

CAT Connection

Anatomy and physiology students dissect cats to learn more about the human body

Junior Zoe Wilson picks up the scalpel and references her book "CAT." Slowly, she peels off the tissue of the cat to reveal muscle in the arm. Next, she takes a small probe and separates the muscles into six layers. After labeling the muscles, anatomy and physiology teacher Dustin Mead checks her work and gives her group the okay to move on.

"There are a lot of similarities (between a cat and a human body). I think that's why we dissect cats," senior Jon Caracci said. During the second semester of anatomy, students put their usual book work to use. "The first semester of anatomy is mostly book work, dissecting cats is completely different," Caracci said. "We get to work with our hands, it's all slimy and gross and it smells bad."

Before the dissection students first had to pass a lab tools quiz. They were required to earn 100% before they could start the dissection. Students who did not pass the quiz on the first day had to immediately retake it on the second. In all his years teaching anatomy, Mead has never had a student need to take the quiz a third time.

Prior to starting the dissection students practiced on a Cutie (small orange). Mead gave the students a sheet on how to cut the orange. At this point many students realized that this was going to be harder than expected and they needed to go and revisit their vocab from the first semester. "It was only hard in the sense that we hadn't seen the vocab in so long, it took us longer than it should have to cut open the orange," Wilson said.

Knowing the vocab and technique is very impor-

tant. "There are cutting terms as to what direction you cut or how you cut," junior Katherine Claes said. "It's really important that you know how to hold a scalpel, if you don't you could stab someone."

The Cutie dissection also served as test for the students to see how well they would work together in a group setting. "If he can't trust you with an orange why would he trust you with you a cat," Wilson said. After the Cutie dissection students were ready to name and receive their cats.

"We looked up punny cat names on the Internet for like five minutes and picked," Wilson said. Wilson's group picked Leo DiCatrio.

Claus' group named their cat Mary. "We really wanted the pregnant cat so Sarah said hail mary before we drew, (for our cat)" Claes said.

Some groups picked ironic names while others combined all their names into one. Caracci's group picked Fiona Joelleracci. "We didn't pick a punny cat name, we wanted ours to have personality," Caracci said. Caracci and his group added some individual flair to their dissection by wearing scrubs. "In the eighth grade Nick Stitzel and I wore them (scrubs) when we dissected pigs in biology, and we decided to bring them back," he said.

Overall, the cat dissection extended the entire second semester. "It is important for the class to give the students a full perspective on the human body," Wilson said. "Looking at pictures just isn't enough. By actually having the cat in front of you we can see more that you would with a book."



Seniors Pratyusha Bujimalla, Riley Deutsch and Taylor Holland carefully dissect a cat with their lab group in anatomy. "We're dissecting to learn about the muscular system, so we identified and labeled certain muscles on the cat," Bujimalla said.

Photo by Makenzie Hill

background

Sophomore Brittany Altman takes a picture of different stretches for track 5 PE. Students rotated to different stations to learn about different exercises and answer questions.

Photo by Makenzie Hill

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1. Junior Jaxson Lovelady weight lifts after his workout in Track 4 P.E. "We do auxiliary lifts such as bench presses, front squats, military presses and hang cleans," Lovelady said. "We also do body weight workouts like planks, pull-ups, bridges and sit-ups. It's all to get us in better shape for whatever sport we are in and maintain fitness during the season."
Photo by Makenzie Hill

2. Dissecting in Biology during a lab, sophomore Melanie Garcia splits open the stomach of a frog. "I was widening open the frogs stomach in order to remove important organs such as the heart intestines, bladder etc, without any damage to their specimen," Garcia said.
Photo by Makenzie Hill

3. Waiting for their turn to interview for the Dragon Scholarship, seniors Collin Shellenberger and Adam Jensen discuss the questions. All interviews lasted about 10 minutes and consisted of simple questions regarding future plans students had.
Photo by Kelsey Acheson

4. Sophomores Meghan Gumina and Brittney Biere work on biology homework together during study hall. Gumina and Biere preferred to do their work in the halls rather than in their study hall room.
Photo by Makenzie Hill