

girls only

Selected for
huntrED
2023
Global Collection



A MUST-READ PERIOD AND PUBERTY GUIDE FOR EVERY YOUNG GIRL

BROUGHT
TO YOU BY:

pad
her

THIS GUIDE IS

FREE



FREE PADS!

The Team

PadHer is a women-led non-profit organization based in Lagos, Nigeria, and Nairobi, Kenya. Our organization educates young African schoolgirls from underserved communities on periods and puberty via the use of comic books so that they can effectively manage their periods and build the self-confidence they need to take control of the future and succeed. Every comic book comes with free reusable sanitary pads (3 pads) to help fight against period poverty in Africa and a free period bracelet to help them track where they are in their cycle.



Chika Nwaogu
Founder / Executive Director

Thelma Ahamba
Director of Operations and Partnerships

Elvinah Nyambaso
Regional Director (East Africa)

Deborah Henshaw
Regional Director (West Africa)

Camilla Jussab
Regional Director (Central Africa)

Kelebohile Dalaseni
Regional Director (Southern Africa)

Karen Ashraf
Regional Director (North Africa)

Serah Wambui
Country Manager (Kenya)

Menstruation is a natural and healthy part of life. Approximately half of the female population is of reproductive age, accounting for around 26% of the global population. Every month, most girls have their period for three to seven days. Menstruation, as common as it is, is still stigmatized over the world.

Lack of knowledge about menstruation can lead to harmful beliefs and discrimination. It can also prevent girls from participating in regular childhood activities. Young girls are denied the opportunity to learn about menstruation and develop healthy behaviors due to stigma, taboos, and myths.

"Girls Only" was created to make it **free, fun, easy, and comfortable** teaching young school girls such as yourself about periods and puberty.

Periods are normal. Every girl gets them at some point in life, so it is nothing to be ashamed of or embarrassed about. So always remember...It's normal, Period!™

Donate.

HELP US REACH MORE YOUNG SCHOOLGIRLS IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES BY DONATING TODAY. VISIT: [PADHER.ORG/DONATE](https://padher.org/donate)

Credits

EDITORS: WANJIRU KINUTHIA, BRENDA JEBET ROTICH | ILLUSTRATOR: CHIKA NWAOGU
GYNAECOLOGIST, MEDICAL CONSULTANT: DR. JACKSON KINYUA MWANGI
AUTHOR, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, AND PRODUCTION MANAGER: CHIKA NWAOGU
PROJECT AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATE: SHEILA OMONDI



meet the characters



AMANDA

AMANDA IS THE MAIN CHARACTER OF THIS COMIC SERIES. SHE IS 12 YEARS OLD, AND SHE JUST GOT HER FIRST PERIOD. AMANDA'S FAVORITE SUBJECTS ARE MATH AND SCIENCE. AMANDA WANTS TO BE AN ENGINEER.



JOSHUA

JOSHUA IS AMANDA'S YOUNGER BROTHER. HE IS 10 YEARS OLD AND LOVES TO DANCE. JOSHUA'S FAVORITE SUBJECT IS ENGLISH, AND HE LOVES TO BE A WRITER WHEN HE GROWS UP.

JOSHUA IS INCLUDED IN "GIRLS ONLY" BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT BOYS SHOULD LEARN ABOUT PERIODS TOO. JOSHUA ASKS COMMON QUESTIONS BOYS ASK ABOUT PERIODS.



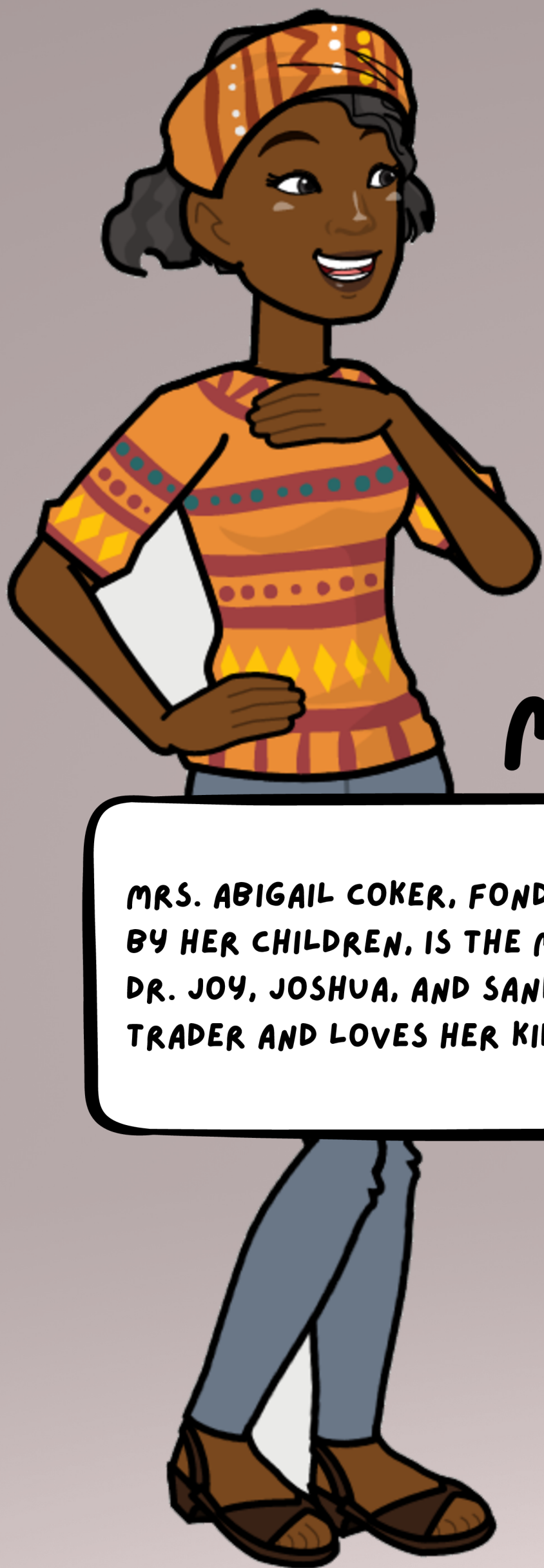
SANDRA

SANDRA IS 8 YEARS OLD AND LOVES TO SING. HER FAVORITE SUBJECT IS COMPUTER SCIENCE, AND SHE WILL LOVE TO BE A COMPUTER PROGRAMMER WHEN SHE IS OLDER.



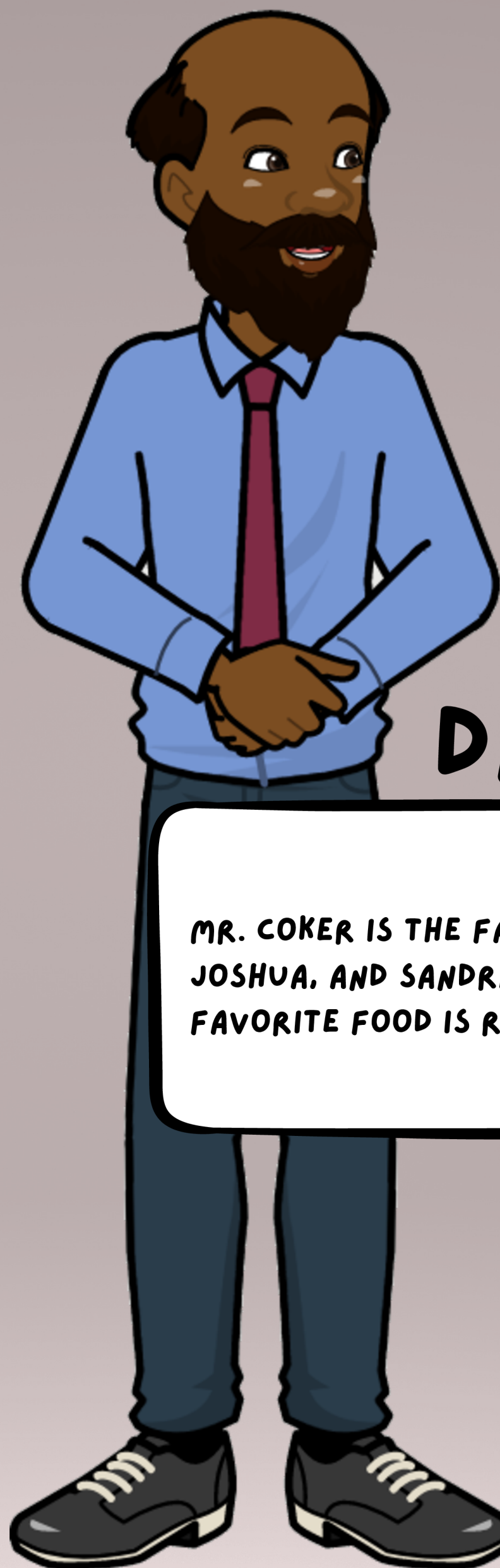
DR. JOY

DR. JOY IS AMANDA'S OLDER SISTER, AND SHE IS A MEDICAL DOCTOR. SHE IS 28 YEARS OLD AND LOVES TO TEACH AMANDA AND HER SIBLINGS ABOUT PERIODS AND PUBERTY.



MOM

MRS. ABIGAIL COKER, FONDLY CALLED "MOM" BY HER CHILDREN, IS THE MOTHER TO AMANDA, DR. JOY, JOSHUA, AND SANDRA. SHE IS A PETTY TRADER AND LOVES HER KIDS SO MUCH.



DAD

MR. COKER IS THE FATHER TO AMANDA, DR. JOY, JOSHUA, AND SANDRA. HE IS A BANKER. HIS FAVORITE FOOD IS RICE AND CHICKEN STEW.

"GIRLS ONLY" HELPED ME UNDERSTAND PERIODS BETTER.
— Beryl (10 years old, Nairobi)

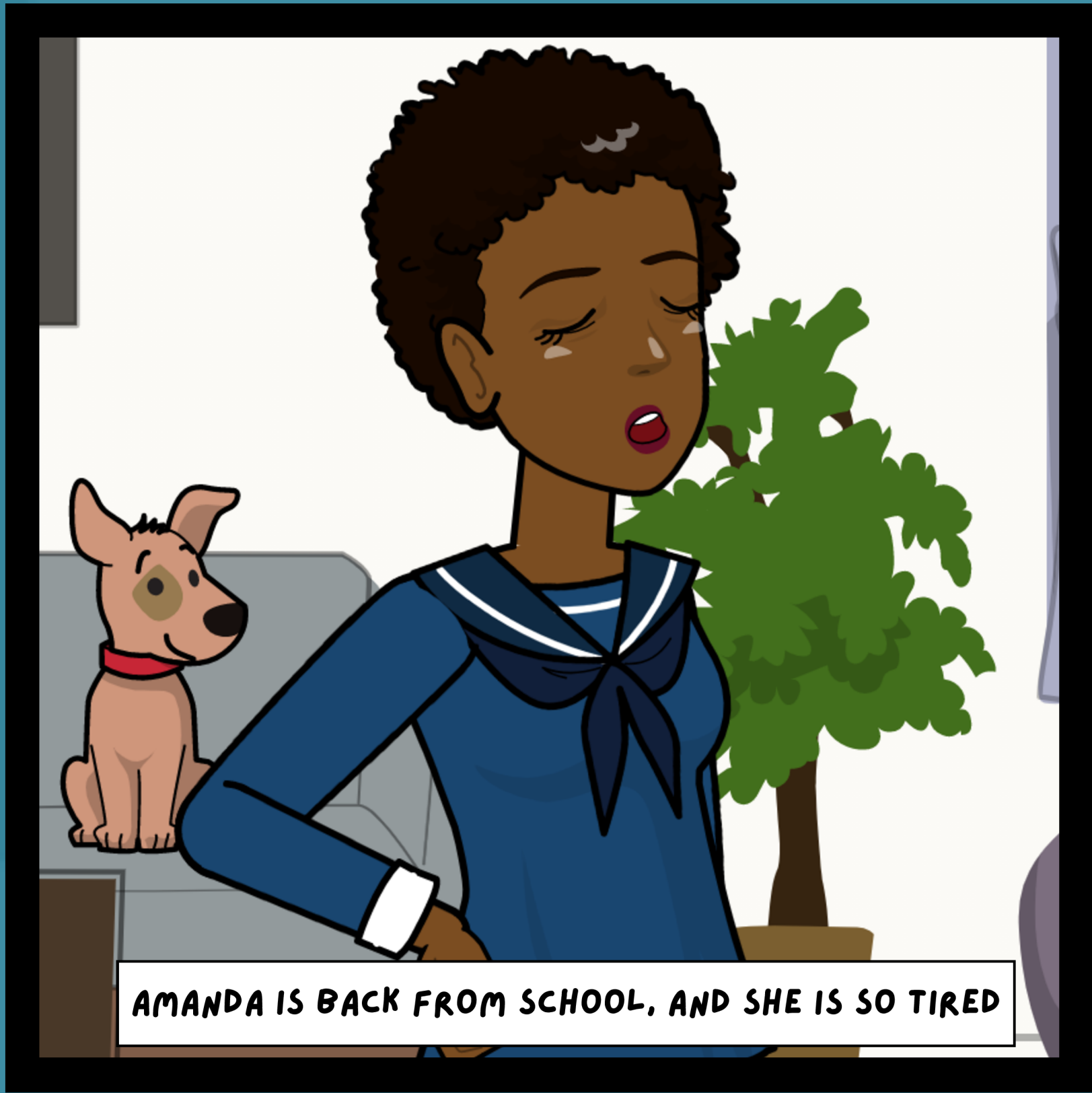


Copyright ©2021 Africa54, All right reserved.

This comic book is a work of fiction that may be based on some personal experiences.

DISCLAIMER: The content in this comic book is offered solely for educational purposes and should not be regarded as a substitute for professional medical advice.

No part of this comic book may be reproduced, stored, or transmitted by any means, be it auditory, graphic, mechanical, or electronic, without the written permission of Africa54, except in the case of brief excerpts used in reviews and critical articles. Unauthorized reproduction of any part of this comic book is illegal and is punishable by law.



AMANDA IS BACK FROM SCHOOL, AND SHE IS SO TIRED



Mom,
I'm home!



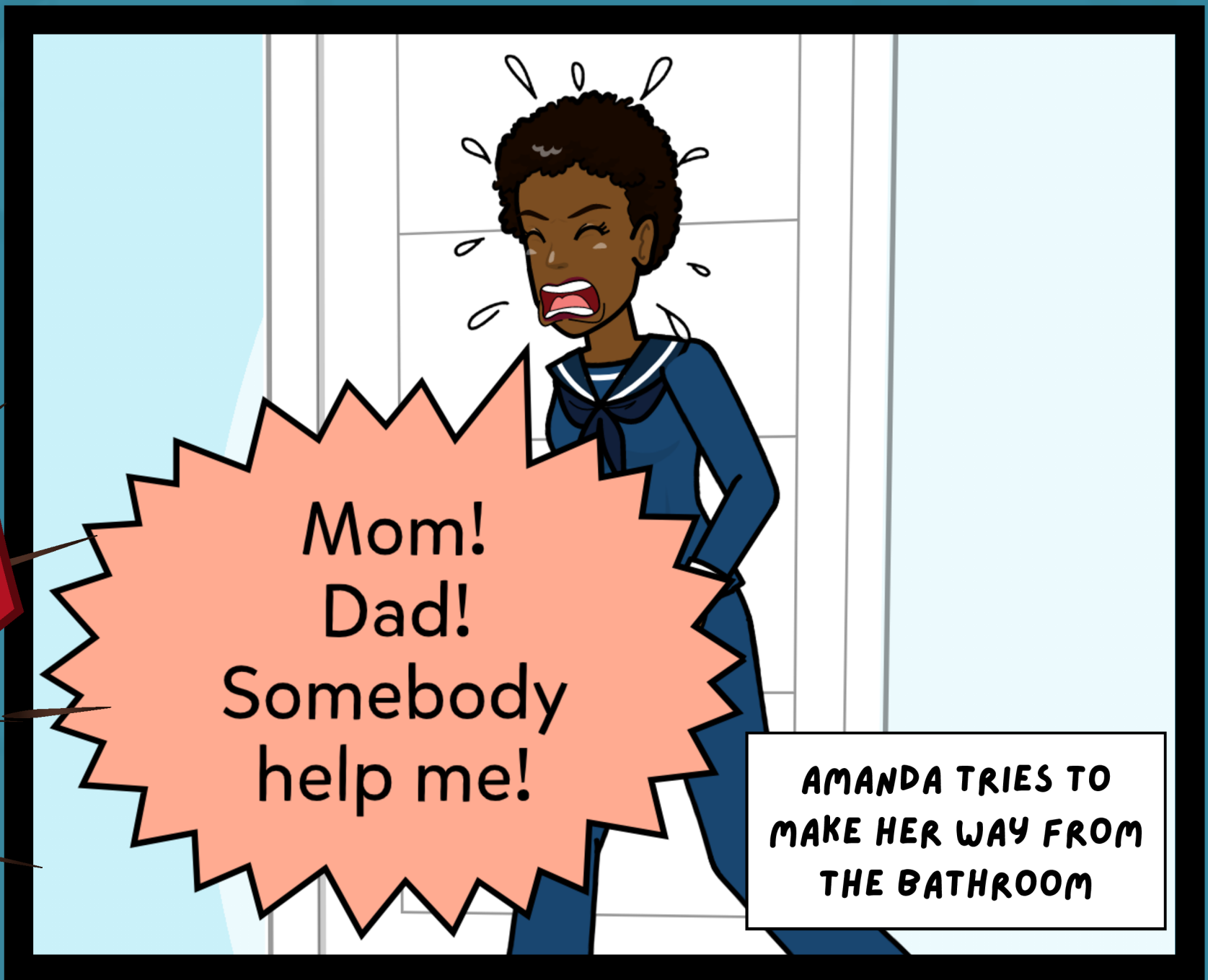
AMANDA IS FEELING PRESSED, SO SHE MAKES
HER WAY TO THE BATHROOM



I don't
feel so
well

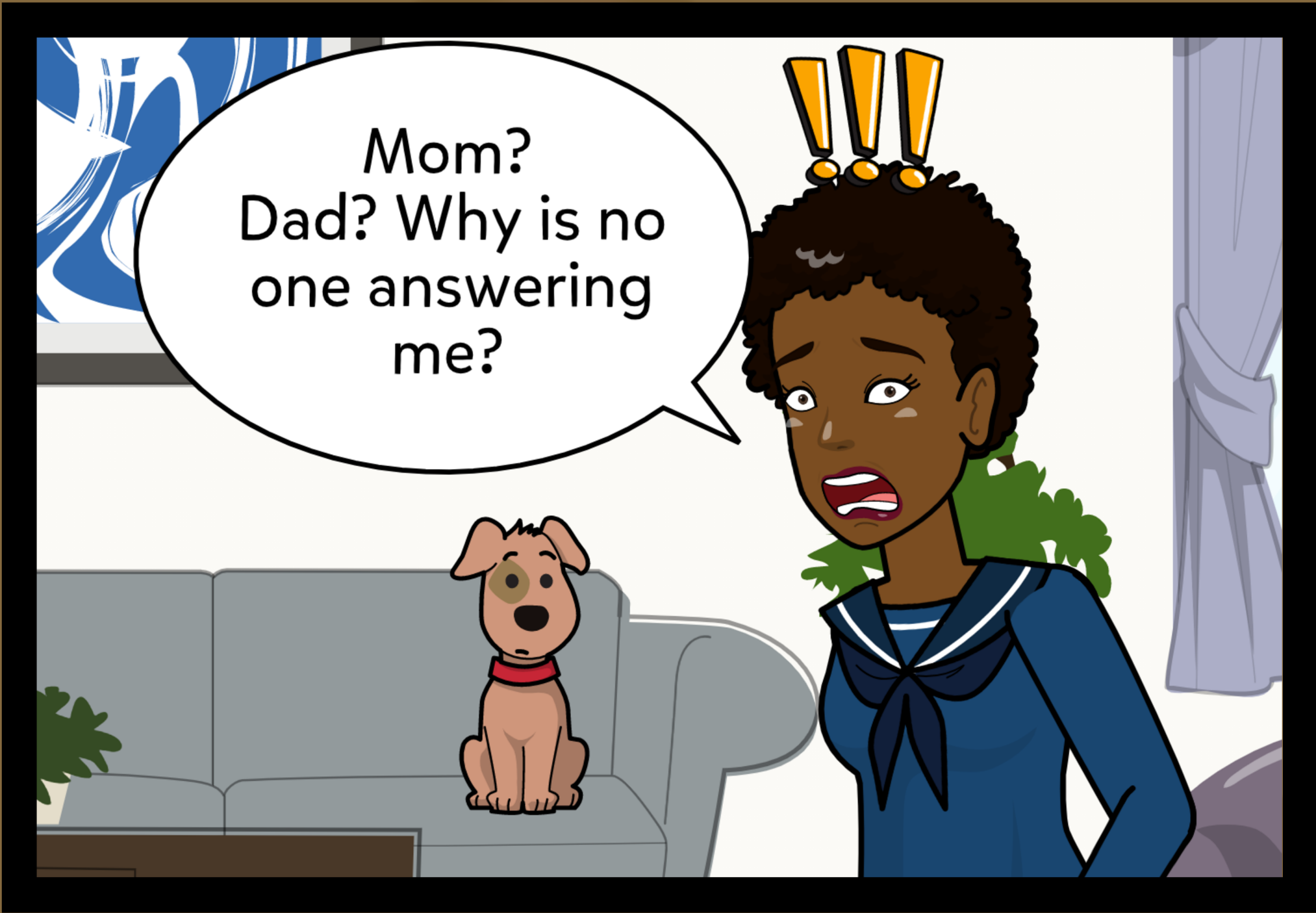


...WHILE USING THE TOILET, AMANDA SEES
BLOOD ON HER UNDERWEAR. SHE PANICS.

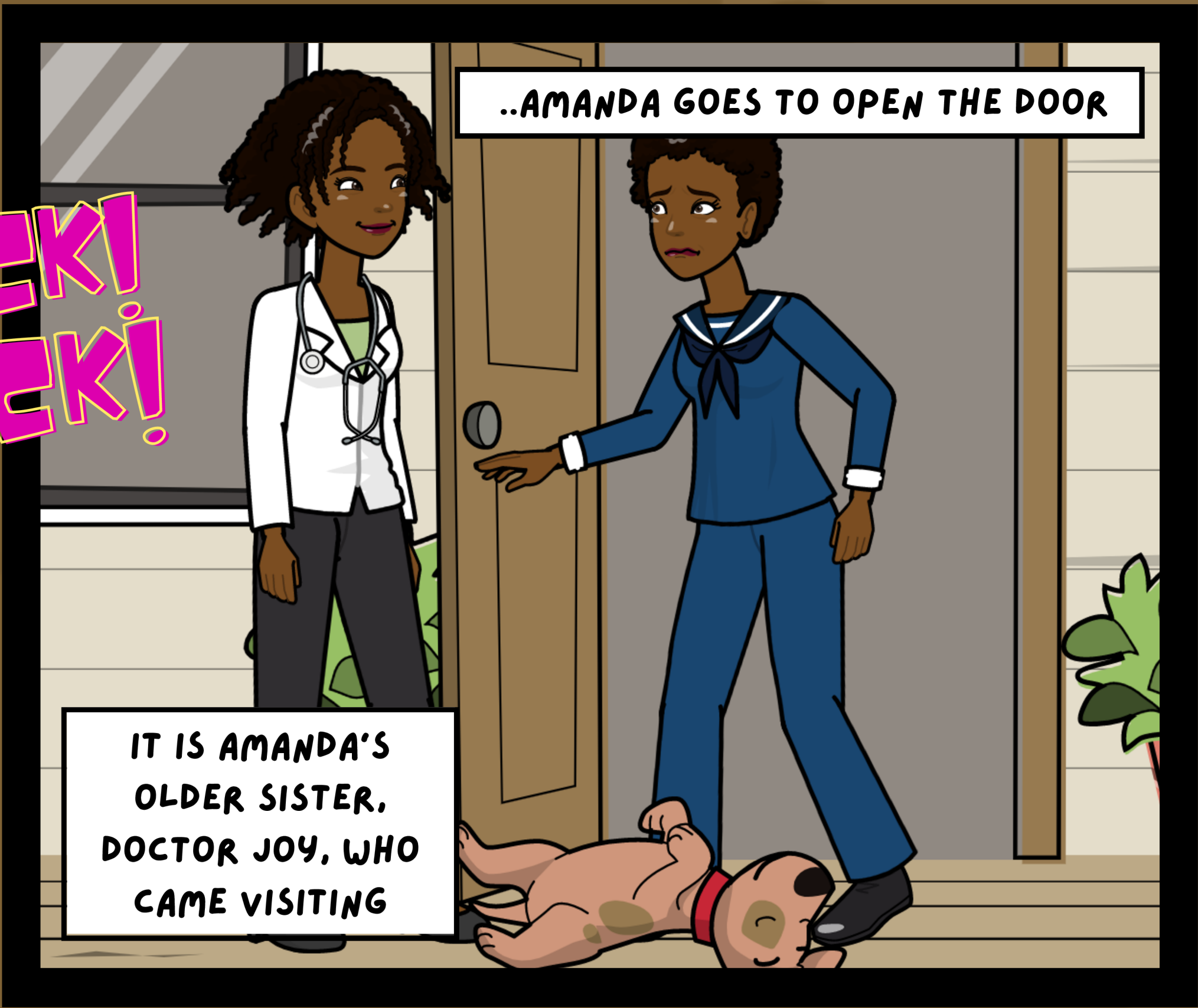


Mom!
Dad!
Somebody
help me!

AMANDA TRIES TO
MAKE HER WAY FROM
THE BATHROOM



Amanda, are you okay? you look very worried



...AMANDA EXPLAINS WHILE CRYING

...and
it seems like
no one is
home

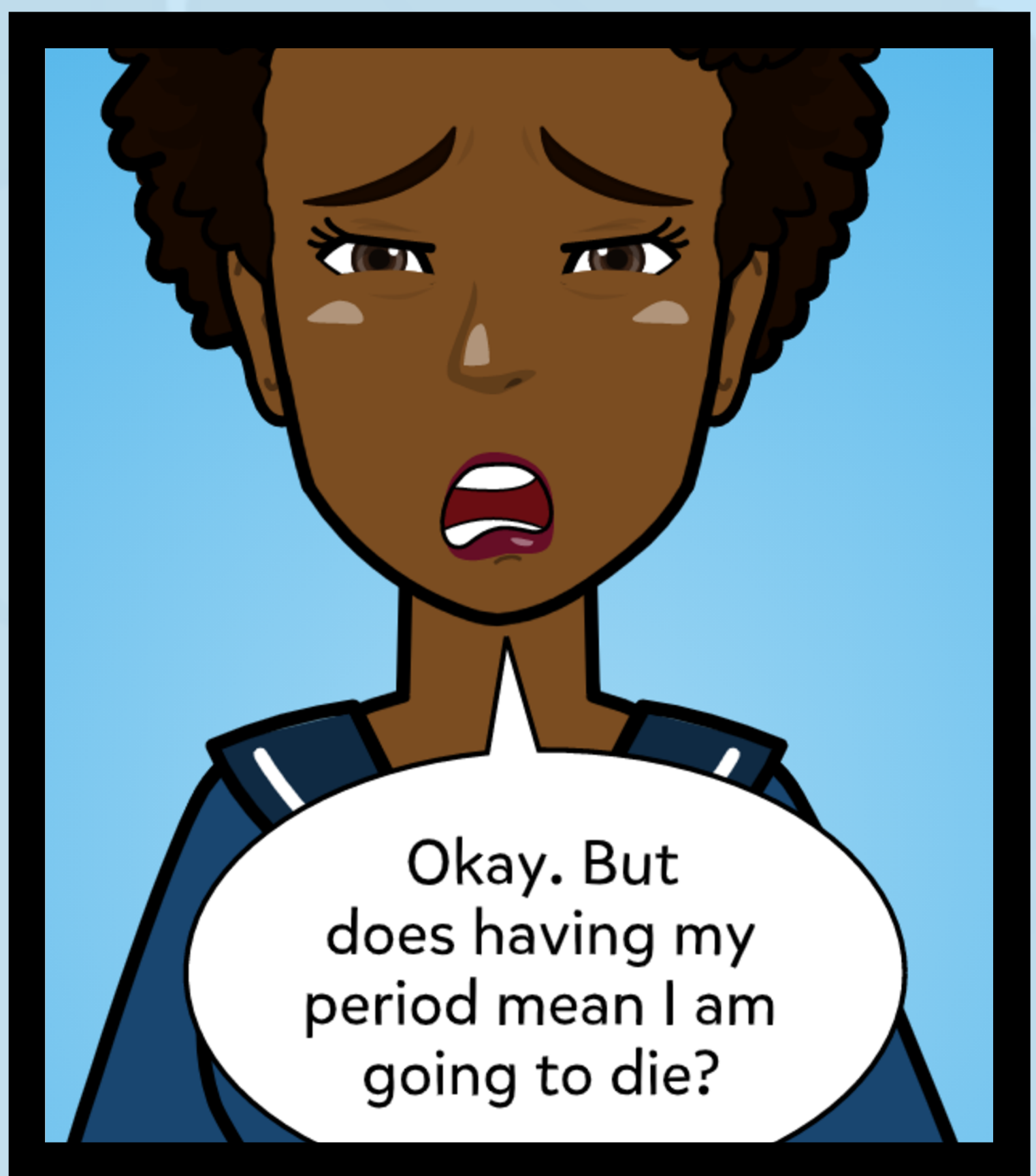
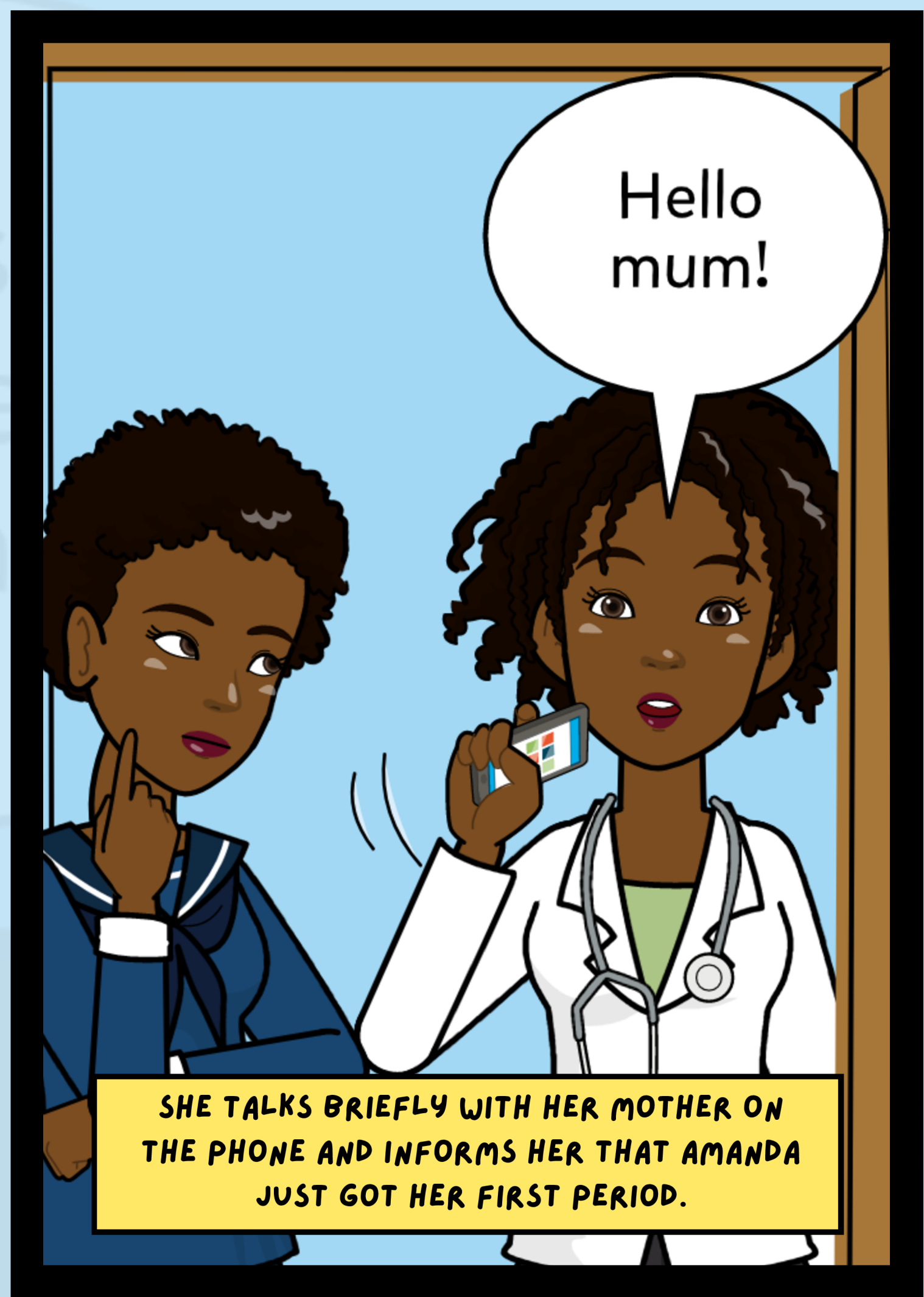
Oh Amanda,
you are fine. There
is absolutely nothing
to worry about

Yes, you
are a doctor, so
what is wrong
with me?

There
is nothing
wrong with you
Amanda

JOY
SMILES AT
AMANDA

You
just got your
first period!



JOY GIVES AMANDA A SANITARY PAD

THIS IS HOW YOU
PLACE IT IN YOUR
UNDERWEAR

IT WILL ABSORB THE BLOOD
COMING OUT

Thank
you, Big
Sis!

AMANDA TAKES THE
SANITARY PAD
FROM JOY

Don't worry Amanda,
it is part of being a woman

Every
girl gets her
period

I had
my first period at
the age of 13, around
the same age
as you

AMANDA IS 12 YRS. OLD

AMANDA'S MUM IS BACK FROM PICKING UP HER SIBLINGS

There is someone at the door, and I think it is mum. Go open. I know you have a thousand questions popping in your head right now. Let's talk about it later

**KNOEK!
KNOEK!**

We're home!

AMANDA'S MUM GREETS AMANDA AND JOY!

Amanda, Joy told me you had your first period. How are you?

I'm okay. Big Sis told me that every girl gets her period

**Mom! Mom!
What's a period?**

AMANDA'S YOUNGER SISTER SANDRA ASKED



...AFTER A WHILE, AMANDA AND HER SIBLINGS HAD FINISHED CHANGING FROM THEIR SCHOOL UNIFORMS

Big
Sis, we are
done!

...SAYS SANDRA

AMANDA AND HER SIBLINGS BURST INTO EXCITEMENT

I have a
lot of questions I
will like to ask you

...SAYS AMANDA

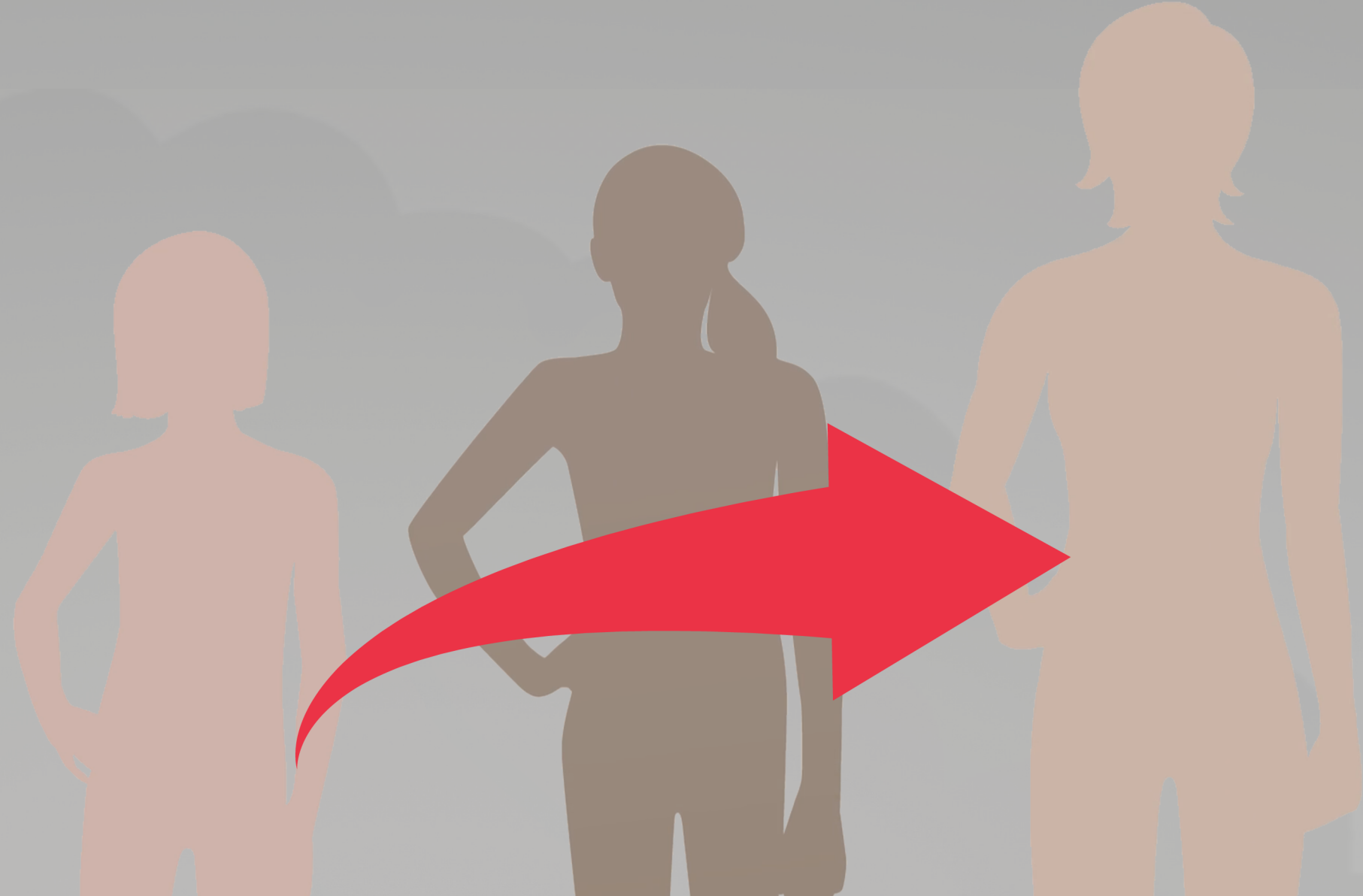
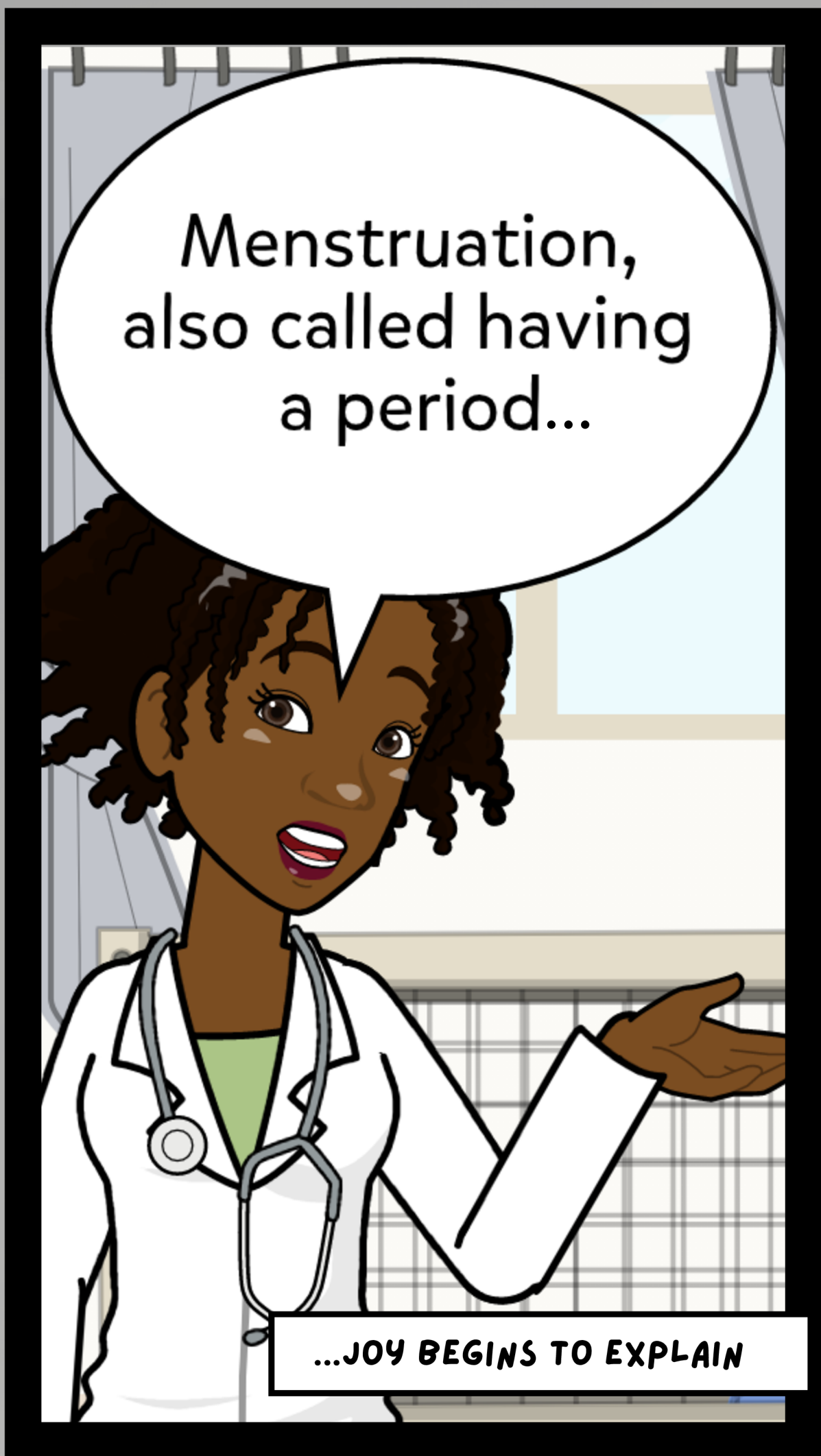
Do
boys get
periods too?

...ASKED JOSHUA

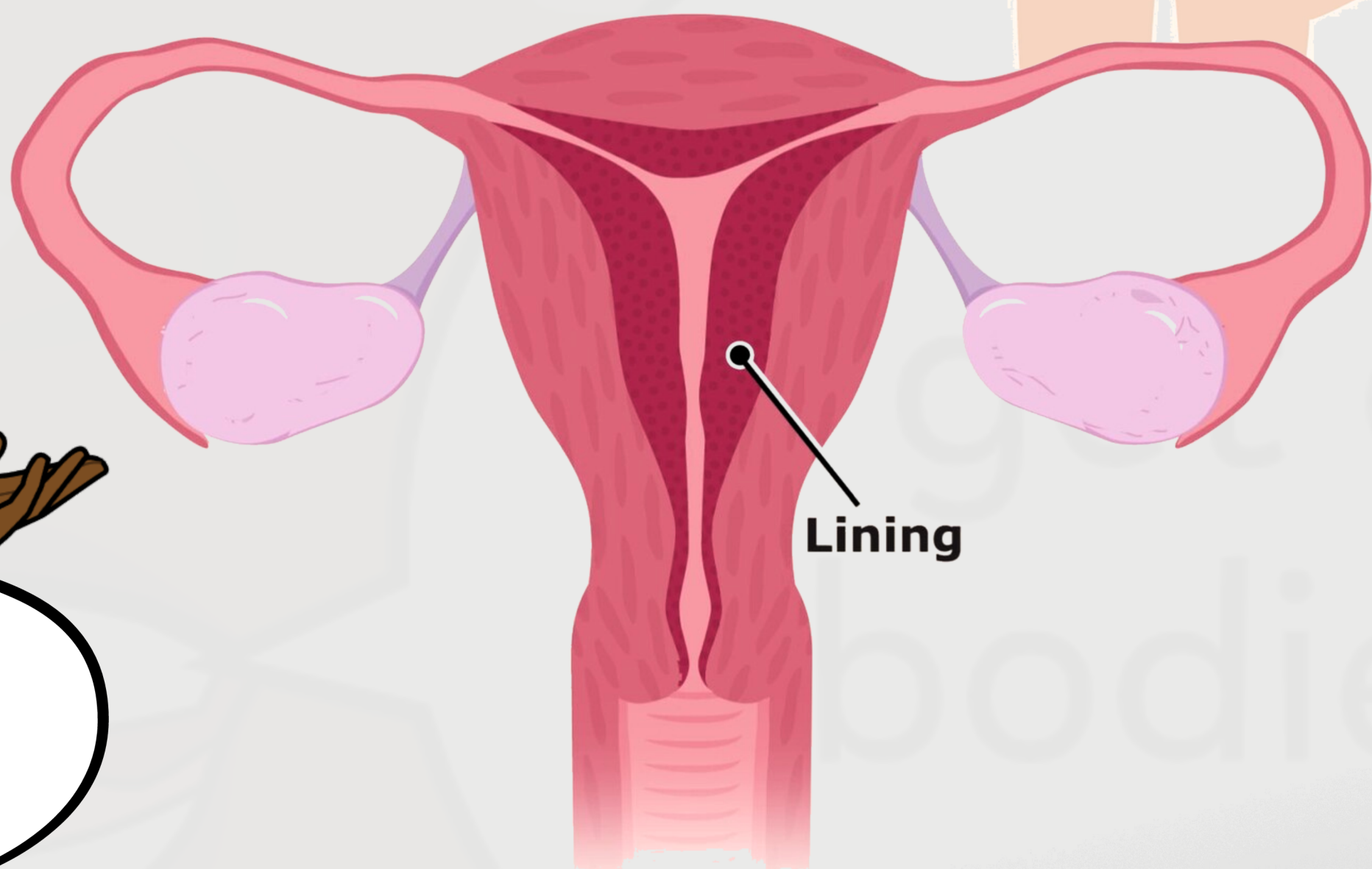
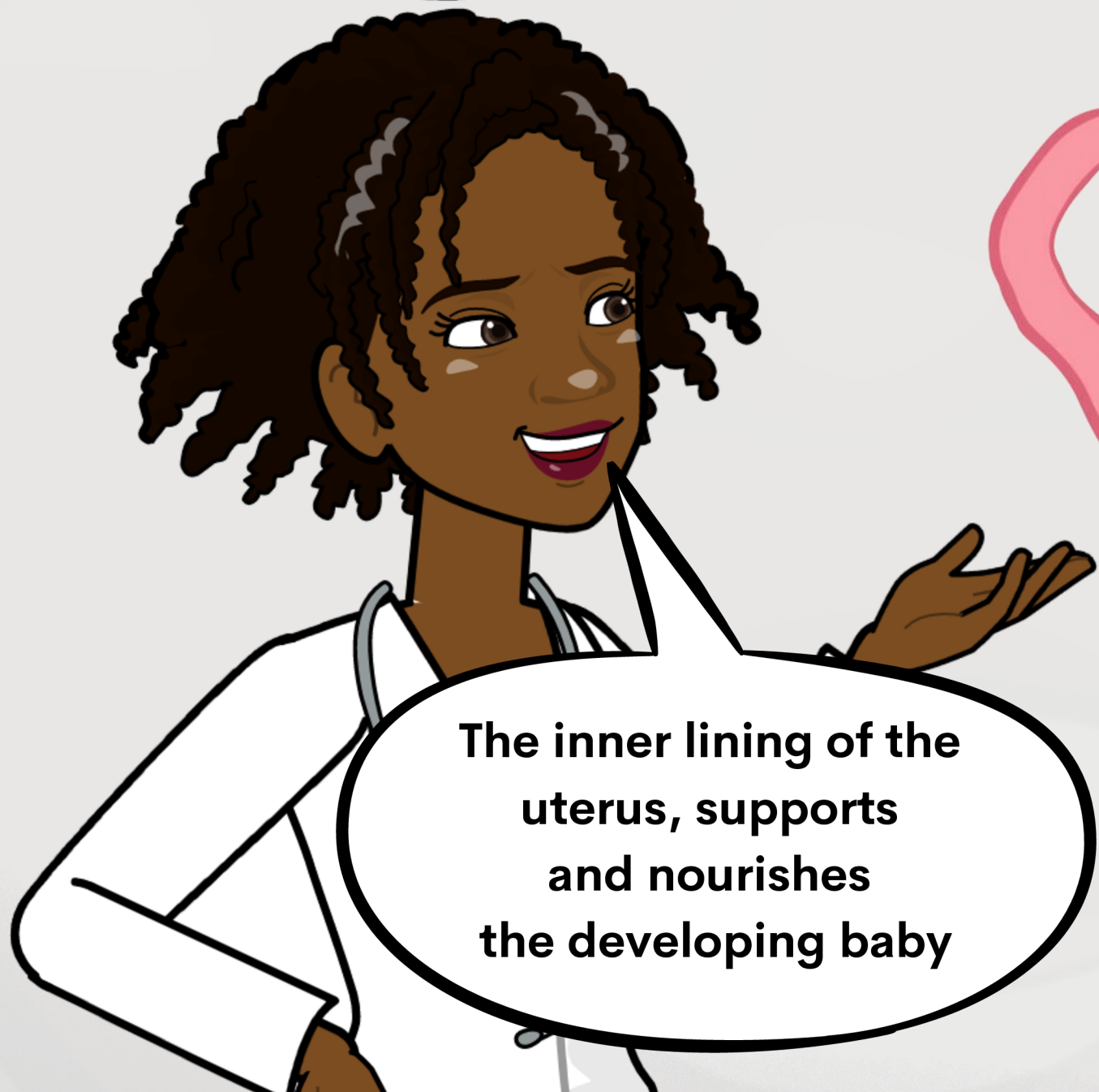
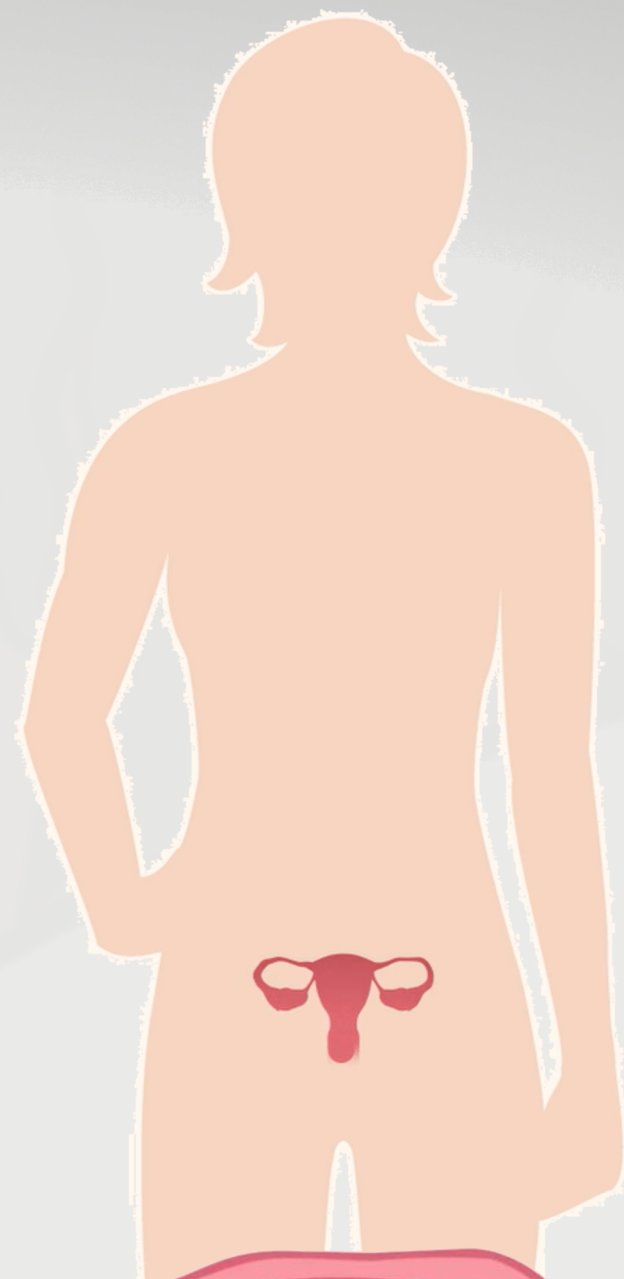
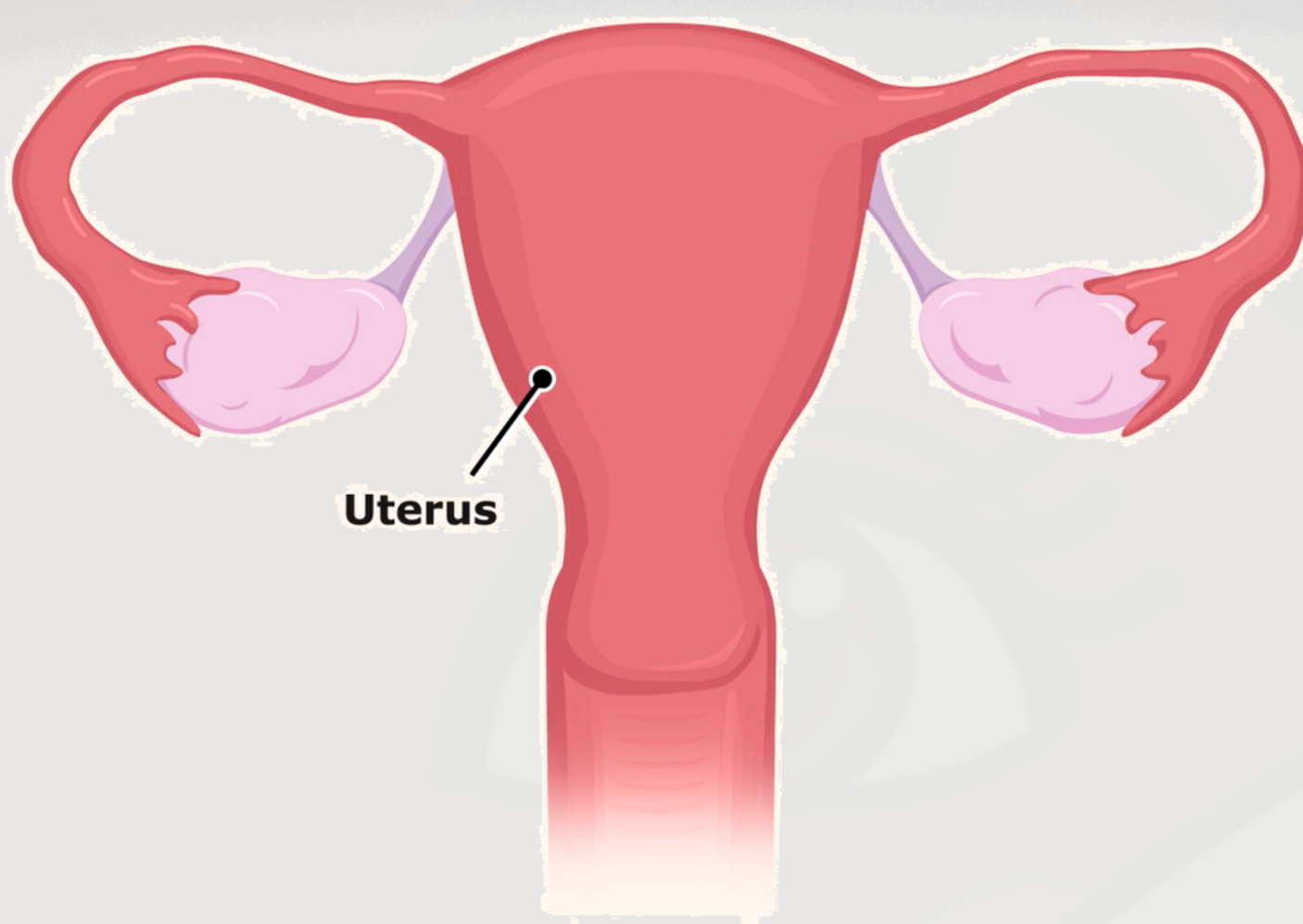
HAAAA!

JOY LAUGHS

I can see you all have
questions. I will answer all
of them. First, let's start
with what a period is.

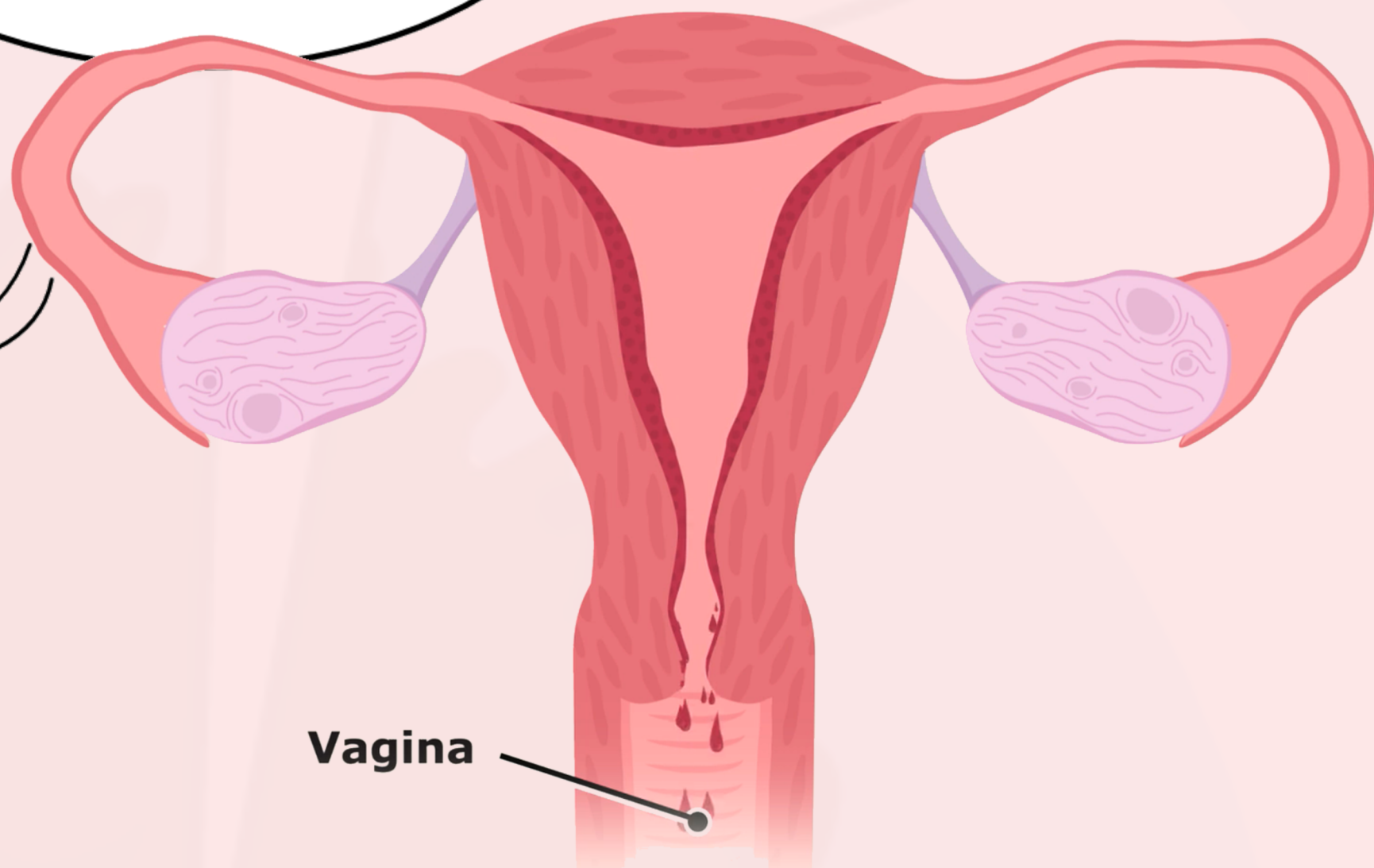


The Uterus is the part inside the body where a baby grows when a woman is pregnant





If there is no baby, the lining is shed during the period



Vagina

As the Uterus sheds its lining, blood and other tissues leave the Uterus through the Vagina.

You see this as blood coming out of the Vagina. We call this a Period, also know as **MENSTRUATION**

Periods happen so you can have babies. It is an indication that your body can now have babies.

OMG!

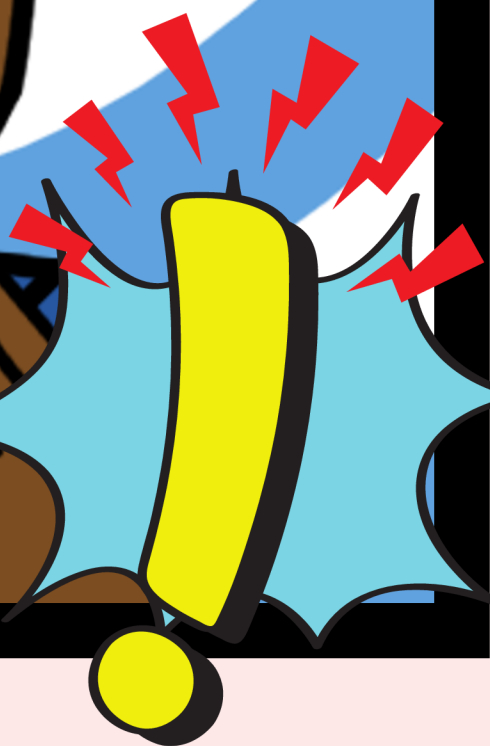
So I am now able to get pregnant?

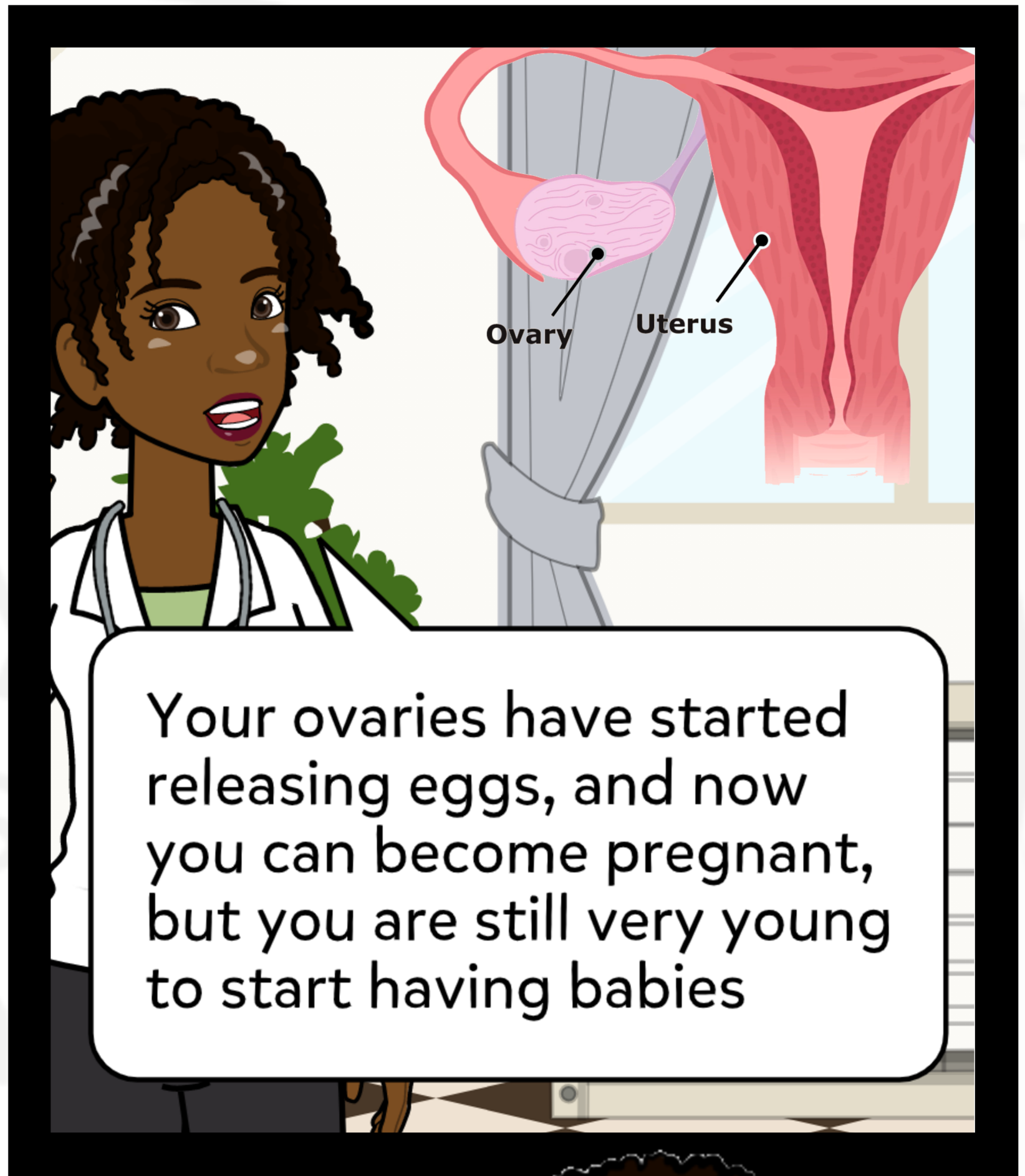
...JOY CONTINUES TO EXPLAIN

Isn't it quite early for me to be having babies. I am still very young!

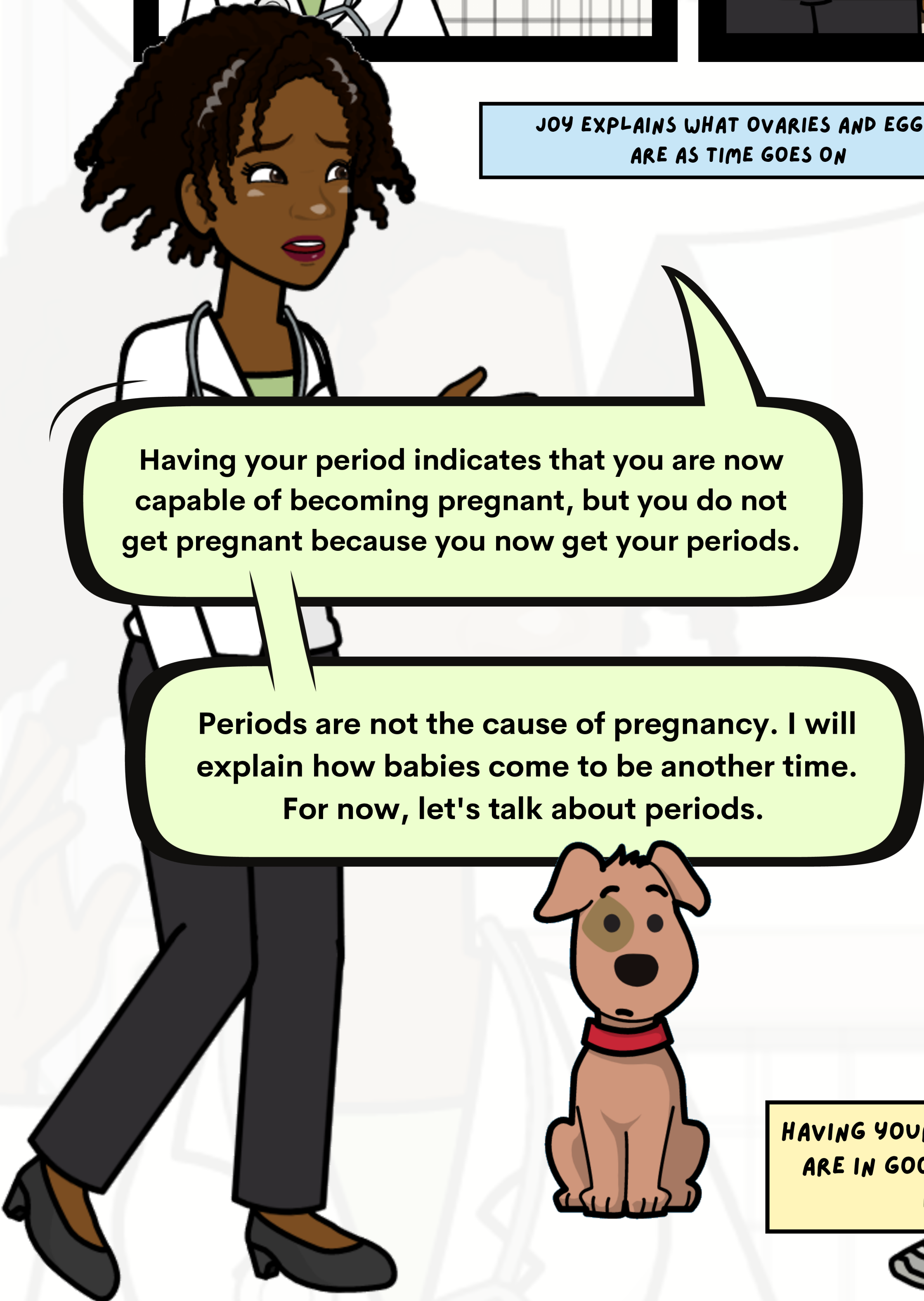
A period can last from a few days to about a week

AMANDA PANICS






JOY EXPLAINS WHAT OVARIES AND EGGS ARE AS TIME GOES ON






Thank
you for
explaining, big
Sis!


AMANDA SAYS...



You're
welcome,
Amanda. So let's go
back to periods




Have
you heard of
the menstrual
cycle?

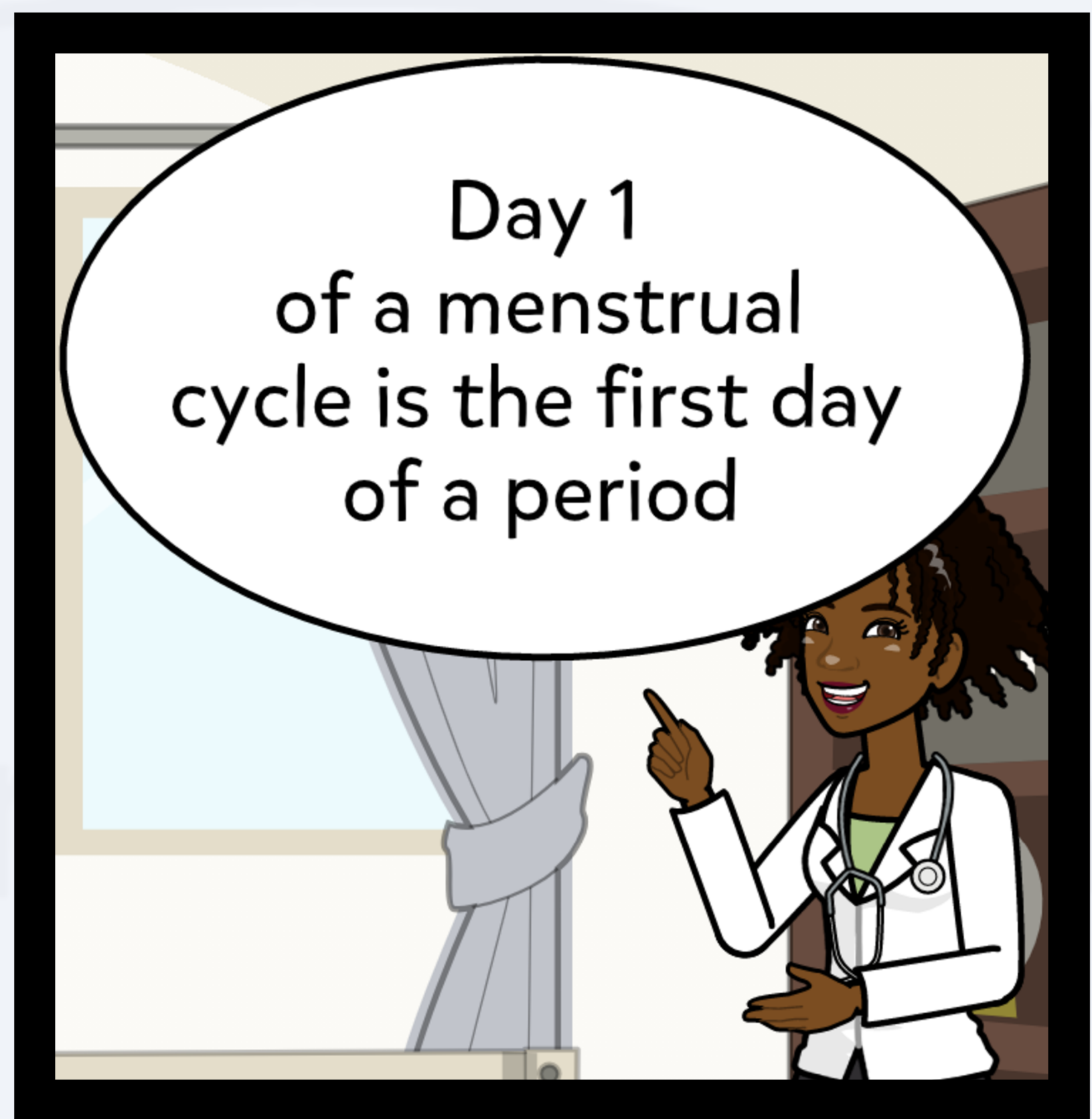


No,
I haven't!

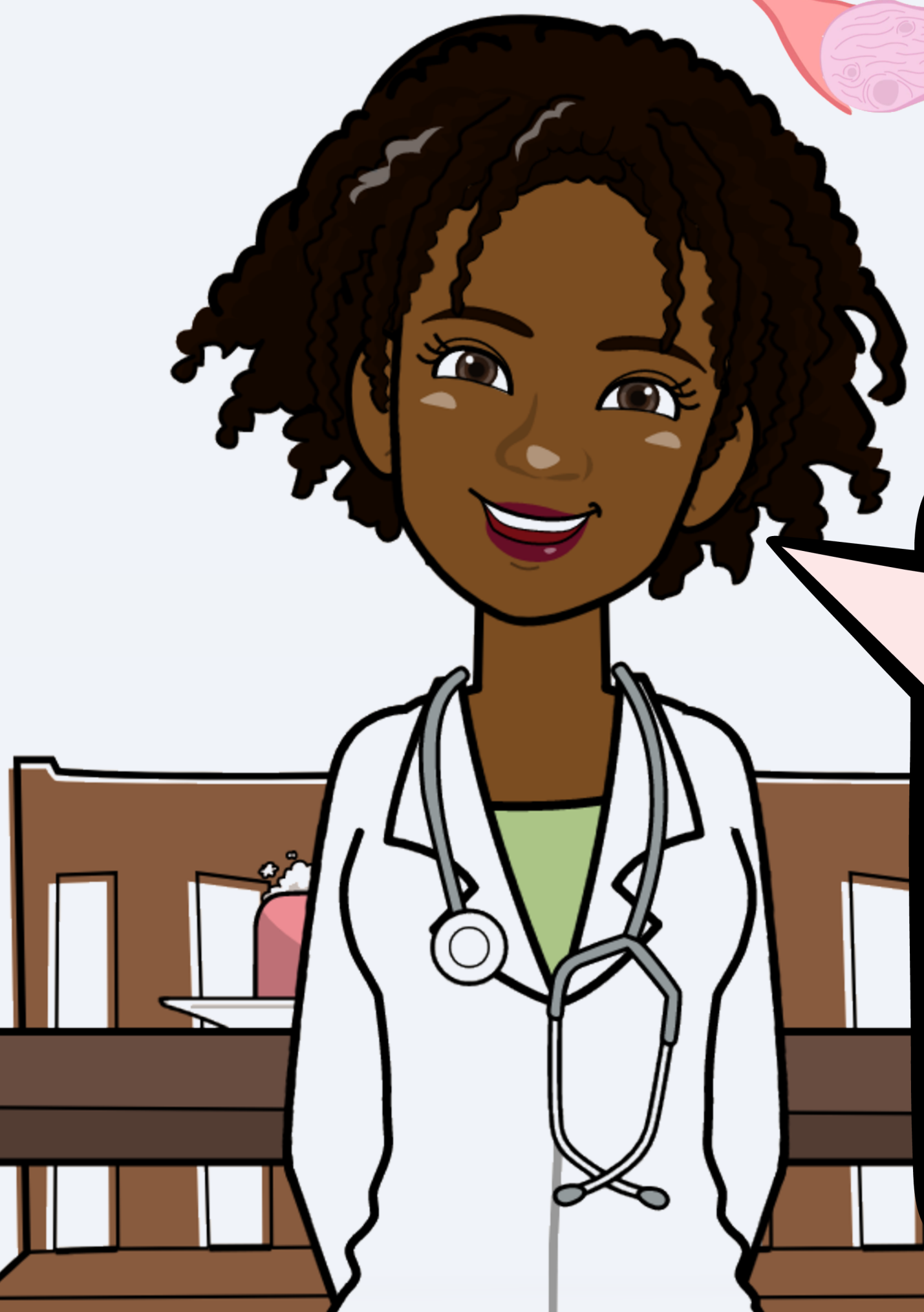
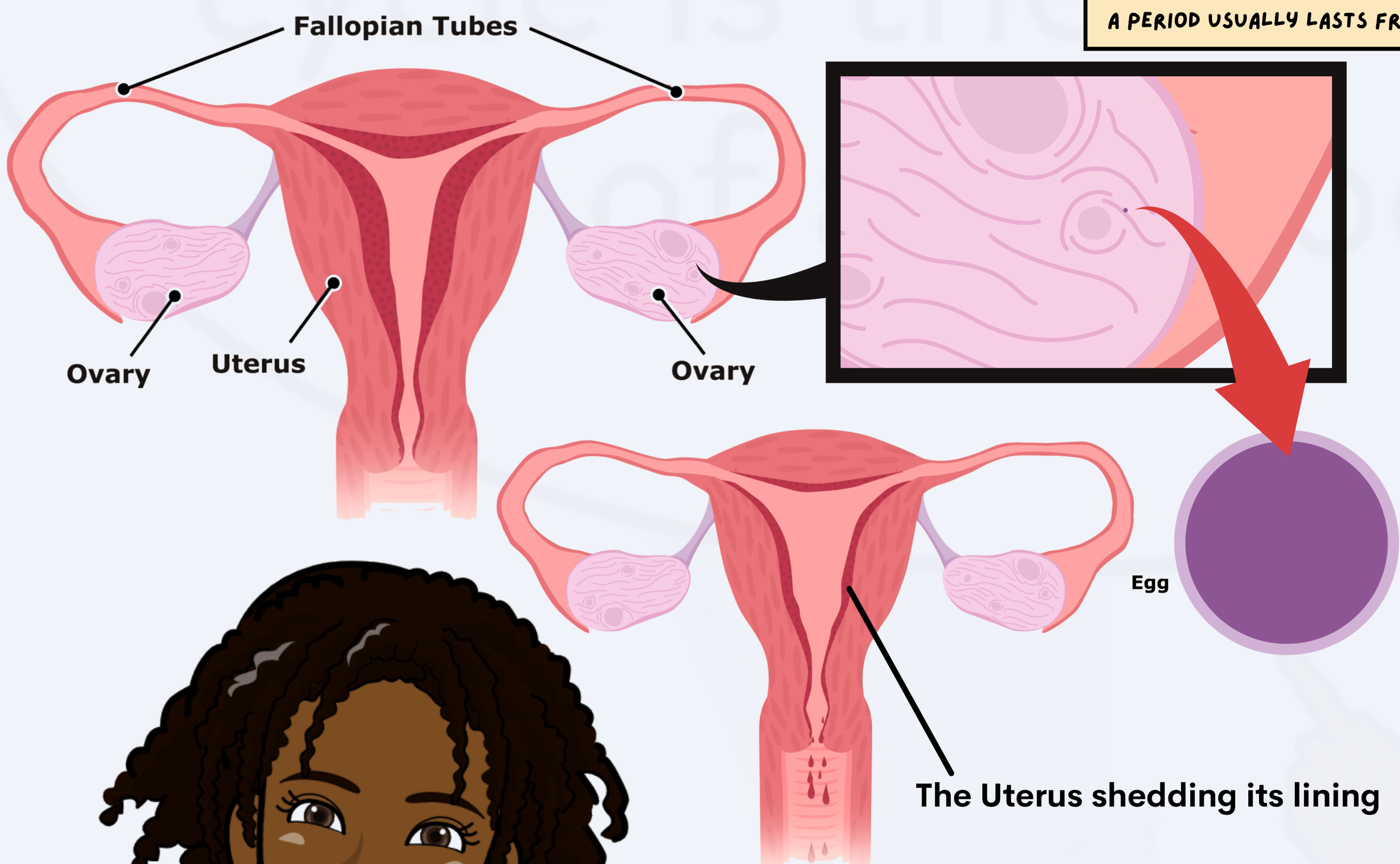
AMANDA REPLIES



It is
the time from
one period to
another



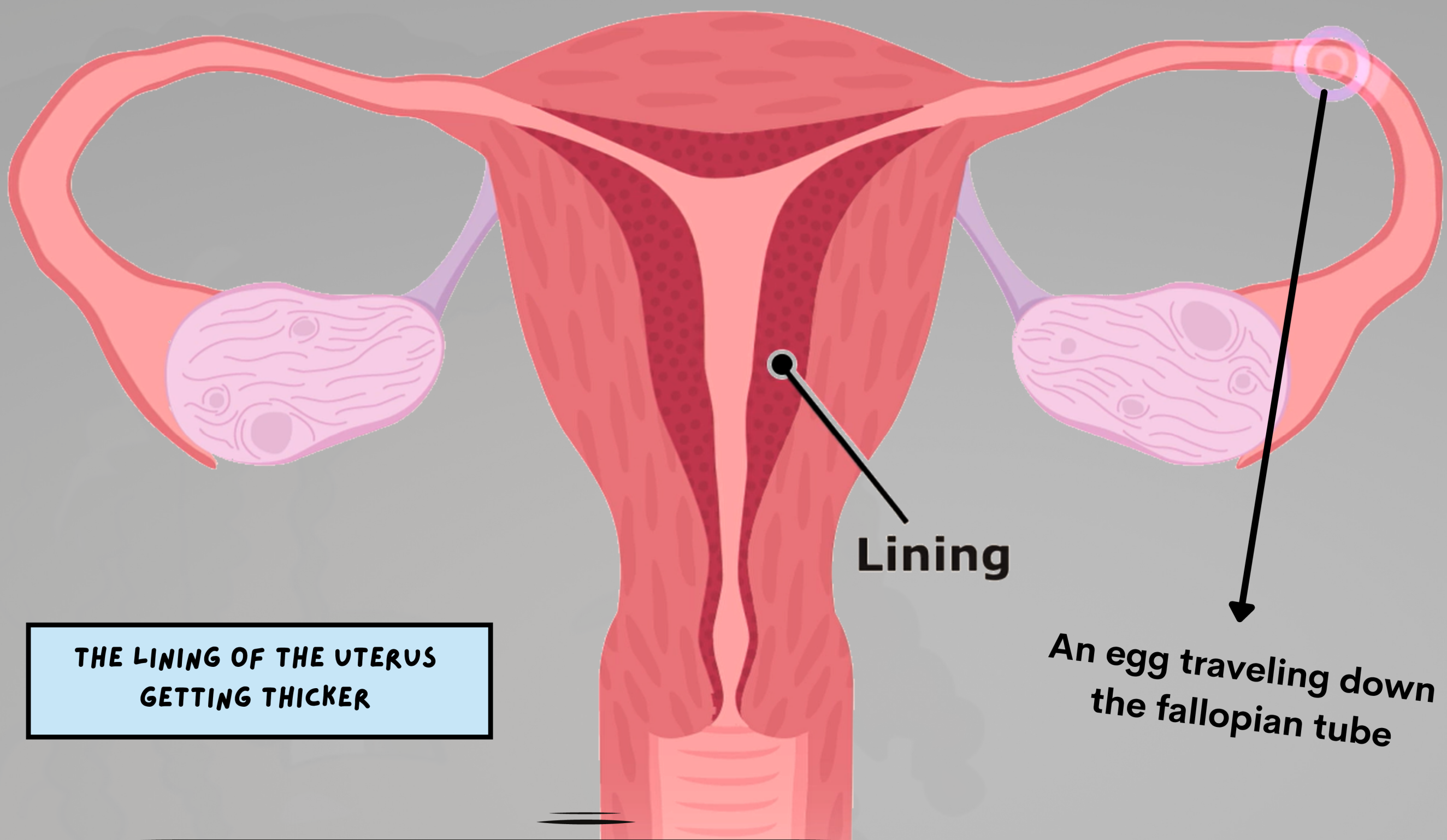
A PERIOD USUALLY LASTS FROM 3 TO 7 DAYS



On Day 1 of a menstrual cycle, the uterus starts to shed its lining.

As soon as the period ends, the uterus prepares again to receive a fertilized egg, and the lining of the uterus begins to build up again to become THICK. Eggs are released from a woman's ovaries and are super tiny. One-tenth the size of a poppy seed.

Women have two ovaries, one on each side. The Fallopian tubes leave from each ovary to the uterus



THE LINING OF THE UTERUS
GETTING THICKER

Lining

An egg traveling down
the fallopian tube

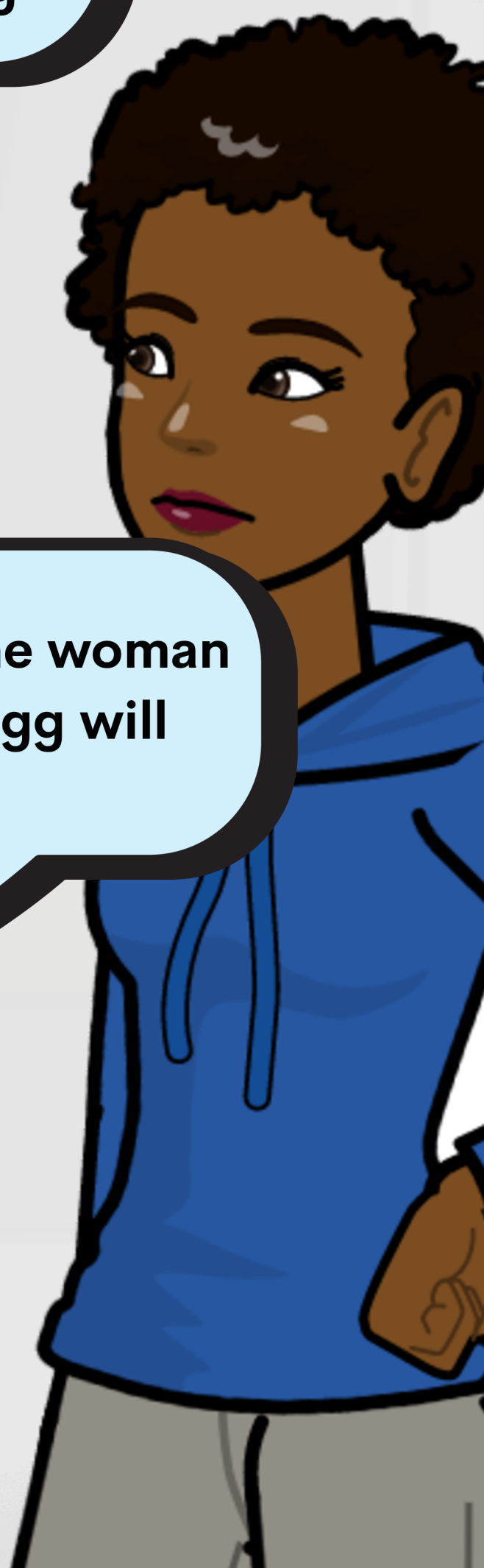
In the middle of a menstrual cycle
(Day 14), an ovary releases an egg;
this is called Ovulation

After Ovulation, the egg travels down
the fallopian tube to the uterus. It takes
a few days to complete the journey

Meanwhile, the lining of the uterus
gradually gets thicker to support the
development of a fertilized egg

If the egg gets fertilized, it will
implant in the uterus, and the woman
is pregnant

If the egg is not fertilized, the woman
is not pregnant, and the egg will
begin to dissolve



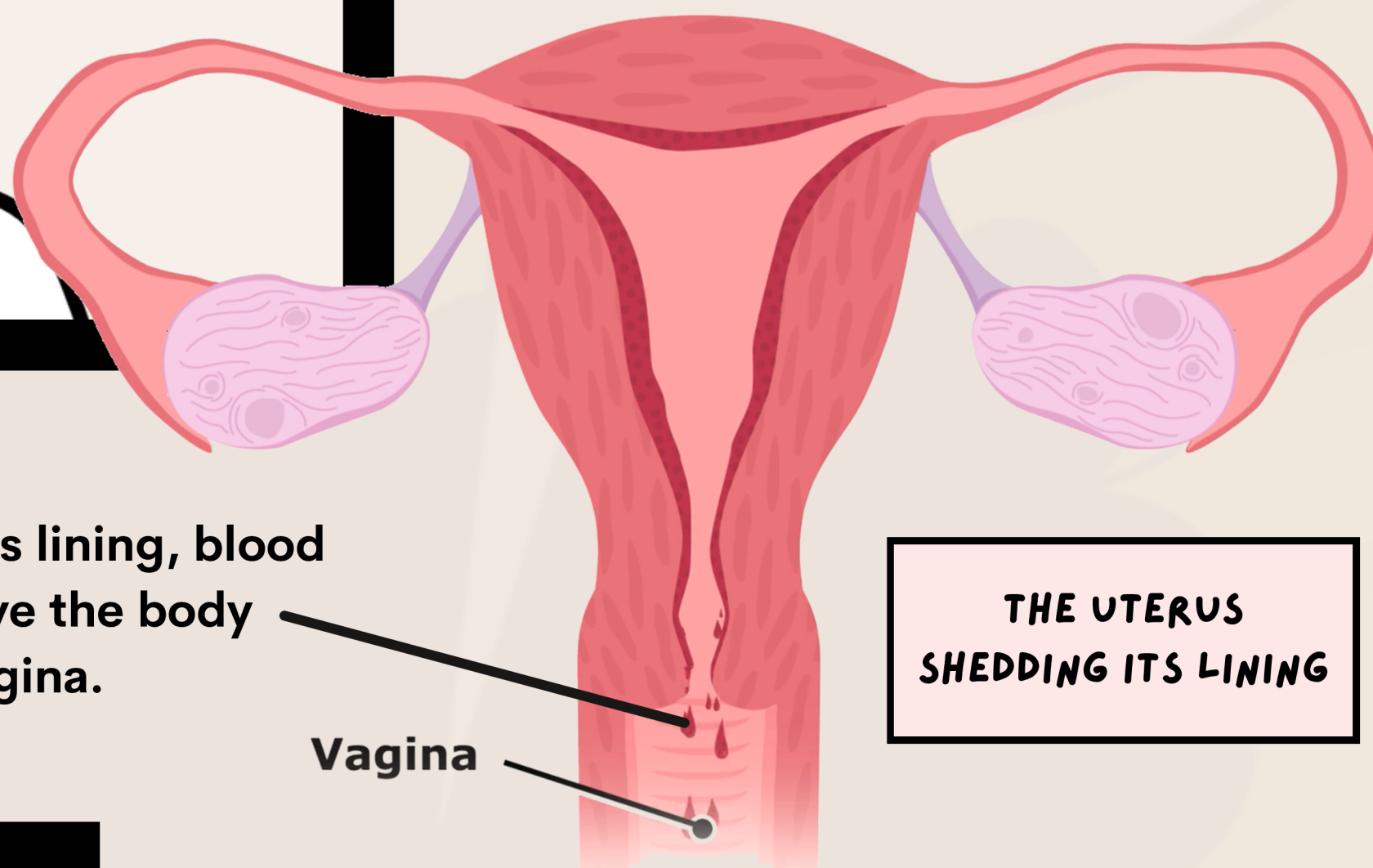
...JOY EXPLAINS



Because the woman is not pregnant, the uterus's lining is not needed, and the uterus sheds its lining (Day 28)

A woman will then have her monthly period, and the cycle begins again

The blood you lose during your period is the lining of your uterus.



When the uterus sheds its lining, blood and other tissues leave the body through the Vagina.

THE UTERUS
SHEDDING ITS LINING

Vagina



So
will I also get
my period?

SANDRA ASKED

WOW!

Yes Sandra, Most girls
get their first period when
they're around 12



Getting your period any time between age 10 and 16 is OK

Every girl's body operates on its own schedule

Some can start as early as 8, and some by the time they're 18. There's no right or wrong age to start having periods

Your periods will start when your body is ready. However, there are some indications that it will begin soon

A girl's period usually shows up approximately two years after her breasts begin to develop

...JOY EXPLAINS

Another clue that a girl's period is about to arrive is the appearance or feeling of vaginal discharge fluid (similar to mucus) on her underwear. Approximately six months to a year before a girl's first period, she will experience this discharge

A girl's period may not come regularly for the first few years after she begins her period. At first, this is normal

A girl's periods should come around once every 4-5 weeks, 2-3 years after her first period

Hmm, So that is what that white sticky thing I saw on my underwear some months ago was

AMANDA REALIZES

Periods usually happen every 4–5 weeks.
However, some girls have their periods less
frequently or more frequently

...JOY EXPLAINS

Periods can cause mood swings, sadness,
anxiety, bloating, and acne

Oh
that's why I
was feeling sick
today!

Exactly
Amanda!

It is called PMS
(premenstrual syndrome)

PMS is when a girl experiences
emotional and physical symptoms
before or during her period

The symptoms go away after the
first few days of a period

HMM...

...JOY EXPLAINS

Throughout a period, a girl usually only sheds a few teaspoons of blood, although it may appear to be a lot of blood

Most girls replace their pad, tampon, or menstrual cup 3 to 6 times per day

Do boys get periods?

...JOSHUA ASKS

No, Joshua, boys don't get periods. But both boys and girls notice some rapid changes in their bodies as they get older. It is called PUBERTY

I will tell you all about it on my next visit

**Ask
Dr. Joy**

Hi, I am Dr. Joy, and I am here to answer all your questions on periods and puberty. Have a question?

visit: padher.org/askdrjoy

AMANDA'S FATHER
COMES HOME

KNOCK!
KNOCK!

I hear a knock at the door

I think it is Dad

Let me go check

How are you, Amanda?

Welcome, home Dad!

Welcome, home Dad...

Amanda had her first period today

SANDRA GREETES HER
DAD IN EXCITEMENT



Really! Amanda,
Congrats. How are
you feeling?

I am feeling great,
Dad. Big Sis
helped me
understand what
periods are and
that they are
perfectly normal



Yes, Amanda, periods are nothing
to be embarrassed about



AMANDA REPLIES

They are part of what makes you
a woman

Thanks, Dad



Hello Joy, how are you? We
rarely see you these days

I am fine, Dad. Work sometimes gets in the way of spending time with family...

...but I will try to make out more time



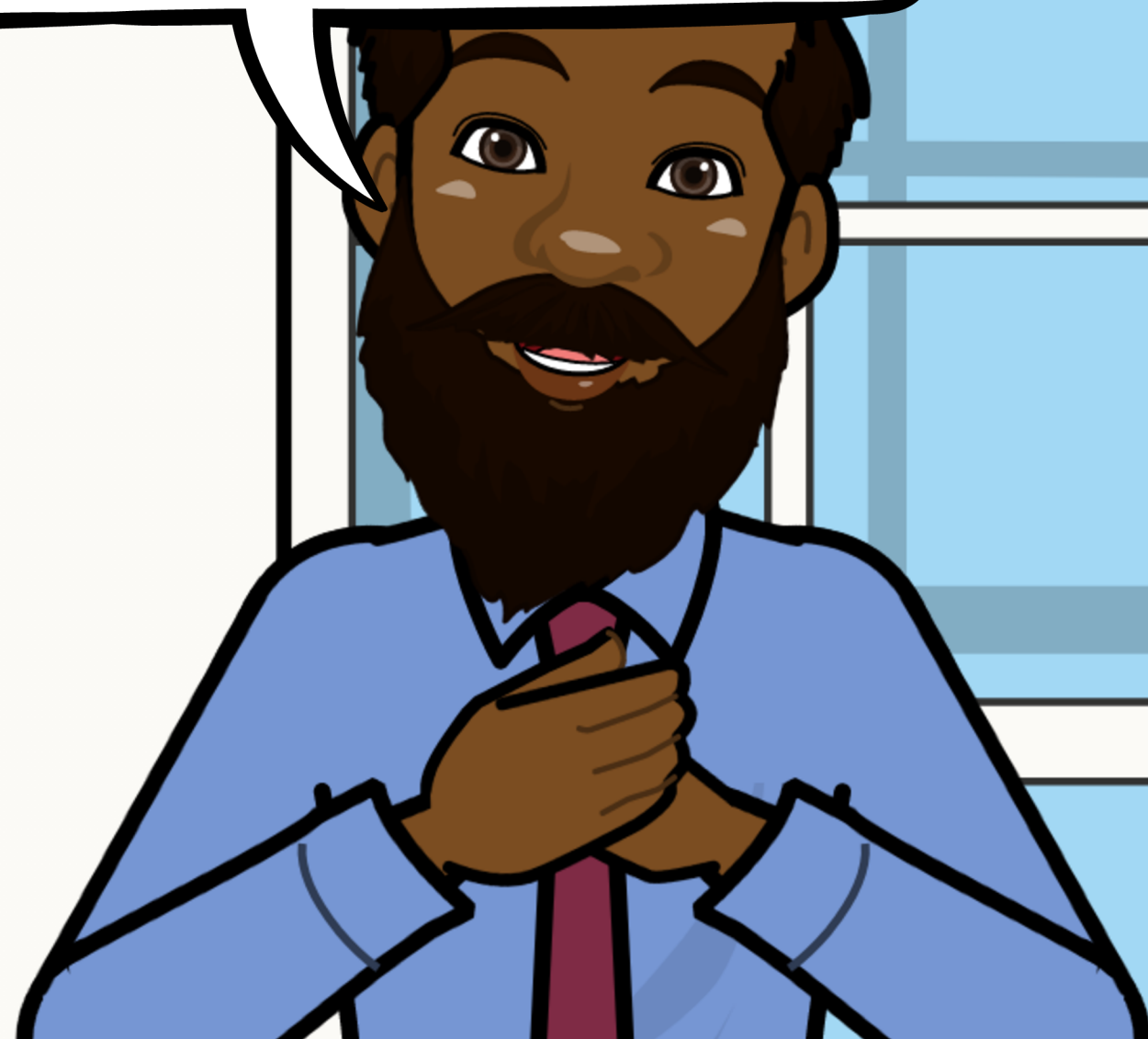
Pls, Joy, try to make out more time for us. We miss you

I miss you guys too

..SAYS JOY

Thank you so much!

Oh, darling, you are home. I know you must be tired, let me prepare you a warm bath



Before I forget Amanda, I wanted to let you know this

..SAYS JOY

Many girls have cramps with their period, especially in the first few days

HOT WATER BOTTLE

If cramps bother you, you can try a hot water bottle on your belly or taking pain relievers like ibuprofen or naproxen

Take some pain relievers for that or use a hot water bottle wrapped in a towel

Okay, Big Sis. I am actually having pains in my lower abdomen

And remember, Periods are a natural, healthy part of a girl's life

Periods shouldn't get in the way of exercising, having fun, and enjoying life

I have to get back to the hospital now

..SAYS JOY

I will be back some other day to tell you more about periods and puberty

Bye Everyone!

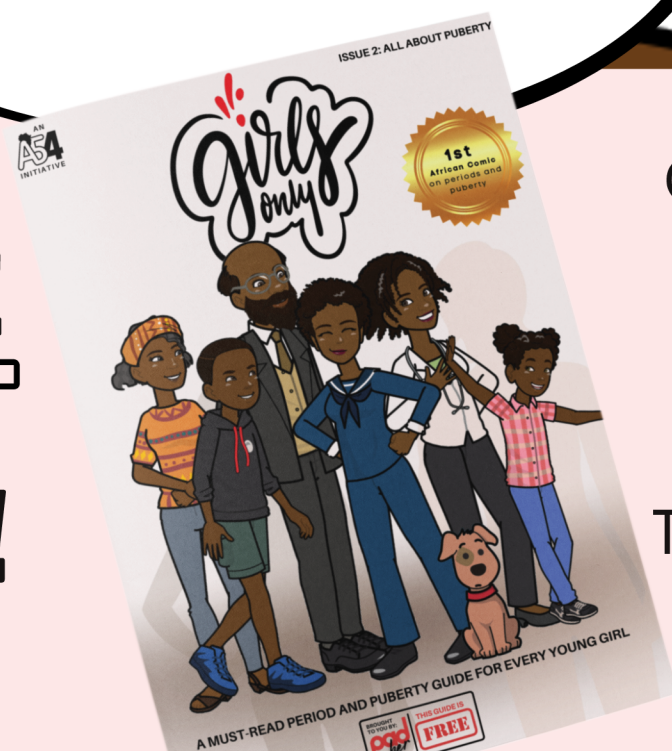
Bye!

Bye!

Bye!

Bye!

**ON THE
NEXT
ISSUE!**



Girls Only will be returning next month with an all-exciting new issue titled **All About Puberty**.

Join us on the next issue as Dr. Joy walks Amanda through puberty and the changes to expect as her body grows rapidly. To download this issue for free and/or newer issues, please visit

padher.org/download



Use this space to write down what you have learned so far about periods

**I am
I can
& I will
PERIOD.**

10 affirmations for young schoolgirls

1. *I am unique*
2. *I am confident*
3. *I am enough*
4. *I can make a difference*
5. *I can do anything I put my mind to*
6. *I can be anything I want to be*
7. *I will always believe in myself*
8. *I will never give up*
9. *I will do great things*
10. *I am, I can, and I will.*

Periods will NOT get in my way!

THE period bracelet

The period bracelet is the abacus for periods. It is an easy way to keep track of your menstrual cycle to help you know when to expect your **period**.



Because every girl has a different menstrual cycle length, you need to create a period bracelet unique to you. Some girls have period cycles as short as 21, while some have periods cycles as long as 40. Whatever your menstrual cycle length is, the Period Bracelet is for you. In the period bracelet kit, you are provided with a fishing line (to string together your beads), 10 red beads, and 40 white/black beads. That is 50 beads altogether! You do not need all 50 beads to make a period bracelet, but we need you to have as many as you can, just in case. We have given you so many beads to be able to construct a period bracelet no matter your period cycle length.

Build Your Unique Period Bracelet in 3 Easy Steps

1.

On the day you see your period first, place one RED bead into the fishing line that you are using to make your period bracelet. Do this every day until your period stops. That is, if you saw your periods for 5 days, you will now have 5 red beads in the fishing line. You will have something looking like this below.



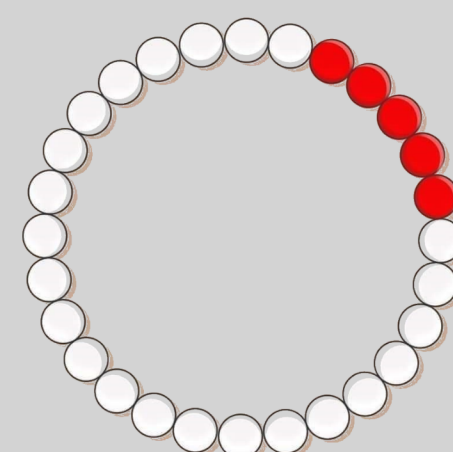
2.

On the days that you do not see your period, add a white/black bead. Do this every day until your period shows up again. That is, if you did not see your period for 23 days, you will now have 5 red beads and 23 white/black beads in the fishing line. You will have something looking like this below. Your bracelet is now complete!



3.

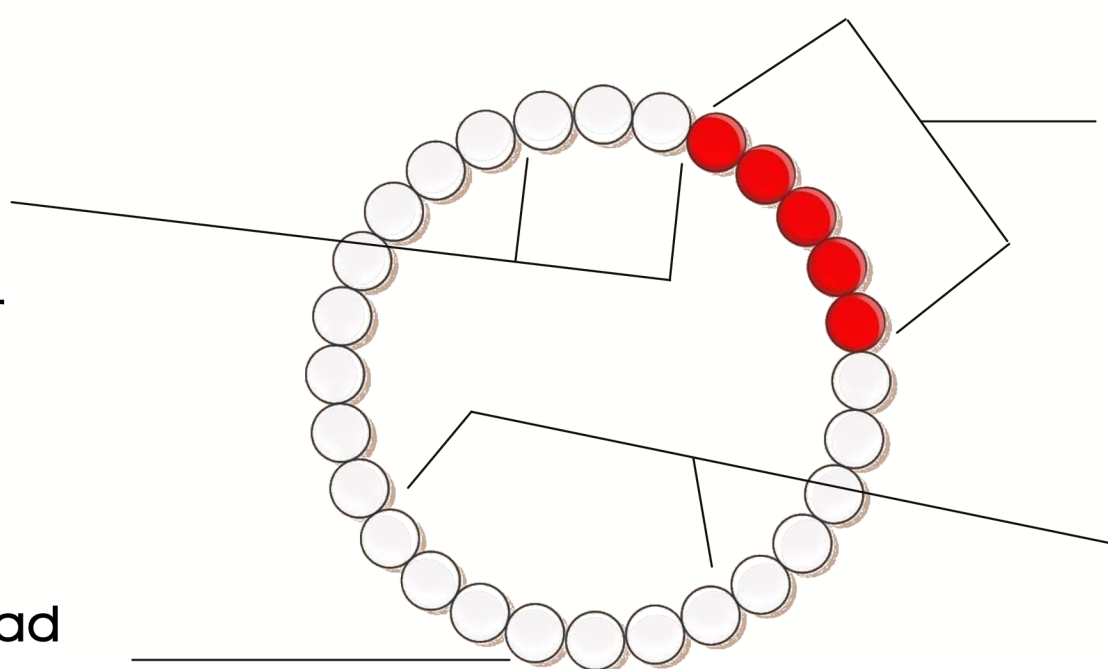
The RED beads indicate days you are on your period and the white/black beads indicate days you are off your period. You can now knot both ends of the fishing line and wear your period bracelet around your wrist! What you should have created should look something like this to your right.



Quick Facts

The last beads closest to the first bead represent days we may suffer from premenstrual syndrome or PMS.

The middle bead indicates Ovulation.



The RED beads stand for blood, signifying the days of your period. The first red bead is counted as the 1st bead.

The beads close to the middle bead indicate days when you're most fertile and most likely to get pregnant.

Try to note what bead you are on by marking the first day you see your period as the first red bead, and then start counting clockwise. This way, you can always tell when your period is coming next.

Via our period bracelet, we are increasing menstrual awareness. The period bracelet helps end period stigma as young schoolgirls wear them to show their support while using the bracelet to track their cycle.

With PadHer, every day is Period Awareness Day (P.A.D)



How to use & Care for our free REUSABLE CLOTH PADS



The PadHer Reusables is a reusable cloth pad whose concept is the same as a single-use disposable pad. Our reusable pads are designed to snap into your underwear and absorb your menstrual flow.

Reusable cloth pads are hygienic if they are used and properly maintained. Whenever you use a period hygiene product that comes in contact with your skin, make sure to replace the pads as soon as they become wet. A wet sanitary pad can irritate your skin. Use the beautiful small wet bag to keep wet sanitary pads as you change to a new one at school. Wash as soon as you get home. 3 pads have been given to you (2 reusable medium flow pads for daytime and 1 reusable heavy flow pad for nighttime).

How to wash your reusable cloth pad

You can wash your reusable pads in 4 easy steps as shown below



1

RINSE OUT



2

SOAK



3

SOAP



4

HANG DRY

1. RINSE OUT

Before washing used pads with soap or detergent, thoroughly rinse them to remove any blood. The key to stain-free cloth pad washing is to keep rinsing until the water runs clear.

2. SOAK

Soak pad in cold water for around 40 minutes. Soaking ensures that the menstrual blood is thoroughly removed. If the pad is badly stained, rinse the stained water and soak it in new water again.

3. SOAP

Cloth pads that have been rinsed can be now washed by hand, but make sure to use warm water. You only need a small amount of washing soap to get the job done.

4. HANG DRY

To avoid shrinkage, it is highly recommended that you air dry (dry under sunlight). We recommend drying under the sun because the UV rays in the sun are great natural disinfectants.



1



2



3

How to use a reusable cloth pad

- 1 Place the pad on the bottom of your underwear.
- 2 The absorbent side of the pad goes against your skin
3. The wings wrap around the crotch of the underwear to snap together.

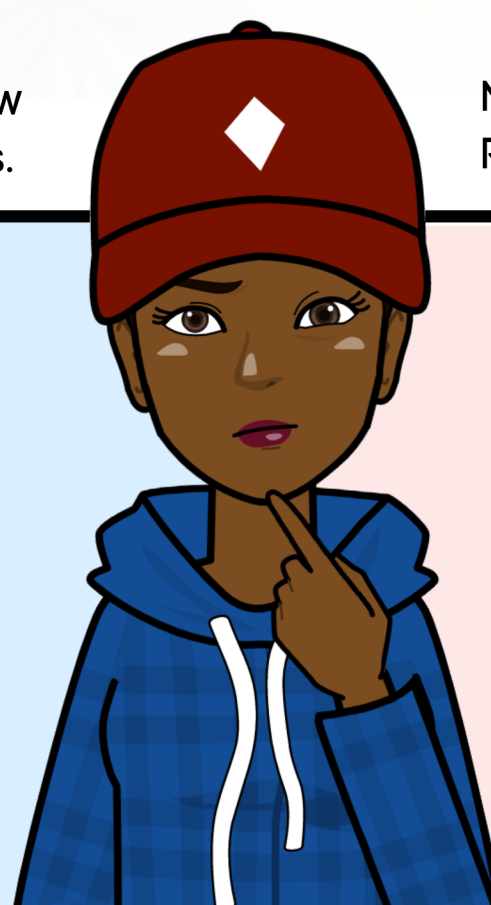
The lifespan of a reusable cloth pad varies depending on how often it is used and how well it is cared for. With good maintenance, you may expect them to last up to 2 years.

Make sure to wash your pads before using them. Replace pads at least every 6 hours.

Want to know more about Periods?

VISIT

www.padher.org/for/girls



follow us



/padherorg



WHAT MAKES GIRLS ONLY GREAT?

- Well-researched
- Designed for Boys Too!
- Medically accurate contents
- Based on real-life experiences
- Fun for school girls
- Comfortable for Parents and Teachers

**...I DEEPLY APPRECIATE PADHER'S WORK TO INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY
AND EQUITY FOR GIRLS...**

— Meghan Hammond, Project Manager, HundrED



**Want to help your
daughter manage her
period?**

Visit

padher.org/for/parent
for a comprehensive
parent guide

OR



BROUGHT
TO YOU BY:



INFO@PADHER.ORG | WWW.PADHER.ORG

**Age: 8 yrs and above
Price: FREE**



Order our comic
books today via
padher.com/shop

