

Science Y4 Spring 1 – Digestion and Teeth

In this unit children will take part in activities to explore the human digestive system and learn about how food is transported around the body. They will learn about our different teeth and match teeth to different animals. They will use the terms producers, predators and prey when constructing food chains.

In this unit children will:

- Name and label the body parts involved in the digestive system – mouth, tongue, teeth, oesophagus, stomach, small and large intestine.
- Describe the simple function of the basic parts of the digestive system in humans – mouth, tongue, teeth, oesophagus, stomach, small and large intestine.
- Identify the different types of teeth in humans and their simple functions.
- Construct and interpret a variety of food chains, identifying producers, predators and prey.

Prior Learning

F.S Observing animals, caring for living things.

Y1 Naming common animals

Y2 Basic needs of animals

Y3 Nutrition comes from what we eat

Cross Curricular Links

Key Vocabulary

Digestive system – This is designed to extract the goodness from food and get rid of the leftovers.

Oesophagus – The tube that takes food from the mouth to the stomach.

Stomach – Where food is digested.

Intestine – Long tube which food travels from the stomach and out of the body while its being digested.

Canines – 4 teeth which are tall and pointed, used to hold and tear food.

Incisors – 8 teeth at the front, which have a straight, sharp edge and help cut up food.

Premolars – 8 bumpy teeth behind the canines, which help grind food.

Molars – 12 big, flat teeth that help to grind and chew.

Producer – Plants in a food chain.

Consumer – Animals that eat plants.

Predator – Animals that hunt, kill and eat other animals.

Prey – Animals that are hunted and killed.

Key Knowledge

- Our body needs food to provide it with energy, vitamins and minerals. In order to use food, we must first break it down into substances that the various organs and cells in our body can use. This is digestion.
- The digestive system acts in stages to digest our food. Each stage is important and prepares the food for the next stage.
- The entire length of our digestive system is around 20 to 30 feet.
- The main stages of the digestive system are chewing, swallowing, stomach, small intestine, large intestine
- Saliva is made up of water and it helps you chew, taste and swallow food. It contains enzymes which start to break down the food we eat.
- Humans have 3 main types of teeth – Canines used for tearing and ripping; Incisors to help you bite off and chew; Molars to help you crunch and grind food.
- Animals that eat only meat are called carnivores. Animals that eat only plants are called herbivores. Carnivores and herbivores have different types of teeth, to suit the food they eat.
- Food chain describes the order in which living things depend on each other for food. Food chains start with a producer.

Digestion in Mouth

Mouth constitutes teeth, tongue, and lips, which all together perform physical digestion by masticating food, & begins the digestion process.



- Consumers dominate food chains. They have important roles to play within an ecosystem such as balancing the food chain by keeping animal populations at a reasonable number.

Key Questions

- Why is important that humans have different teeth in their mouth?
- Why do herbivore animals need different teeth to carnivores?
- Why is it important that you chew your food before swallowing it?
- What role does our epiglottis play when swallowing?