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| 3A-4 |
| **Basic Science Question:** |
| What is the tooth morphology process? |
| **Report:** |
| The human tooth morphology process includes three periods of varying dentition[1]. The initial stage is primary dentition, when the first set of teeth become present over the first two years of life[1]. This set of teeth includes two incisors, a canine, and two molars per quadrant[2]. The mixed dention phase begins around age six, after exfoliation of some deciduous teeth[1]. This marks a period of transition between primary and permenant dentition. Permenant teeth push their way into the oral cavity, eventually erupting among the remaining primary dentition[1]. Mixed dentition lasts until about age twelve, when the last remaining primary tooth is exfoliated[1]. The final set of teeth to emerge make up the permenant dention[1]. Under normal circumstances, there are a total of thirty-two teeth: two incisors, one canine, two premolars, and three molars per quadrant[2]. The dentition can be organized according to the universal numbering system. In this arrangement, maxillary teeth are number one through sixteen going from right to left[3]. Mandibular teeth are numbered seventeen through thirty-two going from left to right[3]. Supernary teeth take on the numbers fifty-one through eighty-two in the same order, depending on the tooth of closest proximity[4]. Each subset of the dentition has a unique function. Incisors are intended to be used for cutting food with their sharp incisal edge[1]. Canines are used for tearing food with their single pointed cusp[1]. Posterior to canines, premolars aid in chewing food, utilizing buccal and lingual cusps[1]. Finally, molars are more square-shaped, posterior teeth that serve to grind food thanks to a large occlusal table[1].  |
| **References:** |
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