

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## The Journey Within: How Food Moves Through Our Digestive Tract

### Short Answer Key

1. The mouth prepares food for digestion mechanically by chewing and breaking it into smaller pieces. It prepares food chemically by mixing it with saliva, which contains enzymes that start breaking down carbohydrates.
2. Peristalsis is a series of muscular contractions that push food from the mouth to the stomach through the esophagus.
3. The stomach's main functions in the digestive process include mixing food with gastric juices, churning it into a semi-liquid mixture (chyme), and killing harmful bacteria with hydrochloric acid.
4. The pancreas releases digestive enzymes into the small intestine, where they break down carbohydrates, fats, and proteins. The liver produces bile, which aids in fat digestion and absorption.
5. The large intestine reabsorbs water from the undigested food mixture, turning it into a more solid form. Beneficial bacteria in the large intestine help break down some remaining nutrients and produce vitamins.

