

Lesson 2: Organ Transplantation

Teachers' notes

This lesson is designed to open up the topic of organ transplantation and allows the teacher to 'visit' key factors in the science of this medical procedure. Organ rejection, medical ethics and carefully scrutinising scientific evidence are the main underlying themes of this lesson.

Starter

The starter sets the scene and shows the medical advances in the transplantation of human organs and it should be made clear to the pupil that until tissue rejection could be overcome there was an impasse. The key to the Card sort:

Order	Letter	Item	Date
1	e	Cornea transplant	1905
2	i	Research into rejection	1950
3	a	Live kidney transplant	1954
4	f	Liver transplant	1963
5	j	Heart transplant	1967
6	b	Xenotransplant	1968
7	g	Heart-lung transplant	1981
8	k	Heart, liver, kidney transplant	1984
9	c	All abdominal organ transplant	1995
10	h	Womb transplant	2000
11	l	Tongue transplant	2003
12	d	Face transplant	2005

Main Activity

The main activity is choosing who receives a heart – the scene is set by using the power point. It is important that they recognise that they are making their choice on medical evidence, not their own feelings! They complete the exercise by reporting back to the whole class, followed by a summarised report that can make up their class notes. There is no correct answer. Many opt to save Jessica, usually because they relate more to her age. Medically, they should be drawn to save James – there is slightly more chance of a successful outcome.

Plenary

The plenary draws students' attention to medical evidence and ethics by a medical article and follow up comprehension exercise. The homework is optional and meant to pull together group/class findings. A record of their work can be summarised in their 'Clinical Directors Report' which should be part of their class notes.