Bea’s Buzzing Guide to Digestion

Learning objective: To identify and explain the functions of the organs in the human digestive system.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below to test your understanding of how our bodies process food.

Bea the honeybee is buzzing with excitement to explain how humans turn lunch into energy! Digestion begins in the mouth, where teeth break down food and saliva starts to soften it. Once swallowed, the food travels down a muscular tube called the oesophagus. It then arrives in the stomach, a stretchy bag where powerful acids churn the food into a thick, soupy liquid. Next, this mixture enters the small intestine. This is the most important part of the journey, as the body absorbs essential nutrients and vitamins into the bloodstream to help us grow and stay healthy. Any leftover waste that the body cannot use moves into the large intestine, where water is absorbed. Finally, the remaining waste is passed out of the body. Throughout this process, the body works like a complex factory, ensuring every bit of goodness is extracted. It is a remarkable system that keeps us active, whether we are running in the playground or focusing on a tricky maths puzzle!

Word bank: oesophagus · stomach · nutrients · intestines · digestion · saliva

1. What are the two main jobs of the small intestine according to the text? (2 marks)

2. Which organ is described as a 'stretchy bag' that uses acid to break down food? (1 mark)

3. Why is it important for the body to absorb water in the large intestine? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, why might digestion be described as a 'complex factory'? (2 marks)

5. Do you think the digestive system is the most important system in the human body? Justify your answer. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a labelled diagram of the human digestive system, showing the path food takes from the mouth to the end of the process.

Extension challenge: Research what happens to the body if someone does not get enough nutrients from their food. Write a short paragraph explaining the importance of a balanced diet.