

Name _____

Period _____

Earthworm Dissection

Directions: Follow the instructions carefully, check the boxes as you complete each step. Remember that dissection is about carefully exposing the organs to view, try not to damage structures.

External Anatomy

1. Examine your earthworm and determine the dorsal and ventral sides. The ventral side appears flatter than the other side of the worm. The dorsal side is the worm's rounded top.
2. Locate the clitellum which is on the anterior end of the worm. It is the swelling located from segments 33 to 37 and is near the anterior end.
3. Locate the prostomium, it is a fleshy lobe covering the mouth of the worm. It is on the far anterior end of the worm.
4. Locate the dark line that runs down the dorsal side of the worm, this is the **dorsal blood vessel**. The **ventral blood vessel** can be seen on the underside of the worm, though it is usually not as dark.
5. Label the **view** and **structures A & B** in the picture to the right.



Internal Anatomy

1. Place the specimen in the dissecting pan **DORSAL** side up.
2. Locate the clitellum and insert the tip of the scissors about 3 cm behind the clitellum.
3. Cut **carefully** all the way up to the head. Try to keep the scissors pointed up, and only cut through the skin. **Be careful not to damage the internal organs.**
4. Spread the skin of the worm out, use a dissecting needle to gently tear the **septa** (little thread like structures that hold the skin to organs below it)
5. Place pins in the skin to hold it apart, angle the pins out so that they are not in your way of making observations.