

How to Opt-Out of Animal Dissection in the Classroom

Step 1: Start the conversation with your teacher

This is an intimidating step, but keep in mind that most teachers are open minded and want to make sure that their students have a comfortable learning experience. You can **use our email template** (at right) to contact your teacher and broach the topic of using an alternative to animal dissection.

Dear [Teacher's Name],
I would like to discuss how I can opt out of the dissection exercises planned for our class. For [personal/moral/religious] reasons, I do not want to participate in dissection, but would like to use an appropriate alternative.
Do you have any specific products or solutions that you would approve for my use? If not, will you work with me to identify potential options?
Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,
[Your Name]

Step 2: Determine the best path forward

Path 1

Your teacher may already have a preferred dissection alternative ready for you to use – **WIN**

Path 2

Your teacher may be open to letting you use an alternative but doesn't have a specific alternative in mind. In this case, you or your teacher can [visit BioLEAP.org](http://visitBioLEAP.org) to browse dissection alternatives. – **WIN**

Path 3

If your teacher is not open to the use of alternatives, try to understand their reasoning so that you can prepare talking points for another conversation. – **Don't give up! Go to step 3 to make your case.**

Step 3: Make your case

To build a strong case you need to **know your rights, know the facts, and build support.**

Know your rights: Depending on where you live or what school district you are in, you might have a stated right to opt-out of dissection. Visit NAVS.org to explore your rights. If your state or school district has a policy stating students' right to opt-out, share that with your teacher.

Know the facts:

FACT – Dissection alternatives are often free or less expensive than animal specimens.

FACT – Dissection alternatives provide the same level of learning as animal specimens.

FACT – Students can get hands-on experience from dissection alternatives.

FACT – Animals used in dissection are often inhumanely sourced.

Build support: There is power in numbers. If your teacher is unsupportive of your choice not to dissect, find people who will have your back. You may enlist the help of your parent or guardian to speak with your teacher on your behalf, and you can ask your classmates to sign a petition supporting your effort for access to humane dissection alternatives.

Don't get discouraged! If your teacher isn't willing to budge, [contact us](http://contactus) at NAVS, and we will do our best to help you reach a conclusion that both you and your teacher are happy with.

Learn more about humane options to dissection at bioleap.org