

UNIT 1 - BODY PLAN AND ORGANIZATION

ACTIVITY - Learning the Dissecting Planes

Objectives:

Students will learn the basic vocabulary used in dissection.

Students will learn how to orient themselves on a three dimensional figure.

Materials Needed:

Cucumber or Zucchini

Kitchen knives, scalpels

Strategy:

Turn the cucumber or zucchini into an animal. This is done by cutting holes on the anterior part of the cucumber to make eyes. The cucumber is now a "lizard". The eyes give the lizard an anterior and posterior position. The location of the eyes also gives the lizard a dorsal and ventral side. These are referred to as anterior & posterior. Note: cucumber lizard may be made more lifelike by using straws where legs would be located.

Using scalpels the students will be asked to make shallow cuts starting from the superior end along the ventral side of the lizard. This cut is known as the sagittal incision. Now they will be instructed to cut midway on the ventral side of the organism from their left to right side. This is known as the transverse incision. Continue demonstrating all the planes. For this exercise the terms distal and proximal should also be introduced. The teacher will ask the students to locate a certain organ by giving them clues using the vocabulary they just learned.

Conclusion:

Consider all situations in a normal medical context that would require directions. These terms should be used in these situations. For example students should refer these terms to their own persons while they are in the class. Students have ventral and dorsal sides in addition to anterior and posterior directions. Objects in relation to the student's person might be termed distal or proximal to them.