

Planarian Lab –Teacher Notes

Supplies:

For class:

- Planarians: 6 per group
 - Order from your favorite source, such as Carolina Biological or Niles Biological.
- Petri dishes: 6 per group
- Ice cubes (for day 1)
- Access to a dark place like drawers, cupboard, or locker to store cut *Planaria*
- Cotton swabs

For each lab table:

- 1 bottle of dechlorinated tap water
- 2 single-edge razor blades (new ones work best)
- 2 hand lenses
- 2 dissecting microscopes (if available)
- 2 petri dishes
- 2 microscope slides
- 2 cotton swabs
- Page of small labels
- Dropper (for removing dead pieces)

When getting the planarians let them know you're going to be cutting them so you get good sized ones. Keep in refrigerator with lid loosened until you use them.

Day one – Making the cuts (35-45 min)

Place the planarian on a microscope slide and rest the slide on top of the ice cube inside a petri dish (see picture). This slows the planarian down making the cutting easier. Allow students to choose where they will be making the cuts (5-6 in total) and ask them to provide a justification for their decision. You can do some of the interesting cuts and show them as demos later, just in case students do not get to those.

Following days – Observation days (15-20min)

Observe a few times along the way. Three to four times is plenty.

Last day (25-35min)

It takes about 10-14 days for the planarian to regenerate. On this last day It will take a little longer for students to clean up the petri dishes.

