

Teeth

Reading and Discussion

Teeth have a number of functions. They allow humans and animals to chew food before swallowing it. Teeth also allow humans to make certain sounds when they are talking, and they help to form a correct speech pattern and to give the face its shape. Each tooth is divided into two main parts: the **crown** and the **root**.

- 1) The visible part of the tooth, not covered by the gum, is called the **crown**. The crown is covered and protected by a very tough substance called **enamel**. This protects what is inside the tooth. Under the enamel and making up most of the tooth is the **dentine**. This resembles ivory; it is hard, though not as hard as enamel. The dentine, in its turn, protects the innermost part of the tooth, which is called the **pulp**. The pulp is where the nerve endings and blood supply are located, and it also contains blood vessels that bring food and vitamins to the teeth to ensure that they are healthy. It is these nerves that cause us pain when the dentist works on our teeth, or when we eat or drink something too hot or cold.
- 2) The pulp extends under the gum to the **root** of the tooth. The root consists mainly of the **cementum**, which connects the teeth to the jawbone.

Babies are usually born without teeth. When babies are about six months old, their first teeth start to appear, and by the age of about three, most children have all their 20 baby teeth. These first 20 teeth can be called baby teeth, but the correct name is **primary teeth**. Between the ages of five and six, children start to lose their primary teeth because the second set of teeth is pushing against them. Between the ages of 12 and 14, all 28 permanent teeth have usually grown in, and between the ages of 17 and 25, the four wisdom teeth start growing in most people. The proper name for the wisdom teeth is **third molars**. After the wisdom teeth grow, we have a complete set of 32 teeth.

We have 32 teeth - 16 on the top jaw and 16 on the bottom one. There are different types of teeth and each type has its own function:

- The front teeth are called Incisors. There are four incisors on the top and four on the bottom, which means there are eight incisors in total. Incisors have flat ends and are quite sharp. They allow us to cut and chop food.
- The teeth next to the incisors are called Canines. There are four canines in all. They have pointy ends and are very sharp, which allows us to tear food.
- Next to the canines are the Premolars. There are twelve premolars in total. These teeth have a different shape than incisors and canines, and they are bigger and stronger. Their main function is to grind and crush food.
- At the back of our mouths and next to the premolars are the Molars. There are eight in total. Molars are bigger, wider, and stronger than all other types. They help grind and really mash the food so that it can be swallowed.
- The teeth all the way back in the mouth are the Wisdom teeth or Third Molars. We have four wisdom teeth, but they do not really serve any purpose or have any particular function.

Name _____

Date _____

Activities

Activity A: Multiple Choice:

1. The dentine protects:

- a. The crown
- b. The enamel
- c. The pulp
- d. The cementum

2. The hardest and strongest part of the tooth is:

- a. Enamel
- b. Dentine
- c. Pulp
- d. None of the above

3. The complete set of teeth for an adult of 25 years old is:

- a. 20
- b. 24
- c. 28
- d. 32

Activity B: Matching:

_____ 1. Canines

a. Their main function is to grind and crush food

_____ 2. Incisors

b. Wisdom Teeth

_____ 3. Premolars

c. Have very sharp pointy ends

_____ 4. Third Molars

d. There are eight of them in total and allow to cut and chop food.

Activity C: True or False:

_____ 1. Teeth are divided into three main parts.

_____ 2. Children have 20 primary teeth.

_____ 3. The nerves in the cementum are the cause of pain when the dentist works on our teeth, or when we eat or drink something too hot or too cold.

Name _____

Date _____

Answer Key

Activity A

1. The dentine protects:

- a. the crown
- b. the enamel
- c. **the pulp**
- d. the cementum

2. The hardest and strongest part of the tooth is:

- a. **enamel**
- b. dentine
- c. pulp
- d. none of the above

3. The complete set of teeth for an adult of 25 years old is:

- a. 20
- b. 24
- c. 28
- d. **32**

Activity B

 c 1. Canines

a. Their main function is to grind and crush food

 d 2. Incisors

b. Wisdom Teeth

 a 3. Premolars

c. Have very sharp pointy ends

 b 4. Third Molars

d. There are eight of them in total and allow to cut and chop food.

Activity C

 F 1. Teeth are divided into three main parts.

 T 2. Children have 20 primary teeth.

 F 3. The nerves in the cementum are the cause of pain when the dentist works on our teeth, or when we eat or drink something too hot or too cold.