

Week 8 Reading

1. Short story "Abandoned".



Abandoned

I remember when he bought me. It doesn't seem like ten minutes ago when my creator, Bernard Crib, handed me over and said goodbye. At the time, I was over the moon. I'd been sat in the back of his workshop for nearly a fortnight by that point. I'd watched other robots be built and purchased in that time, and I was lonely. Little did I know, that would be the high point of my life so far.

The first few days were good. Andy played with me every day and even showed me off to his friends. That's where it started to go wrong, really. Sandy, the annoying friend with the spiteful voice, had laughed when he'd seen me for the first time. He'd told Andy that I was out of date and rubbish compared to his own robot pal. I could see how deflated Andy was; he'd been so excited for everyone to see me and then he'd had it taken away.

Obviously, I tried my best to perform for him, but there's only so much a robot can do. My thrusters aren't as fast as Sandy's RoboBlaster S+. It doesn't matter how hard I try, I can't pull loop-the-loops in the air. I can shoot as high at the clouds and parachute to safety, and that used to be enough, but robots nowadays are so advanced. Poor Mr Crib is too old to keep up. He tries his hardest, but he's just an outdated model. Like me, I guess.

After the incident with Sandy, it was all downhill. First, Andy passed me on to his sister, but even she didn't want me. To be fair to her, she's too young for a robot and just wants to play with mud. Good for her. Then, he sold me to one of his other friends. I don't think he realised how insulting it is for a robot to be sold on so soon. We have pride, just like humans!

This new kid is worrying. He shoved me in a dark room at the back of his basement along with hundreds of other robots. The scary thing is, none of them has all of their parts. Every now and then, he'll come downstairs with a screwdriver, and one of them will be left missing a piece. Upcycling, he calls it. Making new things out of old parts. Old parts! He dared to call us *old parts*! How would he like it if somebody came and took some of his parts to make a better human?

Once again, I'm left feeling lonely. Some of the other 'bots can talk, but I wish they couldn't. All they talk about is the pain of their missing parts or how long they've been here. I can't bear the thought of being in this bot-forsaken room for any longer. Tonight, I think I'm going to make a run for it.

That's the only choice I have. I'm set on it.

Oh great, he's here again. Hopefully, he'll pass me over, I need all of my parts for tonight.

Why is he heading towards me? Go away! Leave me alone...



Answer these questions:

V - When the robot says "it all went downhill", what does he mean?

I - How did the robot feel when he was bought? How do you know?

P - What do you think could happen next? Why?

E - Explain how you know the robot wanted to please Andy.

R - Where was the robot left after he was sold?

2. Explanation text "Digestion".

Digestion

Mouth

Food enters the digestive system through the mouth. Chewing food helps to begin to break it down through the action of the teeth. Saliva contains bacteria that start the process of digesting the food while it is still in the mouth. It also softens food so that it can pass into the oesophagus more easily.

Liver

You may not know it, but the liver plays a key role in digestion. It releases bile into the small intestine, which helps to break down fats. It takes nutrients the other way and converts them into chemicals for the body. The liver also filters out toxins that may come from food and drink.

Colon (Large Intestine)

The colon is commonly called the large intestine. It is actually a lot shorter than the small intestine and is barely 2 metres long. The main job of the colon is to process what is left from the small intestine. It converts it into something easy to pass as a stool. Most of the water is removed by the colon. By the time the stool reaches the anus, it is mainly made up of indigestible food and bacteria. It normally takes around 36 hours for a stool to pass through the colon.

Rectum

The rectum is a short (about 8 inches) chamber that joins the colon to the anus. All of the processing has taken place by this point. The rectum holds on to the stool until a signal to our brain tells the anus to open. Your body can then pass the stool out into the toilet.

Oesophagus

The oesophagus is a muscular tube about 25cm long. Its only function is to pass food into the stomach. Food isn't digested, and no nutrients are absorbed in the oesophagus. A mouthful of food that enters the oesophagus is called a bolus. Food is passed along the tube by a series of muscular contractions. These squeeze one after the other to push it along. It's a bit like squeezing toothpaste from the end of the tube.

Pancreas

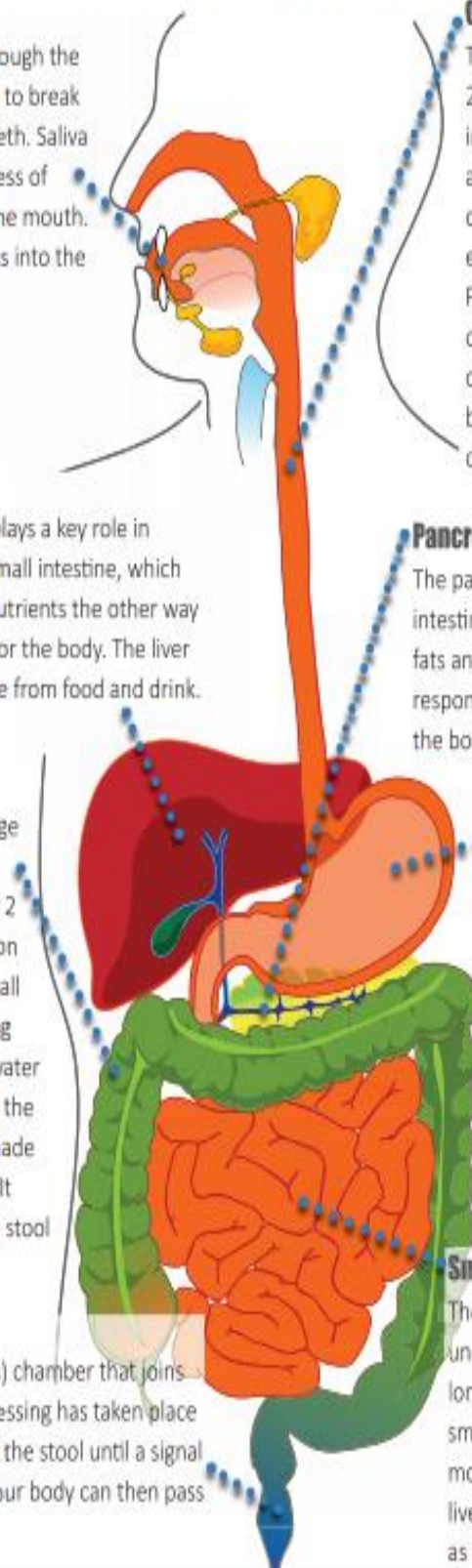
The pancreas secretes enzymes into the small intestine. These help to break down proteins, fats and carbohydrates. The pancreas is also responsible for creating insulin, which assists the body in processing sugar.

Stomach

Your stomach is basically a large bag that holds onto food while it is broken down into useful chemicals. Cells in the stomach lining release enzymes and strong acid that help to break down the food. Once the food has been broken down sufficiently, it is passed into the small intestine.

Small Intestine

The small intestine is still big. If you unravelled it all, it would be nearly 7 metres long. During its slow passage through the small intestine, food is broken down even more, and nutrients are absorbed into the liver for processing. The remains are passed as a liquid into the colon.



Answer these questions:

V - Which word or phrase tells you that the liver is important for digestion?

E - Do you think the diagram is useful in this text? Why (not)?

R - Where does food begin to be digested?

S - What are the main functions of the liver?

S - What happens to a stool after it leaves the colon?

R - Complete: _____ helps the body to process sugars.