



A Walk Through the Heart

You have completed a diagram of the parts of the heart, and we have discussed blood flow. Now you are going to have a kinesthetic experience to make that knowledge stick in your memory. This is as much instruction on how to learn as it is science content. So, stay focused. You can use this technique for lots of learning.

Each one of you has been given a sign to hold. That sign represents the part of the heart that you will play. The director of this walk will help place you in the room at an appropriate point. For example, if you are the tricuspid valve, she/he will place you between the right atrium and the right ventricle.

Once everyone is in place, someone will be designated to walk through the heart from vena cava to aorta. He or she will hold a blue balloon when he/she is not oxygenated and a red balloon when he/she is. When this person (representing blood) approaches you are to tell him/her where he/she is, what part of the heart you are and where he/she will be when he/she passes you. If you are the tricuspid valve you would say, "You are in the right atrium and you will pass through me, the tricuspid valve. As soon as you pass me you will be entering the right ventricle."

We will do this as much as we need to so that everyone gets a chance to be blood and a part of the heart. As soon as one person finishes the walkthrough, he or she will take one person's place in the heart and that person will become blood and repeat the trip.

At the end of this, we will take a short formative assessment where you will be asked to label the parts of a heart diagram and fill in a flow chart describing where blood moves from and to in the trip from vena cava to aorta.

To extend the experience, you can add the lub dub sound or the systolic and diastolic movements of the chambers.