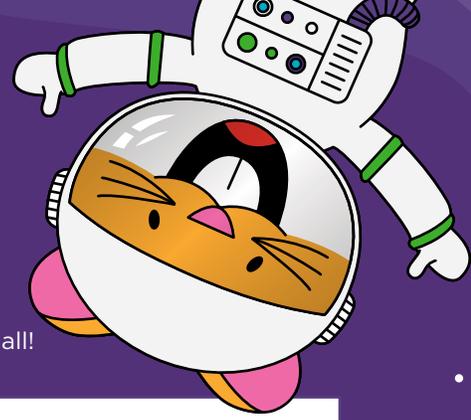


Imagining alien teeth

Bitsy knew if she continued to explore, she'd meet all sorts of cool and unique alien creatures. If you met an alien, what kind of teeth do you think it would have? Would it have super-sharp fangs or big, flat molars? Maybe it wouldn't have teeth at all!



There are researchers and scientists who think about what alien life might be like as part of their jobs. They know that aliens could evolve many different ways. But when it comes to teeth, two things matter:

1

The type of planet the alien lives on

2

The type of food the alien eats

With that in mind, let's imagine what a few alien creatures might look like!



On a water-covered planet, aliens might have sharp, pointy teeth to catch slippery fish. (Just like sharks!)



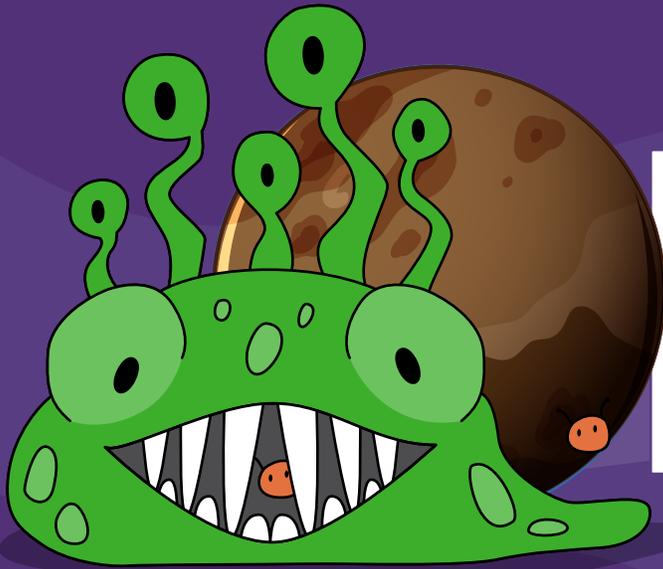
Aliens on a forest planet with thick, tough plants would need flat, grinding teeth to chew through tough leaves. (Just like cows and giraffes on Earth.)



On a planet with low-gravity, aliens could have long, thin teeth to trap food that drifts through the air. (Some ocean creatures on Earth eat this way.)



In the heat of a desert planet, aliens might have hard teeth to crush dry seeds. (Like Bitsy, who uses her teeth to chew and crack hard foods.)



Predators on a swampy planet could have wide, scoop-shaped teeth to filter out tiny creatures from muddy water. (Some whales eat this way, by sucking in lots of ocean water and using their "teeth" to filter out anything that isn't food.)

If life existed on a gas-filled planet, the floating aliens there might have no teeth at all or soft, sponge-like teeth to absorb nutrients from the air. (Sea sponges eat this way, by absorbing food from the water around them instead of biting and chewing.)

