

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date / HR \_\_\_\_\_

## Meet A Red Wiggler - Anatomy

### Objective:

Students will learn basic worm anatomy.

Students will learn about decomposers of the food chain.

### Materials:

- Red wigglers, 1 per student
- Worm containers, 1 per student -  
    Any container with a low lip which can hold water  
    For example: Petri dish, plastic coffee can lid, the bottom of a carton of milk
- Water
- Teaspoons, several
- Popsicle stick
- Rulers, 1 per student
- "Meet A Red Wiggler - Anatomy" worksheet, 1 per/student
- Magnifying glasses (optional), 1 per student

### Activity:

1. Put about a teaspoonful of water and a worm in a container for each student.
2. Rulers are needed for only one of the observations, so they can be shared if necessary.
3. Optional: magnifying glasses can be used to aid the students in their observations.
4. Optional: binocular microscope can be used to view the dorsal blood vessel of the worm.  
This blood vessel is an unbroken line running along the top side of the worm. Blood flows from tail to head in it, and then back again to the tail through a ventral blood vessel (bottom side).

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### Meet A Red Wiggler - Anatomy Worksheet

1. Collect a red wiggler, a worm container, a teaspoonful of water, a ruler and a magnifying glass (if available) from your teacher. If you have a magnifying glass, use it to help you make your observations. The worms must be kept moist at all times during your observations. If the water dries up, ask your teacher for another teaspoonful of water.

2. The red wiggler has a narrower head end (anterior) and a rounder tail end (posterior). What is the color of the head? \_\_\_\_\_ The tail? \_\_\_\_\_

3. At the tip of the head end of the worm is the prostomium. It is a flap which covers the mouth of the worm.

What color is it? \_\_\_\_\_

USE INCHES AND CENTIMETERS;

4. Measure the length of the worm when it is at its shortest. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Measure the length of the worm when it is stretched out and moving. \_\_\_\_\_

6. Does the worm have a top (dorsal) side and a bottom (ventral) side? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Find the swollen section of the worm. This is the clitellum. The clitellum is necessary for worm reproduction. (If your worm is immature, it may not have a visible clitellum. Look at another student's worm if necessary).

Which end is the clitellum, closer to? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the clitellum \_\_\_\_\_

8. Turn the worm over. You will be able to see a row of dark splotches. This is the intestine where food is digested.

Where does the intestine begin? \_\_\_\_\_

Where does the intestine end? \_\_\_\_\_

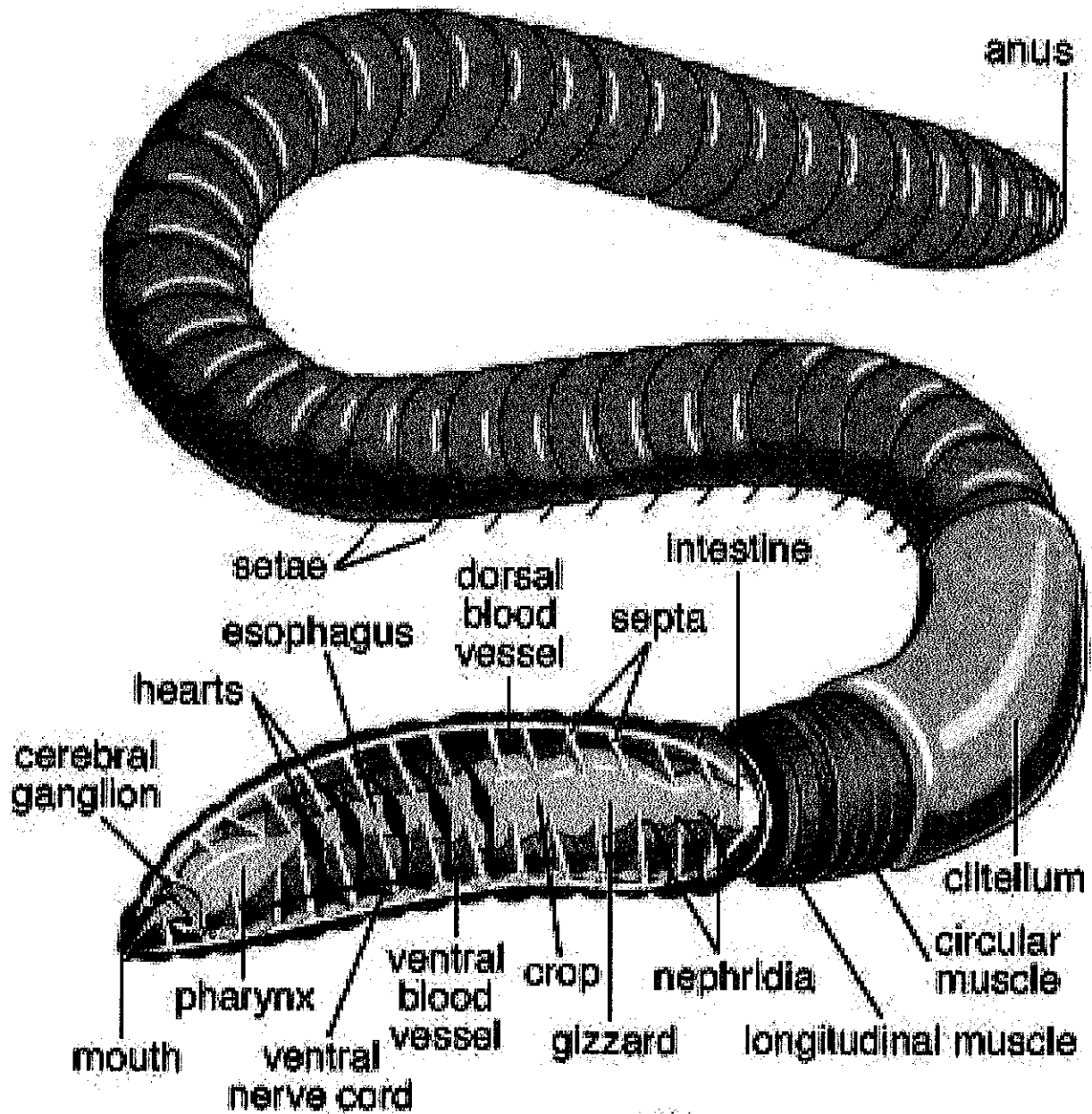
9. Each worm is made up of many rings called segments. Look at another student's worm which is either longer or shorter than our own. Which worm appears to have more segments (longer or shorter worm)? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Describe the way a worm feels to you when you touch it. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Draw a worm on the back of this worksheet. Label the head (anterior), tail (posterior), clitellum, and segments.

Remember: The worm you are observing is a living creature. Treat it gently. Carefully return it to the worm bin when you have completed your observations.

# Earthworm Body Parts



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