

Nova's Digestive System Expedition

Learning objective: To describe the simple functions of the basic parts of the digestive system in humans.

Join Nova the barn owl on an exploration of how our bodies process food! Use the word bank to help you complete the sections below. Think carefully about how each organ plays its part in the journey from the first bite to the final product.

Word bank: oesophagus · stomach · small intestine · large intestine · saliva · nutrients · digestion · teeth

1. The Start of the Journey: Describe the role of teeth and saliva when food first enters the mouth. Why is this initial stage crucial for the rest of the process? (3 marks)

2. Transporting the Fuel: Explain the function of the oesophagus. How does it ensure food reaches the stomach safely? (2 marks)

3. The Mixing Bowl: What happens to food once it arrives in the stomach? Use the word 'nutrients' in your explanation. (3 marks)

4. The Absorption Station: Compare and contrast the roles of the small intestine and the large intestine. Why does the body need both? (4 marks)

5. Justify Your Answer: Why might a person feel unwell if their body struggled to absorb water in the large intestine? Explain your reasoning. (3 marks)

6. What might happen if the stomach were unable to break down food thoroughly before it entered the small intestine? (3 marks)

Extension challenge: Nova wants you to imagine you are a piece of toast on a journey! Write a short, creative diary entry from the perspective of the toast, describing your transformation as you pass through each stage of the human digestive system.