DIGEST THIS! Informative descriptions of the digestive system written by the 7th grade

The Taste Buds By Francesca Lohmann, Andrea Palley and Reed Anderson

We are the taste buds! We live in the mouth, mostly on the tongue. Each of us has a nerve sensor which sends messages to the brain, indicating whether the object being eaten is hot, cold, sweet, sour, salty or bitter. There are more of us in babies than adults, which is why babies find bland foods more enjoyable than spicy or bitter foods. Without us eating would be no fun!

Saliva By Heather Brown and Kyle Whelan

Saliva converts the bread that you eat
Into glucose and maltose
Simple sugars, so sweet.
When you walk in a room
With freshly baked bread,
Your brain sends a message
Throughout your head,
Telling your saliva glands
To hurry it up
For the meal on which
You’re about to sup.

The Stomach

I am the stomach and I help your digestion by churning and adding gastric juices to your food, one of which is hydrochloric acid. The hydrochloric acid, alone, is capable of dissolving a razor blade (and would be fatal to most other organs). Don’t worry though, I have a special mucus that protects my wall.

The mucus has an alkaline substance in it which neutralizes the acids. And even if your stomach was slightly damaged, it would automatically be replaced by new tissue; for every minute, I shed half a million cells and replace them with new ones. This amounts to a new lining about every three days!

The Pancreas By Phillip Dorst and Christopher O’Connell

One of the body’s most important organs, the Pancreas, regulates your blood sugars and helps digest food. It resembles a fish with a big head and long tail, and is located underneath the left lung. The Pancreas controls the body’s blood sugars by producing Insulin (the chemical that controls simple sugars). The Pancreas aids digestion by making enzymes that break down proteins. In fact, the Pancreas could digest itself. If I don’t do my job properly, you could end up with a very serious illness called diabetes.
**The Liver**  
By Ian Wilson and Morgan Heringer

I am the liver. One of my over 500 tasks is to store vitamins to send into your blood whenever you get low, vitamins such as: A, B, D, E and K. I am the largest organ in your body, weighing about three pounds. I’m located on the right side of the upper abdomen and am protected by the lower rib cage. I overlay the stomach and join the esophagus. My right lobe is sub-divided into three sections. Even if 90% of me was removed I could still function properly and might grow back to my normal size. But, if I was entirely removed or destroyed and you did not have a liver transplant, you would die, because I perform so many essential functions.

I also manufacture a substance known as bile, which I send to the gallbladder to store until the duodenum needs it to aid in fat absorption.

**The Gallbladder**  
By Matthew Case and Caitlin Fanning

The gallbladder is about the size of a pear and is neatly tucked under the liver. Its major function is to store the bile secreted from the liver and distribute it to the part of the beginning of the intestinal tract called the duodenum. It is here that the system needs bile to help in the absorption of fats. If I become diseased, I can be removed and the liver will take over my function.

**The “Tall” Small Intestines**  
By Erik Rhea and Nani Pacal

Here I am in your belly,  
Deep inside it is rather smelly.  
I take the foods that you eat each day,  
I twist and turn them while you play.  
I churn the juices which help you eat.  
Please eat starches to keep me neat.  
If you swallow something strange,  
You will experience a frightful change;  
For I push the substances I don’t like  
Through my tubes and out of sight!

Process, process, each day I see  
Two and one half gallons flow through me.  
Fruits and vegies, milk and wheat  
And don’t forget your daily meat.  
Vitamins, proteins, minerals, too  
Pass through my walls as fuel for you.  
Though scientists decided to call me small,  
When all stretched out, I’m 20 feet tall!  
So eat good foods and stay in shape,  
Together we’ll help your body feel great.
The LARGE INTESTINE   By Dominic Ali and Vickie Masters

The Large Intestine is about 6 feet
And is part of your food’s digestion.
95% of the food you eat
Is absorbed before this intestine.

As digested food makes its way
Up, down and around the bend,
It takes anywhere from one to three days
For waste to make it to the other end.

Eat lots of fiber so I can do my job
Of losing your body’s waste.
It helps me avoid being a slob
If you stick to a healthy taste.

I make gurgly noises every day,
At home, at work and at school.
I’m vital to your digestive system,
Your body’s disposing tool.

The Once Useful but Now Useless Appendix   By Matt Carlson-LoDuca

I’m the appendix, a little pouch.
When I’m inflamed, you’ll go “Ouch”!
Humans in the days of old,
Ate their meat raw and cold.
But, they had no need to fear,
For I, the appendix was right there.
Then they began to cook their meat
And I no longer served a need.
The fire, it killed the salmonella
Which, to me, tasted like Vanilla.
Since, there were no longer germs to drink,
I halted my task and began to shrink.
I’m still shrinking year by year.
Soon, I might just disappear.
Now, back to me being all inflamed;
It is very dangerous, with a lot of pain.
Harry Houdini died from this fate;
The one trial he couldn’t escape.
So if I’m diseased, “Quick! Take me out!”
Or I’ll spread infection all about.
Useless now, I may be... but, there was a time you needed me.