

## Activity 4.1 – Your heart

### 1 Read the following:

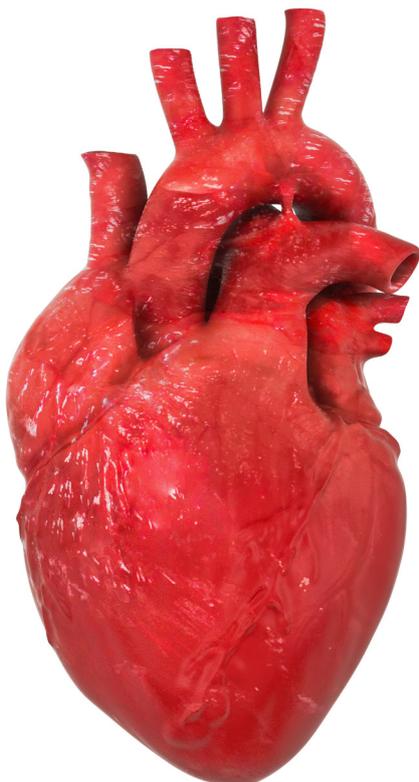
Your heart plays an important part in being healthy. Your heart is a muscle and like other muscles in the body, if you want it to be strong, you need to exercise it. When you exercise, you use many muscles which all need oxygen to work well.

When you breathe in oxygen, it is your blood that carries the oxygen around your body. Your heart has the job of pumping this oxygenated blood around your body and then bringing it back to the lungs to become oxygenated again.

Your heart is in the centre of your chest, slightly to the left, and it is about the same size as your clenched fist. The heart beats about 100,000 times a day and about three billion times during an average lifetime.

Taking your pulse is a way of measuring how fast your heart is beating and pumping – this is called your heart rate and it is measured in beats per minute (BPM). You can feel your pulse on your wrist or on your neck where your blood vessels are close to the skin.

When you exercise, your heart rate increases, and you can feel your pulse getting faster and stronger. Increasing your heart rate by exercising strengthens your heart muscle. The faster your heart rate returns to your normal resting heart rate after exercise, the fitter you are.



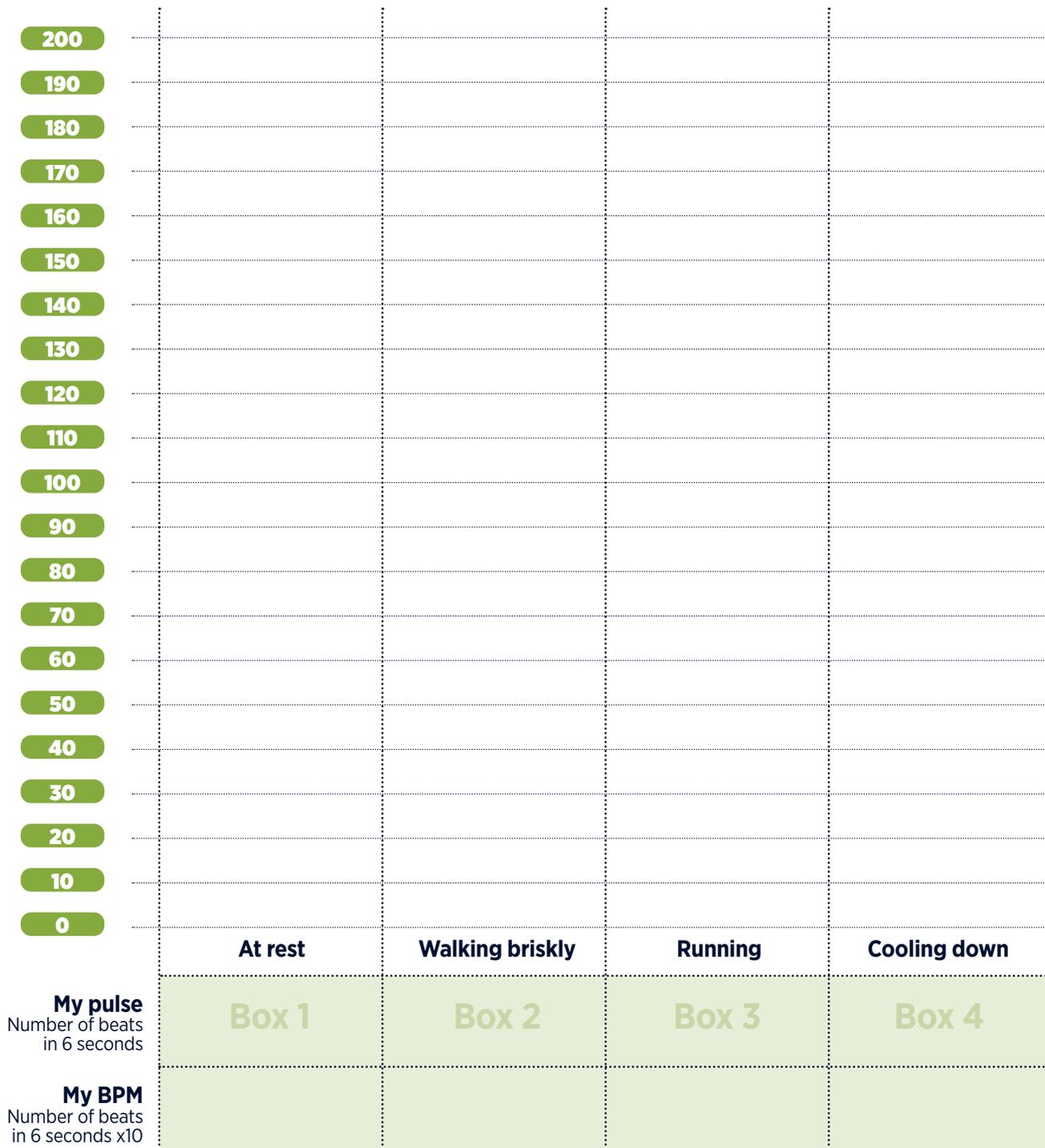
### Did you know?

Taking your pulse is a way of measuring how fast your heart is beating.

- 2 Learn to take your pulse. Your teacher will time you for six seconds as you measure your heart rate:**
1. At rest whilst sitting down - your resting heart rate
  2. After walking briskly for two minutes
  3. After running for two minutes and
  4. After cooling down for two minutes.

**Record and plot your heart rate as BPM (beats per minute) in the correct column on the heart rate tracker.**

## Heart rate tracker



**3 Looking at your heart rate tracker, answer the following questions.**

1. What was your heart rate (BPM) at its highest? .....

2. What activity were you doing? .....

3. Why do you think it was at its highest then?.....

4. When was your heart rate at its lowest?.....

5. What was your heart rate (BPM) at this time?.....

6. Why do you think it was at its lowest then?.....

7. Don't forget that the heart is a muscle. If you want strong muscles, what do you need to do to make them stronger? .....

8. Did your heart rate return to your normal resting heart rate during the cooling down period?  
.....

9. Complete this sentence: The **f**..... your heart rate returns to your normal  
**r**..... heart rate after exercise, the fitter you are.

 **Extra activity**

Can you make a working model of a heart? Watch this video and give it a go!

 Go to the [Ready Steady Go! homepage](#) for a video of how to make a working heart model.

