

daily basis, regardless of how it is presented. Its potential to augment or introduce literature in the classroom is astounding.



Michael Comet  
South Lewis High School  
Turin, NY 13473  
mcomet@southlewis.org

## THE BRAIN

***The Brain Book: Development, Function, Disorder, Health.*** By Ken Ashwell. 2012. Firefly Books. (ISBN 9781770851269). 352 pp. Hardcover. \$45.00.

As the title implies, this ambitious volume packs in information. The scope of *The Brain Book* is extensive, thoroughly covering topics ranging from normal brain development, anatomy, and chemistry to aging, abnormalities, and disorders. Initial chapters present normal anatomy and physiology: brain and spinal cord function, nerves, and central nervous system development. The brain in action follows, in discussion of the senses, movement, the “social and thinking brain,” and mood and consciousness. The final portion of the book presents an overview of disorders, including brain injury, drug use and addiction, and diseases. Thus, topics range from basic anatomy and

physiology – nerve function and parts of the brain – to specialized sections inquiring “What is language?” and a history of human language, emotions, cooperation, music and the brain, fear and anxiety, concussion and spinal cord injury, drugs and medications, and much more. Each section is extensively illustrated with photographs, historical illustrations, diagrams, micrographs, and brain images using technology such as x-ray, CT, and MRI.

*The Brain Book* is an almost overwhelming compilation of detailed facts about the brain and central nervous system. Such scope and detail packed into a single volume make this book most appropriate as a reference or for a more advanced reader. While not on the level of a medical text, the extent and level of material are demanding enough to need the some established science background. Organized somewhat like an encyclopedia, with each topic covered in an “article” of a few pages of text and illustration, *The Brain Book* would be best used as a reference for specific information on individual topics. Text and illustrations are rich in detail, demanding that the reader take in each page carefully to thoroughly understand the material. At times, particularly with the diagrams, labels can be so detailed that the reader (especially one with less anatomy background) must read very

carefully to understand the importance of the structures indicated. This level of detail is thus both an asset and a weakness: providing an excellent, thorough background for the interested student with some science background (such as an upper-level high school student), but more advanced and extensive than is appropriate for the average younger reader. Overall, this is an excellent text for the student interested in developing his or her understanding of human anatomy and physiology.



Cate Hibbitt  
Lincoln School  
Providence, RI 02906  
chibbitt@lincolnschool.org

ELI ZABETH COWLES teaches freshman-level biology, biochemistry, and entomology at Eastern Connecticut State University. She has taught at the undergraduate and graduate college levels for over 20 years. Her interests include insect toxicology, protein characterization, and astrobiology. Cowles holds degrees in biology and biochemistry from Cornell University and Michigan State University. Her address is Department of Biology, ECSU, 83 Windham St., Willimantic, CT 06226; e-mail: cowlese@easternct.edu.

INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THIS SUMMER  
COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA,  
GALÁPAGOS, MADAGASCAR  
AND MORE!

HOLBROOK TRAVEL

DON'T FORGET: Fund for Teachers grant application deadline is Jan. 30<sup>th</sup>

holbrooktravel.com | 800-451-7111  
travel@holbrooktravel.com