

Nova's Journey Through the Digestive System

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

Use this writing scaffold to explain the process of digestion. Think like Nova the owl—observe the facts, ask brilliant questions, and use scientific vocabulary to describe how our bodies process food.

As I watched the children eating their lunch, I began to wonder exactly how their bodies transform a simple sandwich into the energy they need for their afternoon of learning.

Word bank: oesophagus · stomach · small intestine · large intestine · nutrients · absorption · consequently · subsequently · furthermore · break down · essential

1. The Beginning: Describe the process of mechanical and chemical digestion in the mouth. Start your paragraph with: 'The digestive process commences in the mouth, where...' (2 marks)

2. The Journey Down: Explain the function of the oesophagus and how it transports food to the stomach. Start with: 'Once swallowed, the food travels down the oesophagus, which...' (2 marks)

3. The Stomach's Role: Justify why the stomach is a vital organ in the digestive process. Consider the role of stomach acid. Start with: 'Within the stomach, a crucial transformation occurs because...' (3 marks)

4. Absorption: Compare and contrast the roles of the small and large intestines. Start with: 'Following the stomach, the nutrients are extracted in the small intestine, whereas...' (3 marks)

5. Synthesis: Explain why the human body requires a balanced diet to function effectively during the digestive process. Start with: 'In conclusion, the digestive system is essential for health because...' (2 marks)

6. Critical Thinking: What might happen to the body if the small intestine were significantly shorter? Justify your answer using scientific reasoning. (3 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are a tiny explorer travelling through the digestive system. Write a short, creative diary entry from the perspective of a nutrient particle, describing the sights and changes you experience as you move from the mouth to the bloodstream.