Comparing Animal Teeth - KS2 Science

All animals need to eat food to have enough energy to grow and reproduce. We class animals into three groups depending on what type of food they eat:

- **Herbivores** eat plants
- **Carnivores** eat other animals
- **Omnivores** eat both plants and other animals.

Different animals are adapted to eat different food types. This means that animals’ teeth can look very different, as they are adapted to help an animal chew, slice or even catch their food. By looking at an animal’s teeth, you can usually tell what makes up that animal’s diet.

**Herbivores** have flat molars at the back of their mouth that they use for grinding and chewing plant matter. Their incisors are flat, perfect for cropping grass or leaves and even chewing through wood.

**Carnivores** have large, sharp canines for gripping onto prey. Their sharp incisors help them slice and rip through meat. Their molars are also often sharp and not good for crushing food, meaning that many carnivores usually swallow large chunks of meat whole!

**Omnivores** have a mixture of different, specialised teeth. They have flat, crushing molars and sharp canines and incisors. An omnivore’s canines and incisors tend to not be as sharp as a carnivore’s, but they still help them to grab and slice through meat.

Some animals have very unusual or specialised teeth, which do not help them with eating at all! These can be used for display or even fighting other animals!

**Your Task:**
Research a herbivore, carnivore and omnivore of your choice. Draw each in the table found overleaf. Describe each animal’s teeth and explain why this animal needs teeth like this in order to survive.

Not sure which animals to research? You can find lots of carnivores, herbivores and omnivores on Born Free’s website: https://www.bornfree.org.uk/animals

Each of the species below have very unusual or specialised teeth that they use in different ways:

- **Crabeater seal**
- **Narwhal**
- **Hippopotamus**.

Look up one of these species and include it in your table. Explain why it has unusual teeth, and what it uses them for. Are they for eating a certain type of food? Maybe they are used in fighting? Or even display?
### Comparing Animal Teeth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species name and drawing</th>
<th>Describe. What are its teeth like?</th>
<th>Explain. Why are its teeth like this?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herbivore</td>
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<td>Omnivore</td>
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