

Organ Donor Awareness

Physical and Health Education, Grade 8 (updated February 2019)

By Lia Michalski

Overview

As part of the effort to foster the development of socially responsible citizens, students will learn about organ donation. They will explore how organ donation affects lives in and around our community and why an individual may choose to become an organ donor. This lesson connects the Big Ideas, Curricular Competencies, and Content learning standards of the Grade 8 Physical and Health Education curriculum with the BC First Peoples Principles of Learning. This lesson also offers opportunities for differentiation, and provides suggestions for adaptations and modifications based on student need.

Students will explore the topic of organ donation through discussion, news and social media, and stories within the community. Students will have the opportunity to connect their exploration with their own thoughtful opinions and reflect on their discoveries in connection with the inquiry questions.

Disclaimer: This resource deals with some sensitive subject matter. The concepts of death and dying associated with organ donation may resonate strongly for some students. Approaching the topic with your class in an open, caring, and supportive manner will help students engage in the subject matter and recognize the value of hearing and learning from opinions that may differ from their own.

Inquiry question(s)

- What is an organ donor/organ donation?
- How does the decision to become an organ donor affect those in our world and community?

Big Idea

- Advocating for the health and well-being of others connects us to our community

Curricular Competencies

- Create strategies for promoting the health and well-being of the school and community
- Assess factors that influence healthy choices and their potential health effect

Core Competencies

- Personal and Social:
 - Personal Awareness and Responsibility – Well-being
 - Social Responsibility – Contributing to community and caring for the environment

First Peoples Principles of Learning

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors. (Chrona, 2016)

The background

Opening conversation

While student learning builds on prior knowledge, it is important to recognize that prior knowledge of this topic will vary in your classroom. The opening conversation component of the activity should not be skipped. It is important to ensure all students in the room reach the same understanding of organ donation before moving into the culminating activities will help foster further discussion and discovery.

Begin with a conversation about organ donation in order to discover what students already know and to dispel any misinformation. You do not need to be the expert here. Approaching this topic with your students as an experience of learning together presents opportunities for deeper conversation.

Discussion prompts may include:

- Show of hands, who here has ever heard of organ donation?
- What are some pieces of information you have heard about organ donation?
- Does anyone know someone who has become an organ donor?
- Has anyone ever met an organ recipient?
- Why do people need organ donations?

Statistics and research from [BC Transplant](#) to consider:

- The first organ transplant (kidney) in BC was performed in 1968 at Vancouver General Hospital.
- Since 1968, more than 8,654 transplants have been performed in BC.
- More than 700 British Columbians are currently on the wait list for an organ transplant – the need far outweighs the number of organs available for transplant.
- One organ donor can save up to eight lives.
- In 2019, BC reached an all-time high of 1.5 million people registered in the Organ Donor Registry. (BC Transplant, 2019)

Some points to include by the end of the conversation:

- Organ donation is a difficult subject to discuss, as a person becomes a donor after they have died.
- Organ donation is a decision we make in our lives in order to help someone else continue living after we have died.
- Becoming an organ donor is a very personal decision.

For help with some of the questions that may arise, see the BC Transplant Fact Sheet:

<http://www.transplant.bc.ca/health-info/organ-donation-transplant-statistics>

Our body's organs

Using sources of health information, students “assess factors that influence healthy choices and their potential health effects” on a body's organs.

- Have students record their findings using the Our Body's Organs worksheet in Appendix A.
- Students may present their findings in writing, through words, or visually. Students can work individually, in pairs, or together as a class to complete the worksheet.
- Hold a discussion about the students' discoveries and what tips or foods can help keep our organs healthy.

Assessment opportunity

Observe, ask questions, and give feedback about individual findings.

The bigger picture

Organ donation scavenger hunt

Through this activity, students will discover how organ donor awareness is prevalent and making headlines in our world today, and they will explore what a big impact social media can have on awareness initiatives.

Start by inviting students to talk about any instances in the news or world of social media where they have seen organ donation mentioned. These different instances/examples will provide a jumping-off point for the scavenger hunt activity.

Then have students complete the Organ Donation Scavenger Hunt worksheet in Appendix B. They can work individually, in pairs, or in small groups and will use the Internet via smartphones, tablets, or computers to complete the activity.

Modification or adaptation option

- Students create a collage of organ donor awareness pictures and messages to share with the class.
- Students share discoveries through partner, small group, or whole class discussion.
- Assessment opportunity: observation and feedback based on students' discoveries and sharing.

Closer to home

Students now have the opportunity to connect the bigger-picture news stories and social media outlets to stories that are connected with their community and specific families here in Canada. Students will explore how organ donation can affect lives.

Note: This is the part of the lesson that may trigger strong emotional responses from students. You can decide how, when, and if this activity fits within the learning environment in your classroom.

Have students access stories of families touched by organ donation through the website <http://davidfosterfoundation.com/family-stories/> and

<http://www.transplant.bc.ca/about/news-stories/organ-donation-transplant-stories>.

They will select or be presented with a Canadian family that they will look at closely in the news reporter activity.

Organ donation news reporter activity

Students become reporters for a local news station. Their job is to interview the family that has been touched by organ donation, whom they identified on the website. Students work in small groups to present a television interview in which they role-play the reporter and family members of their chosen family.

Students should include the following information in their news reports:

- Background information on the family and their story.
- How did organ donation play a role in the life of this family?
- What information would the family like to present to the public about organ donation?
- What can people do to help families like this one?

After the TV interview presentations, hold a class discussion about how real lives in our country/community were affected by organ donation. Students will use the discussion to further their understanding and as a way to make real-world connections with organ donation.

Alternative

If a student feels uncomfortable with the oral presentation component of this activity, he or she may choose to respond to the above prompts in a printed newspaper article.

Modification or adaptation option

Students could choose a family story from the website and choose several pieces of information to share with the class. Students could also find one of the family stories with a video clip and share it with the class.

Assessment opportunity

Provide students with descriptive feedback based on their presentations. Questions could be posed to further engage students in their learning.

Final discussion and reflection

Discussion

A final class discussion about the exploration of organ donor awareness can be held in order to make connections to the students' discoveries.

Some questions for consideration:

- What did you learn about organ donation?
- Do you think there is enough information being given to youth about organ donation?
- Given what you have learned, how do you think we could do a better job of raising awareness?
- How would you approach people your age about this difficult topic?
- Why would someone want to become an organ donor, or why might someone make the decision not to be?
- If you were to go home and talk to your parents about the class today, what would you say about organ donation?

Reflective journal

Ask students to journal about their learning or anything that they found particularly interesting or challenging about the organ donor awareness journey.

Journaling as a form of self-reflection helps to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the inquiry questions
- make personal connections with the learning
- form opinions about the learning
- consider observations made during the learning process

Assessment considerations

Feedback

Provide feedback throughout the activities in order to support ideas and offer suggestions for new considerations. Feedback can be given during working time by observing progress and helping with challenges; it can also be given after the project is completed. Feedback can include observational statements as well as questions to promote further reflection and connection in students.

Self-assessment

Students can give their own feedback about how they feel they connected with the learning.

Questions for consideration:

- What did I do particularly well in this activity?
- What is one area that I could have improved?
- What did my group do well in this activity?
- What area(s) could my group improve?
- If I were to complete this assignment again, how would I approach it differently?

Peer review

Students can edit and revise their work while working in groups. Revisions provide students with opportunities to consider opinions that differ from their own.

Reflection

Students can use the journaling process as a way to cognitively extend their thinking and understanding around the inquiry questions and exploration.

Appendix A: Our Body's Organs

Our body has many major organs that play very important roles. We are going to learn about some of our major organs and how to keep them healthy.

Here is a list of the major organs that can currently be donated. Next to each organ, write its function in our body and one tip to help keep that organ healthy.

Heart	
Lungs	
Liver	
Kidney	
Pancreas	

(BC Transplant, 2018)

Appendix B: Organ Donation Scavenger Hunt

Organ donation is in the news and all over social media these days. Your job is to find ways in which the media, social media, and pop culture are getting involved in the awareness journey.

1. Which celebrities can you find who have a personal connection to organ donation?
2. Which celebrities can you find who are openly registered organ donors or have posted something with a positive message around organ donation? If there was a message involved, what was it?
3. Can you find a hashtag in social media that is promoting organ donor awareness? What is it?
4. Name three transplant awareness sites that you can find in Canada. (Example: BC Transplant.)
5. Find and watch one video on organ donor awareness. State why/how it was effective and how you believe the video could improve its message.
6. In British Columbia, BC Transplant is the health services authority that raises awareness around organ donation. Does BC Transplant have a Facebook page? Does it have a Twitter handle? Does it have an Instagram account? Write it here.

7. Find one Twitter page promoting organ donor awareness. Write it here.

8. Find one Instagram page promoting organ donor awareness. Write it here.

9. Based on your findings, how can social media play a role in raising awareness around organ donation?

10. If you were trying to raise awareness around organ donation, what hashtag would you create to get the idea trending?

11. Find a news story on organ donation in North America. This story may have appeared in an online resource or newspaper, or may be a visual representation of the story. Briefly describe here what the news story highlights.

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