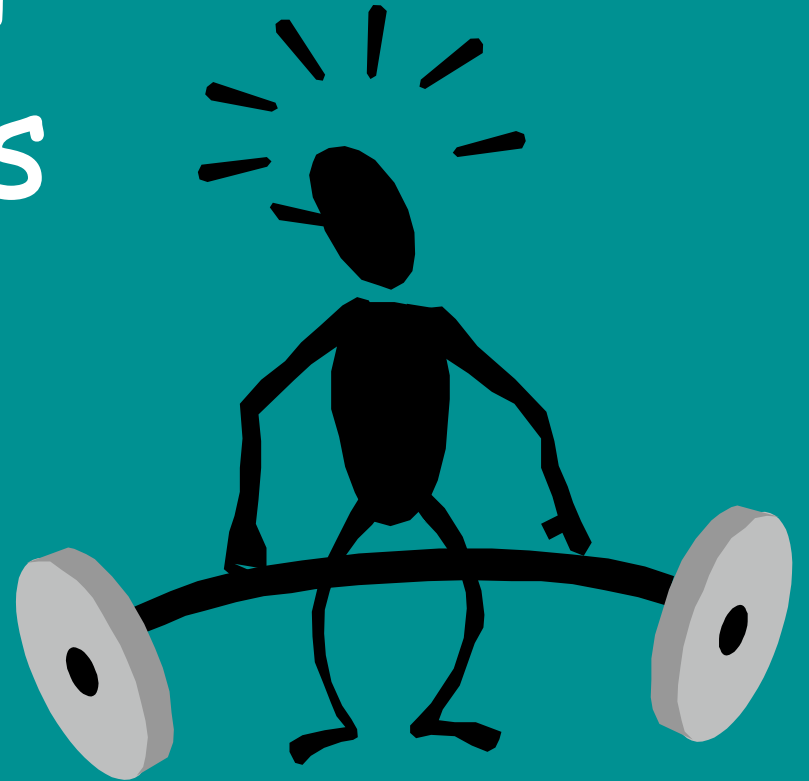


Being Developmentally  
Responsive Is An  
Important Key to  
Creating Effective  
Learning Environments



# Team Challenge

Developmental  
Characteristics  
of Young  
Adolescents



When your students come back from phys. ed., you might want to open the windows a bit.

True or False



# TRUE

Sweat becomes much more pungent during early adolescence.

The idea that teenage hormones affect behavior is really pretty much a myth.



True or False

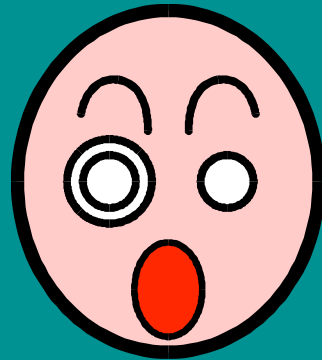
# FALSE

Adrenalin is often secreted in such large quantities that the kids feel like they've been hit with a power surge, and thus they want to move and make noises.

# STRESS

gets in the way of learning.

True or False



# True

Cortisol is the culprit

- blocks the ability to retrieve info
- creates roadblocks in organizing thoughts
- causes over-reactions



A point for each cause of  
teenage stress.



# Don't judge teenage stress

by adult standards!



- failing an exam
- perceptions about what others think about them
- assignment overload
- zits, bad hair, wrong clothes
- emerging sexual identity
- problems on the home front
- not knowing how to proceed (assignments, friendships, etc.)

# Strategies to Mitigate the Affects of Teenage Stress in the Classroom

## Relaxed start to the class

1. Web of the previous day's info
2. Routine that's consistent and safe
3. A few minutes of chat

## Avoid "Do or Die" scenarios

1. 3 x 5 fact sheet
2. [Brain Pop](#) & other supports that allow student to review info at own rate

Sometimes the young adolescent body uses so many nutrients that the youngster gets so hungry "it" hurts.

True or False

TRUE



There is no correlation  
between diet and learning.



True or False

# FALSE

Those who eat well and sleep enough are able to concentrate.

Only 6 % of teenagers eat a good diet.

Early adolescents grow 10-20 inches and gain 40-50 pounds over a few years time.

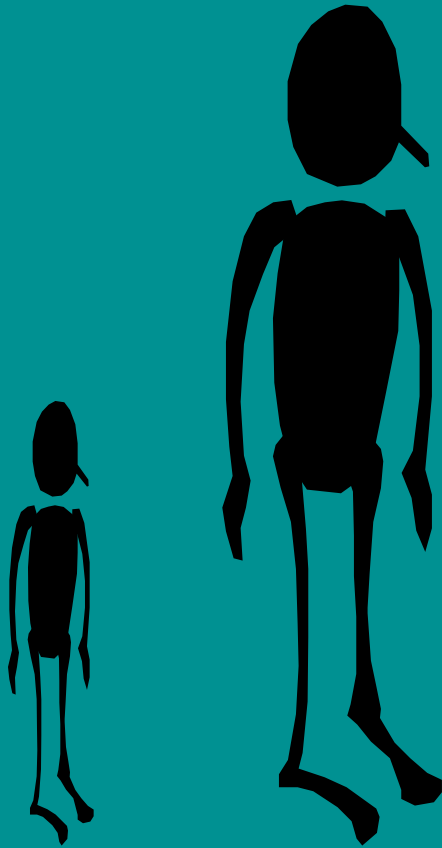
True or False?



# True



The kids understand that all of these changes in height and weight are natural.



True or False

FALSE



The kids are apt to think that there is something wrong with them.

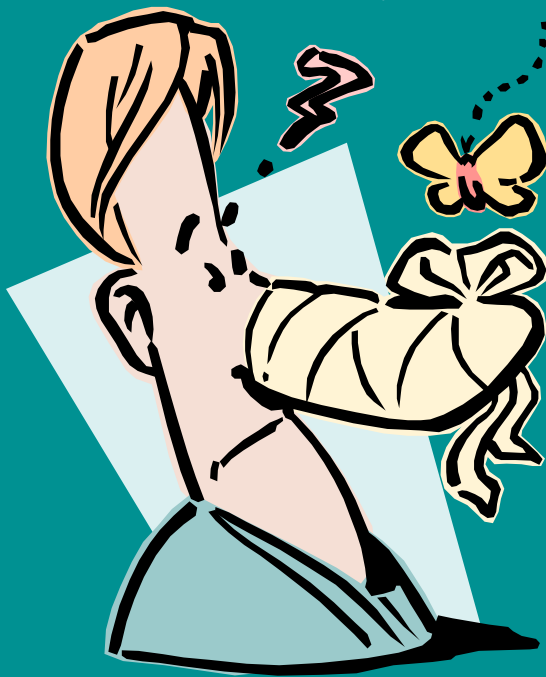
Body parts grow evenly in  
early adolescence.

True or False

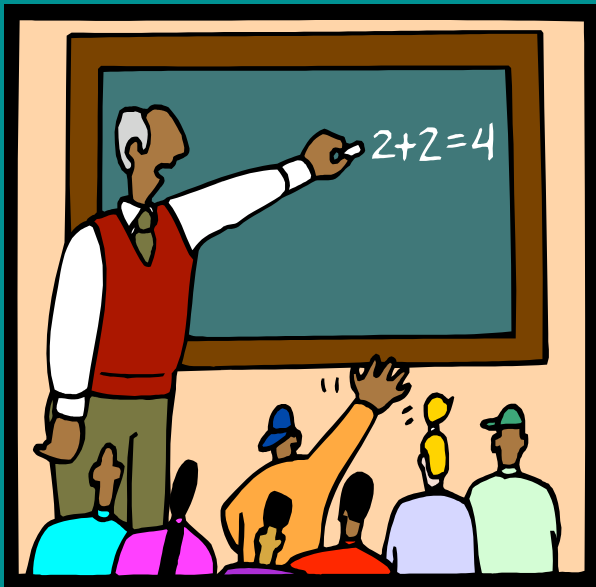
# FALSE

Extremities get bigger first.

(feet, noses, hands, etc.)



What do middle schoolers spend most of the time in our classroom thinking about ?



Most of them are comparing and  
contrasting their bodies to  
everyone else's.

So...how do we keep  
our students learning  
amongst all of these  
distractions?



A point for each  
strategy

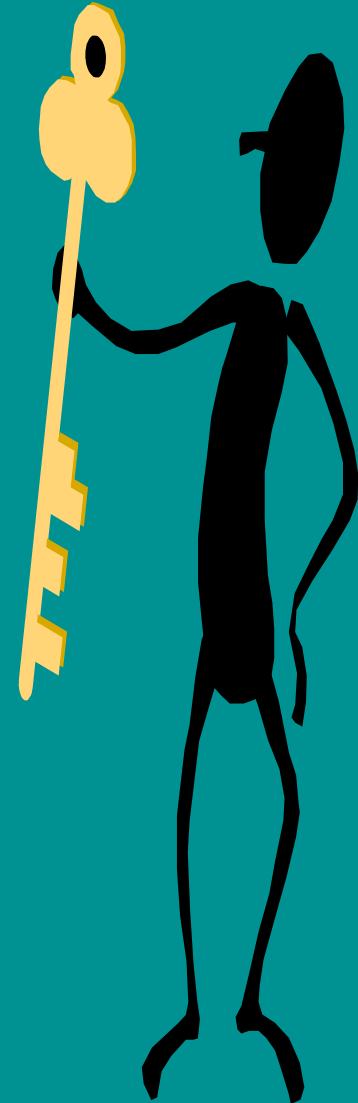


✓ Challenging & relevant curriculum

✓ Hands-on/active learning

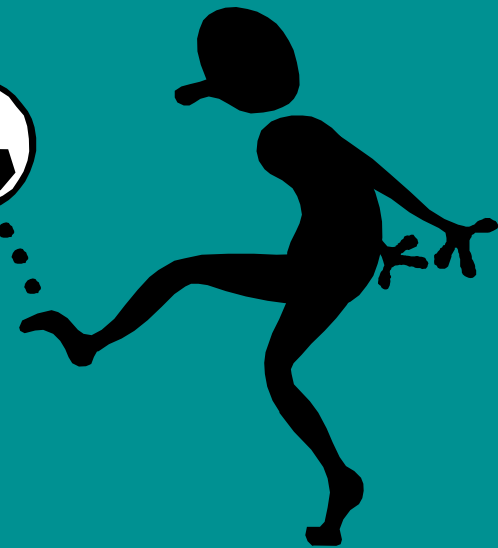
✓ Showing not telling

✓ Positive relationships



Young adolescents are susceptible to bone breaks and muscle damage.

True or False



# TRUE

Bone growth exceeds muscle growth so muscles are sometimes unable to do their job of supporting and protecting the bones.

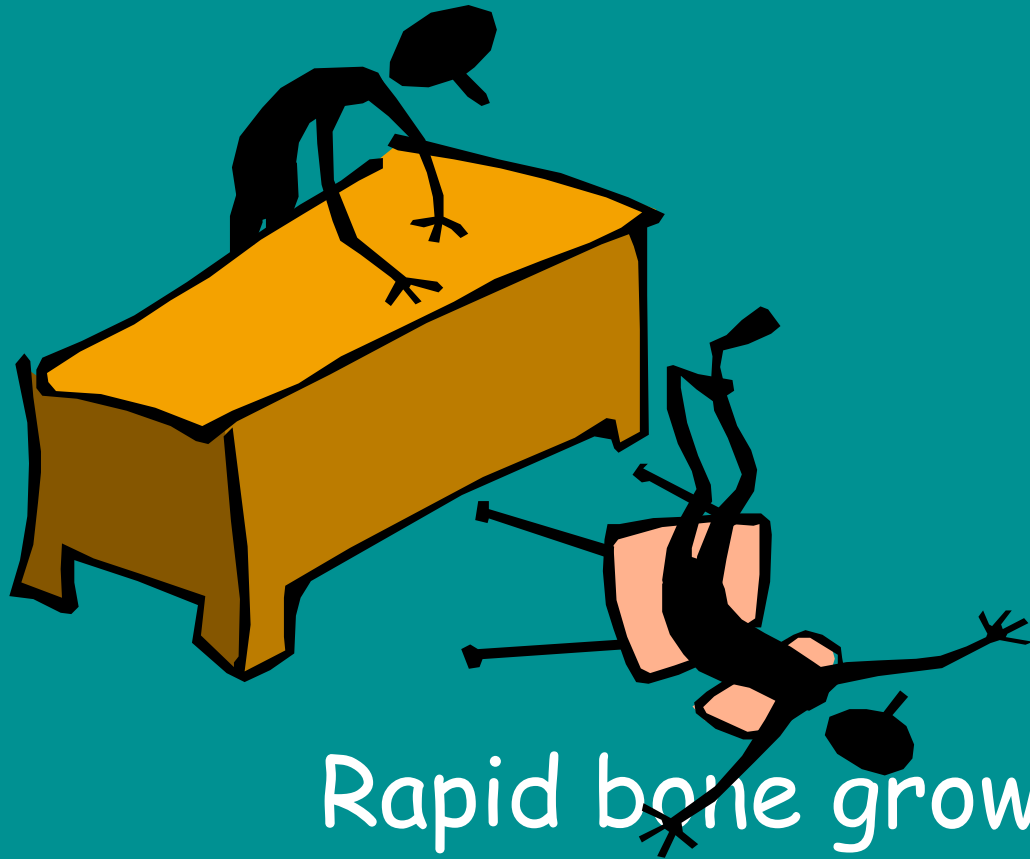
*Sports Done Right*

<http://www.mcsc.umaine.edu/sportsdoneright/index.htm>

There is a real physical reason  
young adolescents are often  
squirmy.



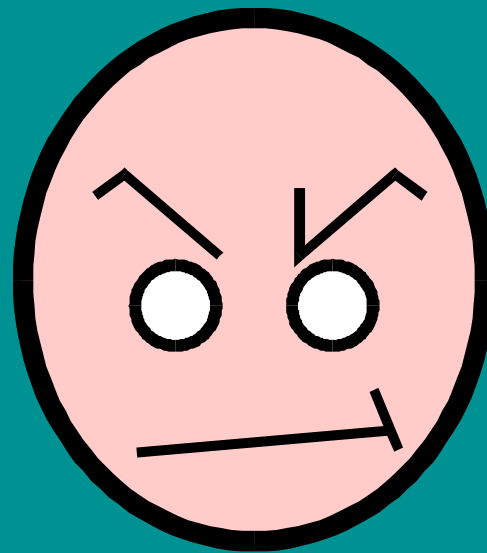
True or False



TRUE

Rapid bone growth can be uncomfortable. The tailbone is especially troublesome--makes sitting difficult.

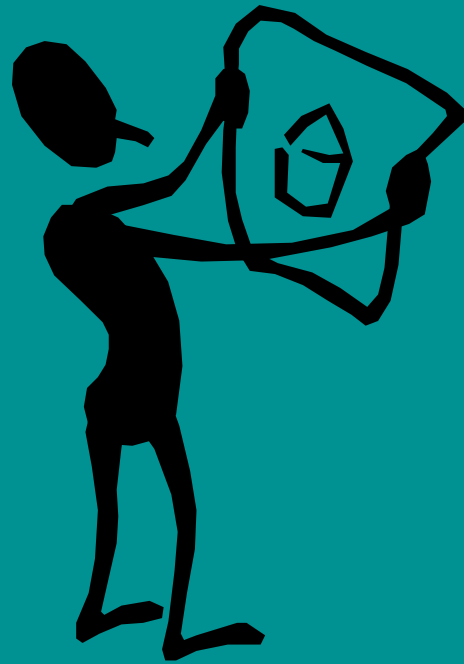
What thing about themselves  
are teenagers most  
dissatisfied with?



# Their Hair



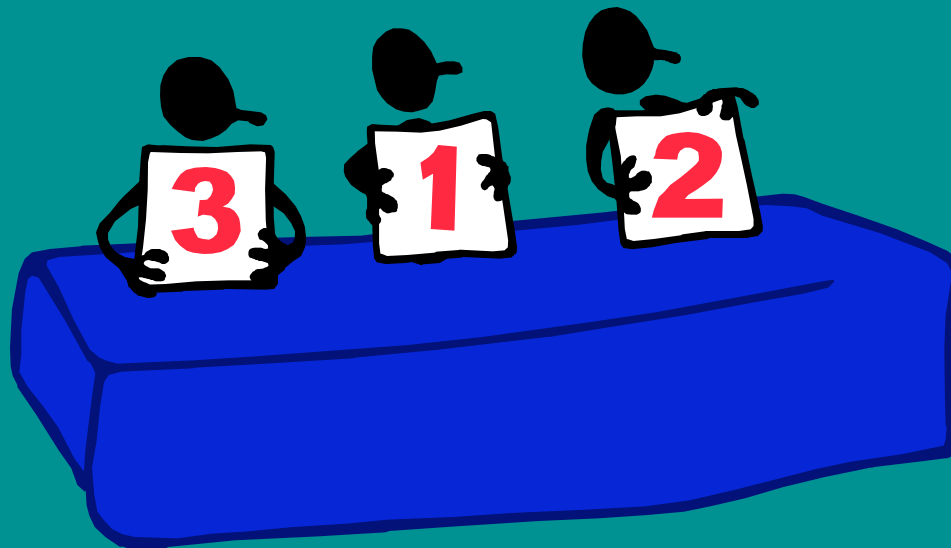
Male or female adolescents--  
which group has the most  
difficulty passing a mirror  
without stopping to take a look.

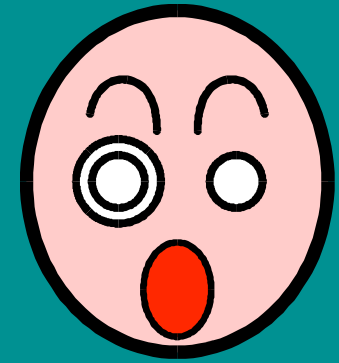




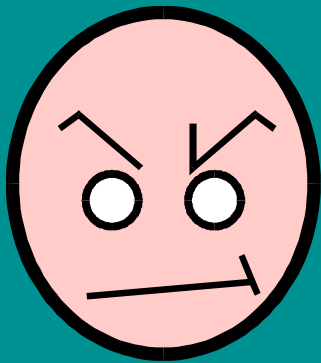
# BOTH!

Teenagers often are plagued by an "imaginary audience" which is noticing every zit, wrinkle, or misplaced hair.





Children going through  
puberty lose some of their  
ability to identify emotions.



True or False



True

They often confuse  
sadness with anger

and

surprise with fear





WHAT EMOTION?

What is the developmental  
physical reason young  
adolescents seem to be overly  
sensitive and more seemingly  
more prone to depression?



The young adolescent brain  
relies more on the amygdala  
(center of emotion)

than those parts of the brain  
responsible for reasoning & logic.

Younger adolescents do not process  
the world in the same ways as adults.

A point for each example  
of young adolescent  
behavior affected by this  
developmental aspect of  
the brain.

- RISKY BEHAVIOR
- IMPULSIVE BEHAVIOR
- OUTBURSTS THAT SEEM TO BE AN OVER-REACTION TO THE ADULTS NEARBY
- AN INABILITY TO CORRECTLY IDENTIFY THE EMOTION EXPRESSED BY BODY LANGUAGE, FACIAL EXPRESSIONS, & CONVERSATIONS



The brain is almost fully developed by what age?



Certainly not by 14!

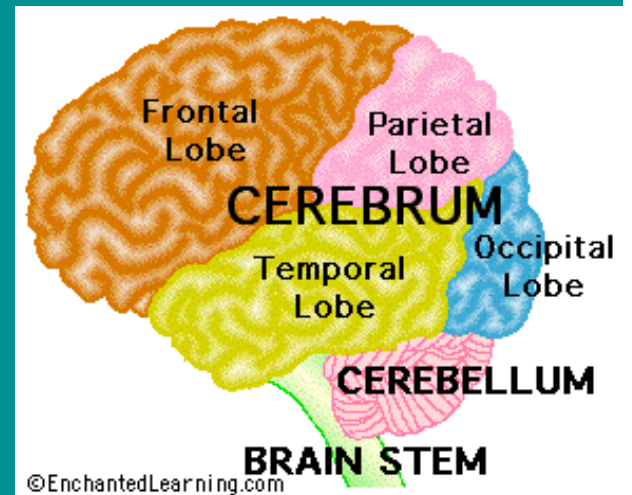
Neural connections are being  
pruned

(use or lose it)

Temporal lobes still growing gray  
matter until 16

Myelin sheathing is still forming especially in the frontal lobes...

Site of abstract thinking, language & the ability to make decisions! (Feinstein, 10)



The brain likes color,  
connections, and patterns  
better than chocolate.

TRUE or FALSE

TRUE

COLOR!

- Teams can color code subject areas
- Students create study guides using color for specific processes, topics, connecting people to issues, etc
- Teachers can link similar ideas or points on overheads, chalk boards, or white boards

# PHOTOSYNTHESIS

XXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXX

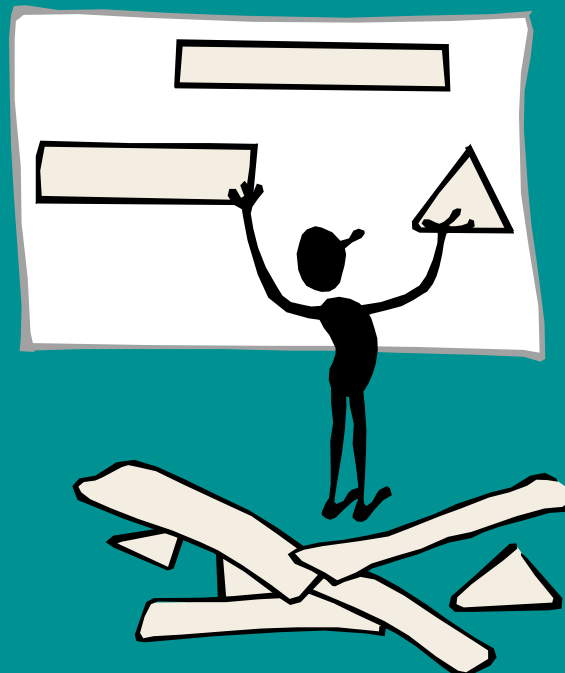
# RESPIRATION

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX



# Finding a Place in the Group

Alone

In the back of the room

With this growing sense of doom

Laughter to the left of me

Smiling to the right.

Alone in the middle

No land in sight

Drowning in fright

Hey, somebody

Anybody

Throw me a line

And I'll be fine.....

Richard Bordeaux

Quoted in *What Every Middle School Teacher Should Know*

# Works Consulted

Feinstein, Sheryl. *Secrets of the Teenage Brain*. San Diego: The Brain Store, 2004.

"Frontline". *Thirteen WNET New York*.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/teenbrain/>. 10/1/04.

Jensen, Eric. *Brain-Based Learning*. San Diego: The Brainstore. 1996.

Knowles, Trudy and Dave Brown. *What Every Middle School Teacher Should Know*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000.

*This We Believe: Successful School for Young Adolescents*. Columbus, OH: NMSA, 2003.

Van Hoose, John, Strahan, David & Mark L'Esperance. *Promoting Harmony: Young Adolescent Development and School Practices*. Columbus, OH: NMSA, 2001.