

Pre-lesson preparation, materials and equipment

The LEARN ABOUT WOOL factsheets listed below will give you ample background information to carry out this lesson and answer a range of questions posed by students.

Useful resources:

For teachers

LEARN ABOUT WOOL factsheets:

- [Sheep — the wool producers](#)
- [Types of sheep](#)

Materials and equipment

- Student worksheet — *How many teeth?*

Lesson objective

- To introduce students to the idea that different animals have different diets and different types of teeth.

Students will have the opportunity to:

- explore and make observations about a range of animals
- discuss the different purposes of a range of external features
- explore the differences and similarities between a range of animals
- sort information and classify objects based on easily observable characteristics with teacher guidance.

Setting the context

Unlike humans, sheep have only back teeth on their upper jaw (no front teeth), with a full set of teeth on their lower jaw. This allows them to grab pasture close to the ground and grip it with their back teeth. The age of sheep can also be identified by the number of teeth.

In this lesson students will compare the teeth of different animals and relate their findings to the types of food each animal eats (herbivore, omnivore or carnivore). Students will then consolidate this knowledge to compare and contrast two animals using a simple matching game.

Lesson focus

The focus of this lesson is to introduce the concept of herbivores, carnivores and omnivores by looking at different types of teeth.

These existing ideas can then be taken account of in future lessons.

Introduction

Explain to students animals' teeth are different depending upon what foods they eat — their 'diet'. Meat-eaters (carnivores) have sharp teeth. Plant-eaters (herbivores) have flat teeth. Animals that eat both plants and meat (omnivores), like humans, have sharp teeth in front and flat teeth at the back.

Body of lesson

- Read the LEARN ABOUT WOOL factsheets [Sheep — the wool producers](#) and [Types of sheep](#) with students. Focus students' attention on the diagrams and photograph of the sheep teeth and encourage students to think about the types of food sheep eat.
- Display the photograph *Showing your age* on a smartboard or large screen if you have one. Organise students into pairs. Ask students to compare the picture of the sheep's teeth with their partner's teeth — what differences can they identify? Ask questions such as:

- How many front teeth does your partner have?
 - What is the difference between the teeth at the front of your partner's mouth and the teeth at the back of their mouth?
 - Why are our teeth different shapes?
 - What sort of food do humans eat?
 - What do sheep eat?
 - Why don't sheep have any front teeth on the top?
3. Explain to students that many animals (including people and sheep) are born without teeth, develop baby or 'milk' teeth, which slowly fall out and are replaced by adult teeth. Take care to explain that different people lose their teeth at different ages and this is normal. Ask students to raise their hands if they have lost any of their baby teeth. Using the worksheet *How many teeth?* help students to record information about how many teeth their classmates have lost and work with them to develop a simple bar graph of class dental development. Explain that tables and bar graphs are simple scientific tools we can use to present data.

Conclusion

Allow students to play the online game: [Teeth and eating:
http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/gamesactivities/teetheating.html](http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/gamesactivities/teetheating.html)

NOTE: This requires Adobe flash player. If you do not have access to the internet for each student, the game can be played in small groups, or as a whole class. Using the information in the online game, explain to students that there are three basic types of teeth: incisors, canines and molars. Animals have certain types of teeth depending on what they eat. Each type of tooth has a job, such as biting (incisor), gripping and tearing (canine), crushing and chewing (molar).

Show students the YouTube clip [Top ten animals with scary looking teeth](#). Ask students to guess what these animals might eat by looking at their teeth. Using the class journal, record in a table or as a mind map the types of animals students have explored during the lesson (herbivores, carnivores and omnivores), what each animal eats and the types of teeth each animal has.

Links to the Australian Curriculum

- Living things have a variety of external features [ACSSU017](#)
- Pose and respond to questions, and make predictions about familiar objects and events [ACSI024](#)
- Use a range of methods to sort information, including drawings and provided tables through discussion, compare observations with predictions [ACSI027](#)
- Compare observations with those of others [ACSI213](#)
- Represent and communicate observations and ideas in a variety of ways [ACSI029](#)