



What is This?

Looking at Life
in the **Womb**
Teen Edition

STUDENT GUIDE

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in the Womb

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Introduction

“What is this?” That might seem like a strange question to you. It might seem so completely obvious that it’s not even worth talking about. “Duh, it’s a baby,” you might say. “My parents have a picture like that of me in my baby album, and pictures like that of my brothers and sisters, too. That’s what a baby looks like before he or she is born.”

On the other hand, maybe your answer is very different. When you see the picture above, you might say instead, “I see a fetus, not a baby.” Maybe you’re thinking, “I see a blob of tissue, I see a part of a woman’s body, but I don’t see a baby. Babies don’t exist until they are born.”

So which is correct? In reality, what is this? That’s the question that we are going to seek to answer in the course ahead of us, and it’s a very important question. Blobs of tissue are just blobs of tissue, and it doesn’t matter too much what happens to them; but babies are people. Babies have rights. Babies need to be loved and cared for, and we should not hurt them.

This course is made up of six modules. Each module will help you think about and answer the question “What is this?” from a different perspective — a scientific perspective, a visual perspective, a logical perspective, a historical perspective, and a theological perspective. By the end, you should be able to form a very clear and well-reasoned answer to the question, “What is this?” Here’s our plan:

What Is This?

Module 1: What Does Human Development Say?

Module 2: What Does the Ultrasound Say?

Module 3: What Does Scientific Reasoning Say?

Module 4: What Does History Say?

Module 5: What Does the Word of God Say?

Module 6: What Do You Say?

Let’s get started!

Digital versions of the student guide, as well as the “Looking at Life in the Womb” videos, are available free of charge on LCMSlife.org.





Module 1:

What Does Human Development Say?

Objective: Explore human growth and development from conception through adulthood and understand the changing characteristics and the timeline in which they occur.

Materials: picture cards, presentation slides, ruler (cm), string, large paper clips, cups, Power Point, Student Recording Sheets 1A and 1B, (optional: modeling materials)

Vocabulary: womb, conception, zygote, embryo, fetus, trimester

When scientists conduct research, they often make a claim, gather evidence, analyze the information, and communicate a conclusion based on their findings. In these first three modules you will look at the scientific evidence for human development and use this to support your own conclusion as you answer, “What is this?”

Let’s begin ...

Part I – Identification of the Images

You will start by looking at some images from Mayo Clinic¹, a well-known and respected medical facility. As you look at each slide, answer these questions for yourself: What is it, and why do you think so? Write your ideas on the Student Recording Sheet 1A.

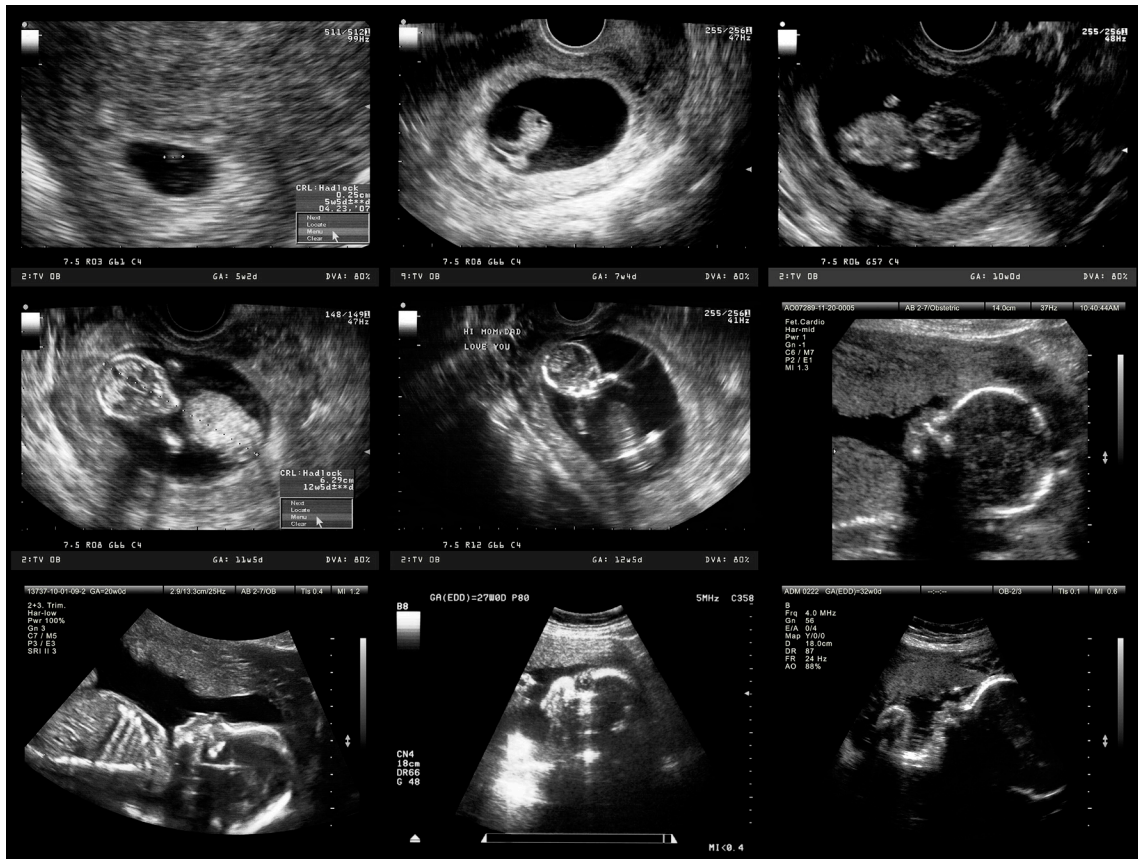
¹ Images from: Mayo Clinic Healthy Lifestyle: “Pregnancy Week by Week, Fetal Development: The 1st Trimester”, Mayo Clinic, Accessed 13 January 2015 mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/prenatal-care/art-20045302
“Pregnancy Week by Week, Fetal Development: The 2nd Trimester”, Mayo Clinic, Accessed 13 January 2015 mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20046151
“Pregnancy Week by Week, Fetal Development: The 3rd Trimester”, Mayo Clinic, Accessed 13 January 2015 mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/pregnancy-week-by-week/in-depth/fetal-development/art-20045997

MODULE 1 - Student Recording Sheet 1A

| Slide | What is it? | Why do you think so? |
|-------|-------------|----------------------|
| A | | |
| B | | |
| C | | |
| D | | |
| E | | |
| F | | |
| G | | |

At which point in the slides did the images become recognizable? _____

How old do you think the image in this slide is? _____



Part II – Age of the Images (Conception through Birth)

Now that you have identified the images as that of a human being, see how well you can identify ages of human growth from conception through birth. For the baby images from conception through birth, try to predict the age of each image. Think about the criteria that you are using to justify your predicted age of each image, and write these on Student Recording Sheet 1B. As you predict an age, place the image on a timeline. Make sure that you create your timeline first, and then drop your images on it at the appropriate places. You will then be given the actual ages and allowed to reposition the images on the timeline, as necessary.

Compare your predicted ages to the actual ages. How close were they? Why do you think this was so?

How much time is there between each of the pictures? Why do you think the pictures were provided at these time intervals?

If time allows ...

Now that you have sequenced the images of the baby for each of your early images, investigate how quickly the baby actually grows in height (length) and weight

(mass) during its early weeks. Use a ruler (cm) to cut pieces of string and large paper clips (1 g each) in cups to appreciate the height and weight of the baby during these weeks of growth. What do you notice about the growth rate for both height and weight of the baby?

Part III – Extending the Age of the Images (Birth through Adult)

You will continue adding images from birth through adulthood to your timeline. Take, collect, or use twelve pictures of random people at various ages and doing different activities. Assign a letter to each person in order of increasing age, beginning with “O.” Predict the age of each person, and record the criteria that you used to determine their age. (Note: You may or may not be able to obtain the actual ages.)

Discuss with a partner how you determined the age for each person that you did.

Add these new images to your timeline. As you look at your timeline from conception through adulthood, what do you notice about the growth and development rate for human beings?