What is the function of your heart? Why do you need blood to circulate to all the parts of your body? Does your heart always beat at the same rate? In this activity, you will listen to your own heartbeat using a stethoscope and explain what you are hearing, and why.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

• Students with heart problems should not be subjects in this activity.

• Clean the earpieces of the stethoscope with alcohol and an absorbent swab before and after each use.

MATERIALS

• alcohol • absorbent swabs • stethoscope • stopwatch

PROCEDURE

1. Work in small groups, so everyone has a chance to listen to their own heartbeat.

2. Have each person in your group sit quietly for a few minutes, and then listen to their own heartbeat with the stethoscope. Try listening to the heartbeat at several different places on the chest.

3. Taking turns, have each person do a few jumping jacks or walk around the classroom a few times. Then have the person sit down and listen to their own heartbeat again. Again, try listening to the heartbeat at several different places on the chest.

ANALYSIS

1. Describe in your own words the heart sounds that you heard after exercise. How did they differ from the sounds you heard before exercise?

Before Exercise	After Exercise

2. Why do you think the heartbeat sounds different after exercise?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

3. List some activities that you think might increase a person's heartbeat. Are there any activities that you think might decrease a person's heartbeat?

Increase Heartbeat	Decrease Heartbeat