

TREMENDOUS TEETH

Why are a shark's teeth sharp and pointy? Why are a sheep's teeth flat?

The shape of any animal's teeth relates to what it eats. For example, plant material is very difficult to digest, so herbivores (plant eaters) have lots of flat molars for grinding and chewing their food. Carnivores (meat eaters) need sharp canine teeth to kill their prey and tear up the meat. Some animals, like monkeys (and humans), have both—we are called omnivores. In many animals teeth are made of calcium phosphate, but some animals have teeth made of ivory, like elephants and hippos.

Toothy (and toothless) facts you may not know...

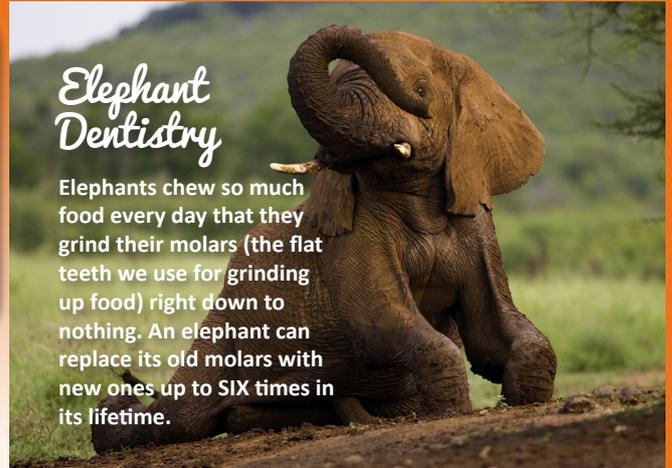
Green sea turtles don't have teeth—they have very tiny, sharp ridges on their beaks. When the green sea turtles are young they tend to eat more squid as the protein helps them grow.

As they get older they may eat less squid and more vegetation like seaweed. The ridges on their beaks are useful for grinding up both of these foods.



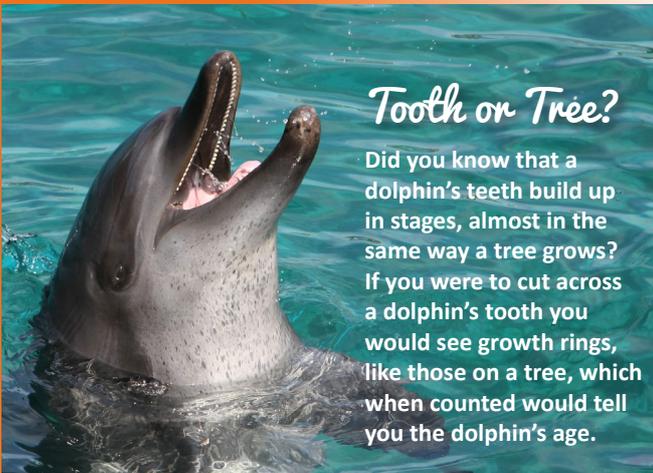
Elephant Dentistry

Elephants chew so much food every day that they grind their molars (the flat teeth we use for grinding up food) right down to nothing. An elephant can replace its old molars with new ones up to SIX times in its lifetime.



Tooth or Tree?

Did you know that a dolphin's teeth build up in stages, almost in the same way a tree grows? If you were to cut across a dolphin's tooth you would see growth rings, like those on a tree, which when counted would tell you the dolphin's age.



An **anteater** eats mainly insects, especially ants, but has no teeth. The anteater has evolved a long sticky tongue, which it shoots into anthills to lick up the ants, almost like licking an ice cream.

It has hard bumps inside its mouth to help grind up the ants, but it also does something else—anteaters swallow stones that help to crush ants in its stomach!



A word search to sink your teeth into!

D N I R G Y D U J P T R M Q C
 I P Z C A N I N E E E U O O Q
 A T W E G X P A L J A R F M F
 R E S R A L O M D M R Z V N Y
 E C A R N I V O R E E V W I E
 S E R O V I B R E H M A L V E
 Y N O I T A T E G E V X T O H
 O R B P O W X M Z O L K L R G
 G V L I J U B A Q I E N V E K

MOLARS
 CANINE
 HERBIVORE
 CARNIVORE
 OMNIVORE
 GRIND
 TEAR
 MEAT
 VEGETATION

Shark Tooth Cookies

YOU WILL NEED:

140g butter
 100g light soft brown sugar
 3 tbsp golden syrup
 ½ tsp vanilla extract
 350g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
 1 tsp bicarbonate of soda
 1 large egg

For the icing:

250g icing sugar
 1 tbsp golden syrup
 1 ½ to 2 tbsp plus 1 tsp milk
 red food colouring

TO MAKE THE COOKIES

Heat oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas 6. Put parchment on a couple of baking trays. Melt butter, sugar and syrup in a saucepan, then add the vanilla. Mix, then remove from the heat and leave.

Sieve the flour and bicarbonate of soda into a large bowl. Add the melted butter mixture and the egg, then stir together until you get a thick dough. Wrap the dough in cling film and put in the fridge for 10 mins.

While the dough is chilling, cut out the shark tooth shapes here—these will be your cookie stencils.

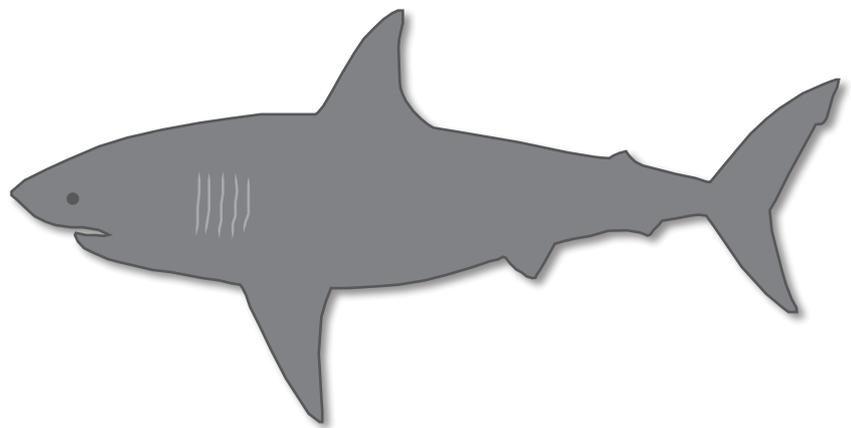
Roll the dough out on a floured surface to 5mm thick. Place a shark tooth stencil on the rolled out dough and cut slowly around the stencil with a knife—but as knives are sharp ask a grown up to help you with this. Keep cutting out teeth until all of the dough is used.

Place on the baking trays and bake for 12 mins until golden. Cool on a wire rack.

TO DECORATE

In a small bowl, whisk together the icing sugar, golden syrup and 1 ½ tablespoons of the milk until smooth. Separate a small amount of icing into another bowl and add red food colouring until it is quite red.

Spread one cookie with white icing to test if it sets. If it doesn't go smooth, dribble in a bit more milk. Once covered in white smooth icing, add a small amount of red icing to the pointy edge of the shark tooth cookie.



Why are the teeth shaped this way?

TIGER SHARK (*Galeocerdo cuvier*)

