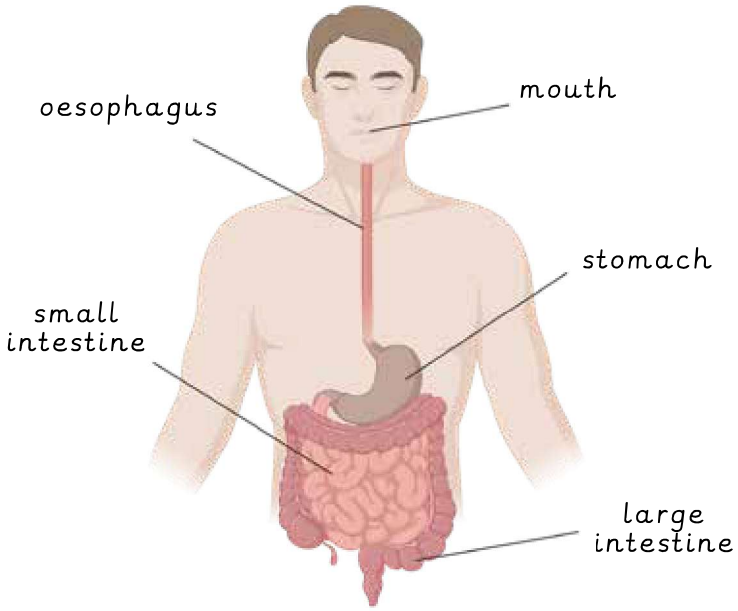
Science - Digestion and food

The human digestive system



Mouth: teeth are used for cutting and grinding and saliva softens and breaks up food.

Oesophagus: carries food from the mouth to the stomach.

Stomach: breaks up food using acid.

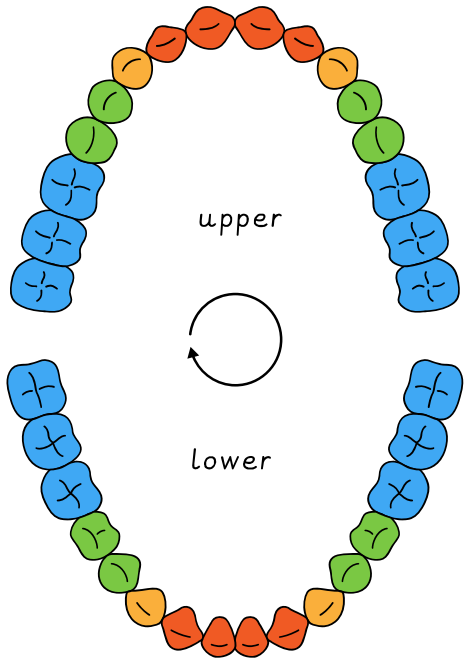
Small intestine: breaks up food and absorbs nutrients into the blood.

Large intestine: absorbs water into the blood.

Teeth in different animals

Animals have different shaped teeth depending on their diet.
Carnivores tend to have much larger canines to help catch and tear their prey.
Herbivores tend to have larger, flatter molars to grind and crush the plants they eat.

Human teeth



Incisor: a tooth at the front of the mouth, useful for cutting.

Canine: a pointed tooth, useful for tearing.

Premolar: a tooth in front of the molars, useful for grinding.

Molar: a tooth at the back of the mouth, useful for grinding.

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Evidence scientists use

X-rays are used to produce images of inside the body. They help doctors and dentists to find and treat problems.

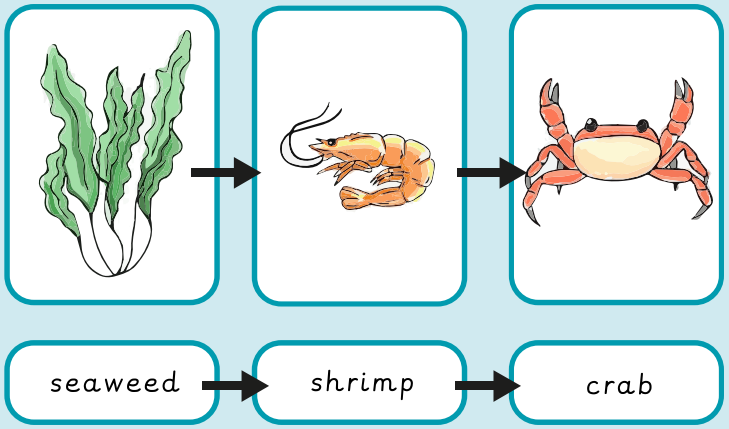
Fossils are the remains or traces of an animal or plant that lived long ago. Fossilised teeth can give clues about an animal's diet by comparing their teeth to those of modern animals.

Faeces are the solid waste from the **digestive system**. The contents of the faeces can show what an animal has eaten and if it is living nearby.

Further vocabulary

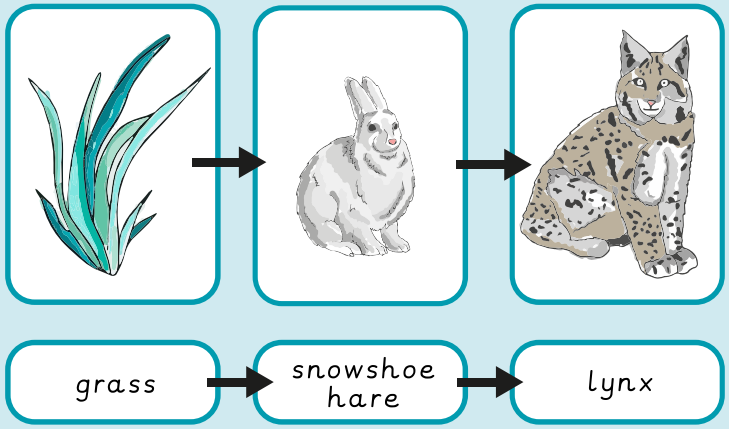
absorb	To take in or soak up.
digest	To break up food into smaller pieces.
predator	Something that hunts and kills its food.
prey	Something that is hunted and killed for food.
producer	A living thing that makes its own food.
saliva	The liquid added to the mouth to help chewing, swallowing and digestion.

Food chains show the energy being passed between living things in a habitat



Food chains usually contain three or four living things.

Food chains always start with a **producer** (plant), followed by an animal that eats the plant (**herbivore** or **omnivore**) and an animal that eats other animals (**carnivore** or **omnivore**).



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