The Great Food Journey

Teacher		**Class**	Year 4
Subject	Science	**Topic**	The digestive system
Date		**Room**	
Lesson length	60 minutes	**Country**	United Kingdom

Pupils learn the basic parts of the digestive system and what each part does. They act out the journey of food from mouth to anus.

Curriculum links

- I can describe the simple functions of the basic parts of the digestive system in humans [1]

Learning objectives

- Students will name the basic parts of the digestive system in order.
- Students will describe in simple words what each digestive part does to food.

Success criteria

- I can order the parts from mouth to anus.
- I can say what each part does to food.
- I can explain why food must become tiny bits.

What students already know

Ask pupils to rub their tummy and tell their partner what they think happens to lunch after they swallow it.

Key words

mouth	opening where teeth cut food and spit wets it for swallowing [3]
oesophagus	muscular food tube in the chest that squeezes food down to the stomach [3]
stomach	stretchy bag that mixes food into thick soup [2]
small intestine	long twisty tube that takes goodness from food into the blood [3]
large intestine	wider tube that dries leftovers and packs them into poo [2][3]

Materials

- Organ role cards for mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine
- Soft toy pea
- Slides 1-4, 6-7, 9-12 and Video clip 1
- Worksheet Task G copies - Complete the table
- Mini whiteboards and pens

Before the lesson

- Print organ role cards with picture and one job sentence, one set per class
- Print Worksheet Task G, one copy per pupil
- Test Slide 6 Video clip 1 (0:00-2:55) with sound
- Clear a long space for the human chain and check soft toy pea

Lesson outline

0–5 min **Starter** 5 min · Whole class

To hook pupils and recall what happens to food after swallowing.

YOU DO

1. Welcome the class and show Slide 1 title question.
2. Say the hook and invite hands up for who wants each role.
3. Ask pupils to tell a partner one idea about where food goes.
4. Show Slide 2 objectives and read the two I can statements together.

STUDENTS DO

1. Raise hands for roles and listen to the challenge.
2. Tell a partner one idea about what happens after swallowing.
3. Repeat the I can statements with the teacher.

Say: Today we follow one bite of lunch through your body. Let's become the digestive system. Who wants to be the mouth, the squeezer, the mixer or the maker of poo? By the end you will name the parts in order and say what each part does.

Ask: What do you think happens to food after you swallow it? (It travels down inside us, changes and some leaves as poo.) · Which parts of the inside do you already know? (Mouth, stomach, intestines.)

Check understanding: Thumbs up if you can say the lesson job in your own words; if not, repeat the two I can statements again.

Support: Give a picture of a body outline so pupils can point to tummy and mouth when sharing ideas.
Stretch: Ask pupils to guess the order food visits mouth, stomach and intestines before teaching.

Use: Slides 1–2

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5–15 min **Teaching** 10 min · Whole class

To name the food tube and order the basic parts from mouth to anus.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 3 and stretch arms to show 9 metres is much taller than a pupil.
2. Explain the long tube is called the alimentary canal and runs from the mouth to the anus [3].
3. Show Slide 4 chain and point mouth to anus in order while pupils repeat each name.
4. Model the jobs with a hand move for chop, squeeze, churn, take goodness, dry leftovers.

STUDENTS DO

1. Repeat the five parts in order and copy each hand move.
2. Point on their own body to mouth, chest tube and tummy as each part is named.
3. Call out the direction: from mouth down to anus.

Say: In an adult the food tube is about 9 metres long [3]. It is one long tube from mouth to anus [3]. Food goes mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine. Each part has a simple job to change the food.

Worked example: Follow one bite: mouth - teeth tear and chop and spit moistens it for easy swallowing [3]. Oesophagus - waves of muscle squeezes called peristalsis force food down to the stomach [3]. Stomach - churns to soup. Intestines break food down [2] until tiny pieces can be absorbed and used [3]. Leftovers leave as faeces through the anus [3].

Ask: What is the long food tube called and where does it go? (The alimentary canal, from mouth to anus.) · How long is it in an adult and why does it fit inside you? (About 9 metres long, because it is coiled up.) · Name the parts in order after the mouth. (Oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine.)

Check understanding: Pupils hold up fingers 1 to 5 as you point to mixed-up part names in order; reteach order with Slide 4 if mixed.

Support: Keep Slide 4 chain visible and let pupils read names rather than recall spellings. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to estimate how many Year 4 pupils lying head to toe would equal 9 metres.

Use: Slides 3–4

15–25 min **Video and model** 10 min · Whole class

To see and hear what chewing, squeezing and churning do to food.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 6 and set the listening job: whisper each part name when you hear it.
2. Play Video clip 1 (0:00-2:55) right through.
3. Show Slide 7 cards and model each job sentence with voice and move.
4. Lead a quick echo: teacher does move and job, class copies.

STUDENTS DO

1. Watch Video clip 1 and whisper mouth, oesophagus, stomach, intestines when heard.
2. Copy the teacher moves and echo the one-sentence jobs from Slide 7.
3. Tell a partner which move matched squeezing and which matched churning.

Say: Watch how food moves from mouth to anus. Listen for what each part does. Teeth tear and chop food while spit moistens it [3]. The oesophagus squeezes food down [3]. The stomach and intestines break it down [2].

Ask: What do teeth and saliva do in the mouth? (Teeth tear and chop, spit moistens it for easy swallowing.) · How does food get from the mouth to the stomach? (Waves of muscle squeezes push it down the oesophagus.)

Check understanding: Mini whiteboards: draw an arrow from mouth to stomach and label oesophagus; scan and remodel squeezing if arrows go the wrong way.

Support: Pause the clip twice and name the part on screen so pupils only track one job at a time. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to spot when food changes from lumps to soup and say which part did it.

Use: Slide 6, Video clip 1 (0:00–2:55), Slide 7

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25–45 min **Main activity** 20 min · Groups

To act out the parts in order and say what each part does.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 9 task and split the class into five groups along a clear line.
2. Give each group an organ role card and place the soft toy pea at the mouth.
3. Lead the first pass slowly: cue each group to do its move and shout its job.
4. Time a second run and remind groups to pass gently with space between them.

STUDENTS DO

1. Stand in order: mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine.
2. Pass the soft toy pea along, doing the move and shouting the group job sentence.
3. Repeat the chain, trying to keep the correct order and steady passing.

Say: Line up as mouth, oesophagus, stomach and intestines. Show each job with a move and sound. Say one sentence for what your part does. Pass our pea gently down the whole tube from mouth to anus [3].

Worked example: Mouth group: mime chopping and say Teeth chop and spit wets food for swallowing. Oesophagus group: gentle hand squeezes behind the pea and say We squeeze food down to the stomach. Stomach group: stir and say We churn food into soup. Intestines groups: mime taking goodness then packing and say We take goodness to blood, we dry leftovers into poo.

Ask: What does your part do to the pea food? (Mouth chops and wets, oesophagus squeezes down, stomach churns, intestines take goodness and make poo.) · Where does the pea go last? (Waste leaves the body as faeces through the anus.)

Check understanding: Each group shouts its job in order; if order or job is wrong, point to Slide 9 and run that link again.

Support: Give each group a role card with a picture and one sentence to read aloud, so no one has to recall the words from memory. **Stretch:** Ask the class to run the chain again faster but in the correct order without looking at the cards.

Use: Slide 9

45–60 min **Plenary** 15 min · Whole class

To check part jobs and explain why food must become tiny bits.

YOU DO

1. Show Slide 10 key words and read each job together.
2. Lead Slide 11 think, pair, share about why food must become tiny bits.
3. Give out Worksheet Task G and let pupils fill each missing job in a few words.
4. Finish with Slide 12 true or false, asking pupils to stand for true, sit for false.

STUDENTS DO

1. Think, pair, share why tiny bits are needed, using fuel, energy and absorb.
2. Complete Worksheet Task G table on their own with short job phrases.
3. Vote true or false for each Slide 12 statement and correct the false ones.

Say: Food is our fuel and its nutrients give our cells the energy they need to work [3]. Before food can do that, it must be digested into small pieces the body can absorb and use [3]. Tell your partner why tiny bits are needed.

Ask: Why must food become tiny bits before your body can use it? (So goodness can be absorbed into blood and give cells energy.) · Which part churns food into soup and which part squeezes food down? (Stomach churns, oesophagus squeezes down to the stomach.)

Check understanding: Collect Task G tables and check Slide 12 votes; if jobs are mixed, revisit Slide 10 key words with moves.

Support: Give a word bank of chop, wet, squeeze, churn, goodness, waste to complete Task G. **Stretch:** Ask pupils to add one extra sentence to Task G explaining where the goodness goes next.

Use: Slides 10–12, Worksheet Task G

Common mistakes

Mistake	How to spot it	How to fix it
Food just falls down to the stomach by gravity.	Pupils point straight down and say it drops.	Remind them you can swallow upside down; waves of muscle squeezes called peristalsis force food down the oesophagus to the stomach [3]. Practise the squeeze move.
Mixing up oesophagus and stomach jobs.	Pupils say the oesophagus churns food into soup.	Contrast tube that squeezes with bag that churns; oesophagus squeezes food down [3], stomach churns and intestines break food down [2].
Thinking all food becomes poo.	Pupils say everything eaten leaves as waste.	Sort goodness and waste: nutrients give cells energy [3] and are absorbed, only waste parts leave as faeces through the anus [3].

Support

- Use role cards with pictures and one sentence to read aloud.
- Keep Slide 4 chain and Slide 10 key words visible for ordering.

Stretch

- Run the human chain faster without cards in the correct order.
- Explain where absorbed goodness goes to help running, thinking and keeping warm.

For the LSE or teaching assistant

Stay with the human chain to prompt moves and read role-card sentences; in Task G scribe the word bank and check mouth-to-anus order.

Safety

- Stand with space between groups, pass gently, and keep the floor clear to avoid slips.

Check for understanding

Question	Answer
List the basic parts in order from mouth to anus.	Mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine, anus.
What do the mouth and oesophagus each do?	Mouth chops and wets food; oesophagus squeezes food to the stomach.
What do the stomach and intestines do?	Stomach churns food to soup; small intestine takes goodness to blood, large intestine dries leftovers into poo.

Homework

Tell someone at home the five parts in order with a move for each job.

Sources

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