I have been teaching Anatomy and Physiology for the past 13 years, and one of the underlying themes in the semester is forensic science. This is an introductory course, so I have a lot of freedom to select activities to pique my students’ interest. I was looking for an activity that could introduce students to dissection before the much more detailed cat dissection, which occurs at the end of the course. I was also looking for a new way to have my students explore the steps of autopsy. In the past, I had done the virtual autopsies available on the Internet, but I really wanted an activity in which the students could be more active in the process. The Carolina Forensic Dissection Kit, as I discovered, does a great job of meeting that criterion, does a great job of meeting of students conducting a fetal pig dissection

Overview of Product

The work up front does take time, this is a big box store. The only cost is to purchase the materials for the lab in large zip-lock bags ahead of time. I have had stations in the past, but the zip-lock bag seemed to work better. Furthermore, the directions that are provided by Carolina are straightforward, and, once the materials are provided and safety issues discussed, students can work at their own pace.

It would take me three pages to describe all of the instruction, but here are a few highlights of the activity. First the students get to examine the external features of the fetal pig.
just as they would in a real autopsy. I have had students take pictures to include in their autopsy reports. Second, during the course of the internal examination, the students have the chance to look at the following:

- Endocrine system
- Circulatory system
- Digestive system
- Urogenital system
- Central nervous system

Along with examining the previously mentioned systems, the students get to do some comparisons between fetal and adult organs. For example, they compare the fetal heart and kidney with the adult heart and kidney. The kit includes slides that students can use to look at some of the histology of these organs. If you choose to complete these other activities, I encourage you to set up separate stations or set aside days to complete them. Finally, once the autopsy is complete, there are endless possibilities for assessment. I have the students create a virtual autopsy via PowerPoint. Again, you know your students, and the lab is open-ended enough to pick an assessment of your choice.

**Summary**

If you are looking for a novel and excellent introduction to forensic dissection, I highly recommend the Carolina Forensic Dissection Kit. Not only does it include detailed autopsy protocols, it will also help you teach mammalian anatomy. Furthermore, the kit is designed in a way that allows the teacher full freedom to conduct the lab in a way that meets the needs of their students.

If you would like copies of my pre-lab or other materials, feel free to e-mail me at chris_monsour@tiffin.k12.oh.us.

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