 minutes to write down their thoughts, stories, agreements/disagreements, and ideas associated with the statement they were assigned. Encourage students to draw/map out their ideas as well!
 3. After 2 minutes, have the groups rotate. Students will rotate through the statements until all the groups have had a chance to visit each station.
 4. Once they are finished at the last statement, ask 1 person from each group to read all the responses on the chart paper in front of them to the rest of the class. Process the activity with the following discussion questions:
 - *What are some common themes between the five statements?*

- *What are some differences between the statements?*
 - *Do most of the responses have a positive or a negative connotation?*
 - *Where do you think our associations with these statements come from?*
5. Throughout the discussion, emphasize that although masturbation is often portrayed negatively, it is a completely normal and natural sexual activity.
 6. Provide space for students to reflect on the lesson by answering the above discussion questions individually. They can also use this time to ask any further questions that were not answered in the lesson.

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