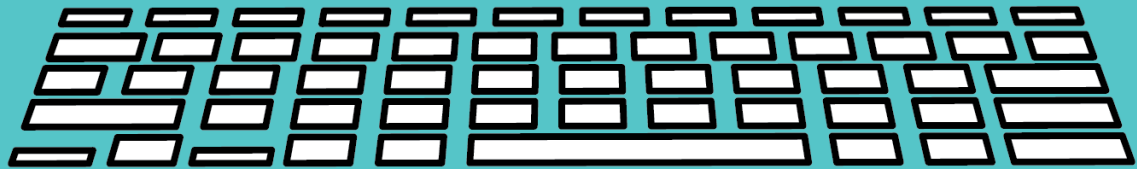
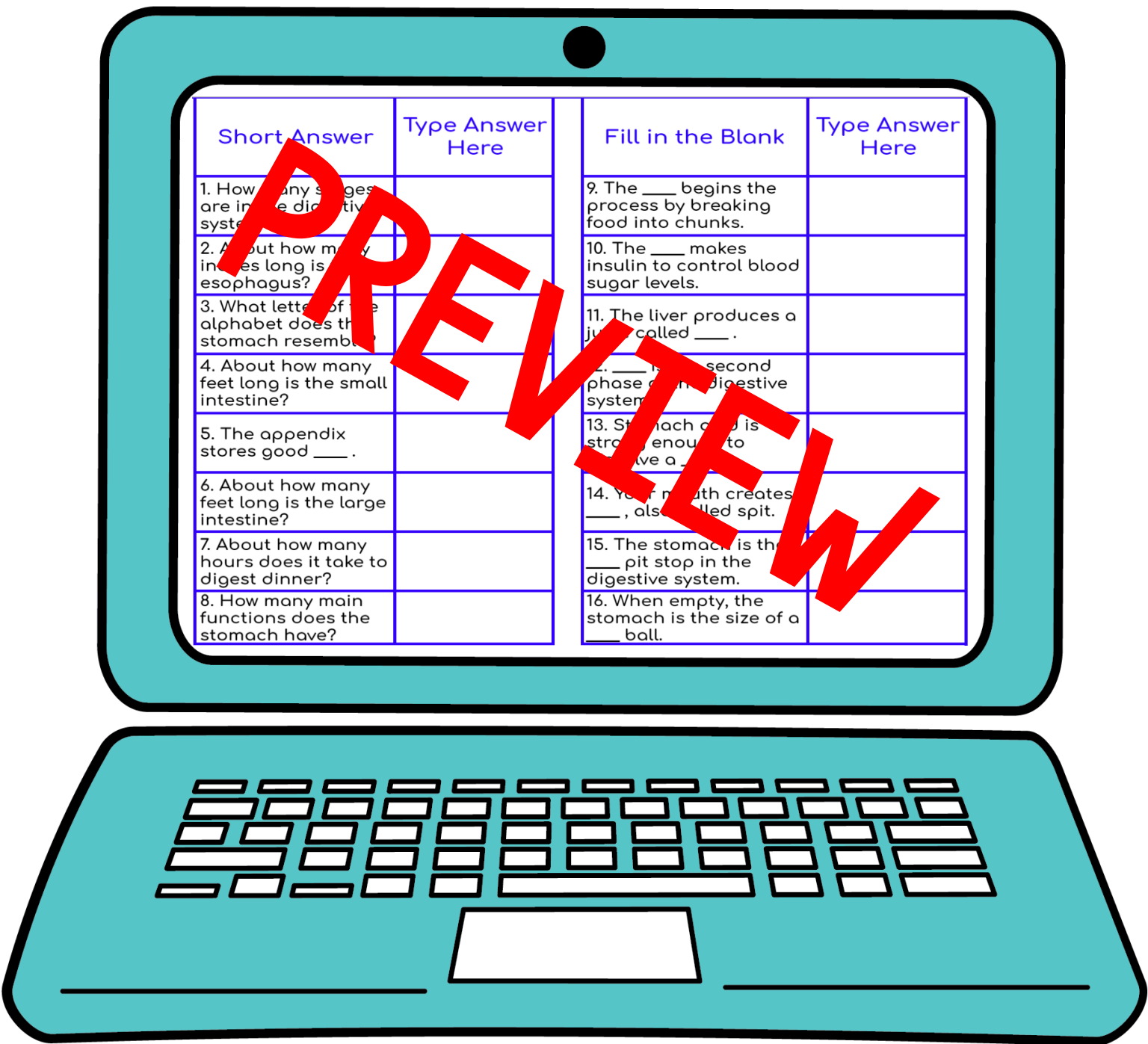


THE SECOND LARGEST ORGAN IN THE HUMAN BODY

Short Answer	Type Answer Here
1. How many stages are in the digestive system?	
2. About how many inches long is the esophagus?	
3. What letter of the alphabet does the stomach resemble?	
4. About how many feet long is the small intestine?	
5. The appendix stores good ____.	
6. About how many feet long is the large intestine?	
7. About how many hours does it take to digest dinner?	
8. How many main functions does the stomach have?	





Short Answer	Type Answer Here	Fill in the Blank	Type Answer Here
1. How many stages are in the digestive system?		9. The ____ begins the process by breaking food into chunks.	
2. About how many inches long is the esophagus?		10. The ____ makes insulin to control blood sugar levels.	
3. What letter of the alphabet does the stomach resemble?		11. The liver produces a juice called ____.	
4. About how many feet long is the small intestine?		12. ____ is the second phase of the digestive system.	
5. The appendix stores good ____.		13. The stomach is strong enough to chew a ____.	
6. About how many feet long is the large intestine?		14. Your mouth creates ____, also called spit.	
7. About how many hours does it take to digest dinner?		15. The stomach is the ____ pit stop in the digestive system.	
8. How many main functions does the stomach have?		16. When empty, the stomach is the size of a ____ ball.	

# DIGESTIVE SYSTEM

Digestion is the process that breaks down food into vitamins, minerals, and nutrients for the body.

The digestive system is the body system that breaks down food in the body. Once food is broken down into energy, vitamins, and minerals, the nutrients are absorbed into the blood.

The digestive system has 5 stages to the digestive system. The first stage is about 20 to 30 feet long, it's almost as long as a bus! The second stage is about 20 feet long. The third stage is about 20 feet long. The fourth stage is about 20 feet long. The fifth stage is about 20 feet long. The digestive system is a long tube that starts in the mouth and ends in the anus. It is made up of several organs, including the mouth, esophagus, stomach, small intestine, and large intestine. The digestive system is responsible for breaking down food into small molecules for the body to use.

The first stage of the digestive system is chewing. Teeth break up the food, and the tongue moves the food around. You also swallow saliva, also called spit. Saliva has enzymes that break down food to make it soft and easy to swallow.

Swallowing is the second phase of the digestive system. The tongue pushes food to the back of the throat. A tiny flap of tissue called the epiglottis automatically closes the windpipe. Food goes into the esophagus, which is about 10 inches long. Muscles contract along the esophagus to move the food toward the stomach. This action is called peristalsis. Because even if you were hanging upside down, food would still travel to your stomach. Food traveling through the esophagus takes 2 to 3 seconds.

The stomach is the third pit stop in the digestive system. The stomach looks like the letter J. When empty, the stomach is the size of a tennis ball. However, it stretches based on the size of the meal.

The stomach has three main functions:

1. store food,
2. break food down into a liquid,
3. slowly empty the liquid into the small intestine.

Once food reaches the stomach, digestive juices and acid begin to break down food even more. Gastric juices not only break down food, but they kill harmful bacteria, too. Stomach acid is strong enough to dissolve a nail. Yet, the stomach protects itself from its own acid with a protective mucus lining. Once food becomes chyme, a soup-like substance, it travels to the small intestine.

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The next stop on the digestive tour is the small intestine. However, the small intestine isn't small. It's about 22 feet long and 1 1/2 to 2 inches thick! In the small intestine, food continues to break down. Here, the nutrients from food pass along to the blood. Vitamins, minerals, proteins, carbohydrates, and fats are absorbed in the body. The small intestine breaks down food with some help from the pancreas, liver, and gallbladder.

First, the pancreas produces certain juices. These juices help the body digest fats and protein. The pancreas also makes insulin to control blood sugar levels.

Next, the liver has about 500 different jobs, including producing a juice called bile. Bile helps with digestion. Bile also helps fats absorb into the bloodstream. The liver also has these functions:

1. removes toxins (harmful substances)
2. recycles old blood cells
3. handles glucose (sugar) for energy

One-third of the blood in the body moves through the liver each minute.

Finally, the green, pear-shaped gallbladder stores the bile until it is needed.

The small intestine holds onto food for 4 hours approximately. During this time, food is broken down and watery. Then the nutrients are absorbed into the blood. Now the liver gets to work. When everything is absorbed into the bloodstream, the liver does its job. The nutrients go in the body. The liver filters the waste, makes bile, and stores vitamins and sugar. Eventually, this waste turns into stool for the body.

The last phase of the digestive system is the large intestine. It is about 5 feet long and 3 to 4 inches wide. The large intestine gathers salts and minerals from the material that does not digest. The appendix is a tiny tube attached to the large intestine that stores good bacteria.

At this point, since all water and minerals are absorbed into the blood, the solid waste remaining is called feces. The large intestine pushes the waste into the rectum. The rectum moves the waste toward the anus during a bowel movement.

The digestive system is most effective when you follow these guidelines:

- drink lots of water
- eat high-fiber foods,
- maintain a healthy diet

Our cells, organs, and muscles need proper nutrients, vitamins, and minerals.

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