Structures and functions in living organisms

Pearson Edexcel · International GCSE · Biology · Vocabulary in context

Word	Example
organelle /ˌɔːgəˈnel/	The nucleus is an **organelle**.
cell /sel/	Every living thing is made of at least one **cell**.
tissue /ˈtɪʃuː/	Muscle is a **tissue**.
organ /ˈɔːgən/	The heart is an **organ**.
system /ˈsɪstəm/	A pond is a **system** with water, plants and animals.
cell differentiation /sel ˌdɪfəˌrenʃɪˈeɪʃn/	**Cell differentiation** produces cells with different structures and jobs.
enzyme /ˈenzaɪm/	The **enzyme** speeds up the reaction.
biological catalyst /ˌbaɪəˈlɒdʒɪkl ˈkætəlɪst/	An enzyme is a **biological catalyst**: it speeds up a reaction without being used up.
active site /ˈæktɪv saɪt/	The substrate binds at the enzyme's **active site**.
denaturation /ˌdenətʃəˈreɪʃn/	Cooking an egg causes **denaturation** of its proteins.
diffusion /dɪˈfjuːʒn/	The smell of perfume spreads across a room by **diffusion**.
osmosis /ɒzˈməʊsɪs/	Water enters the root by **osmosis**.

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active transport /ˈæktɪv ˈtrænspɔːt/	**Active transport** uses energy to move ions into root cells.
peristalsis /ˌperɪˈstælsɪs/	**Peristalsis** pushes food along the gut through muscle contractions.
villi /ˈvɪlaɪ/	**Villi** give the small intestine a large surface area.
transpiration /trænspəˈreɪʃn/	**Transpiration** is the loss of water from leaves.
haemoglobin /ˌhiːməˈgləʊbɪn/	**Haemoglobin** in red blood cells carries oxygen.
homeostasis /ˌhəʊmiːəˈstɑːsiz/	Sweating is part of **homeostasis**: it keeps body temperature steady.
synapse /ˈsɪnæps/	A **synapse** is a small gap between two nerve cells.
neurotransmitter /ˈnjuːrətrænsmɪtə/	A **neurotransmitter** crosses the gap between two neurones.
auxin /ˈɔːksɪn/	**Auxin** makes plant cells grow longer.
phototropism /ˌfəʊtəʊˈtrəʊpɪzəm/	Shoots grow towards light because of **phototropism**.

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