

What Is the Heart? Lesson Idea PreK

Objectives

- Learn the shape and location of the heart, that the heart is a muscle and that we need a heart to live.
- Understand that children's hearts are a little larger than their fists. We can feel our heartbeat or pulse on some parts of our bodies.
- Understand that the heart is a muscle that we can't start or stop on purpose.

Prepare

- Download and print [Take a Look Inside of You!](#) visual for class distribution.

Materials

- [Take a Look Inside of You!](#), bicycle pump (optional)

Explore

1. Distribute the [Take a Look Inside of You!](#) visual. Have volunteers point to the heart on the picture. Ask children to place their hands over their hearts, using the picture to find the correct location. Then have children make a fist with one hand and look at the size of their fists. Explain that their hearts are a little larger than their fists and that their hearts are located inside their chests under their ribs. Have children try to feel their ribs to get a better understanding of where they are.
2. Ask children to make a fist with one hand. Then have them bend that arm at the elbow and feel the muscle in their upper arm. Explain that the heart is a muscle, too. Ask children to tell you what they know about muscles.
3. Explain that the heart muscle is a pump. If possible, show children how a bicycle pump works. Let them feel the air rushing out as you push the handle. *Some pumps pump air. Some pump water. What does the heart pump?* Explain that it pumps blood through the body. Have children squeeze their fists to simulate the pumping action of the heart. Point out that the heart pumps blood all the time. Have children squeeze their fists again and again. Ask them how their hands feel after they have squeezed them many times. Point out that the squeezing makes the muscles in their hands get tired, but the heart muscle pumps and pumps and never gets tired. Tell them that they cannot start or stop their hearts the way they can start or stop squeezing their fists.
4. Explain that the heart has four parts inside it. These parts are like the rooms in a house. The blood moves from one "room" to the next, always in the same order and in the same direction. The "rooms" are separated by "doors" that open only one way.
5. Read the following rhyme and have children recite the rhyme with you.

Muscles

My heart is a muscle
deep inside my chest

[Children point to their chests.]

I have other muscles,

[Children point to other muscles, such as biceps in upper arms.]

But I like my heart the best!

[Children pat their chests at location of their hearts.]