Cat digestive system
For this lab, both lab partners can perform separate dissections – salivary gland/ oral cavity dissection and abdominal cavity dissection.

Salivary glands
Information on the dissection of salivary glands is on pp. 355. You’ll need to form an incision from the transverse jugular (a vein that crosses over the throat) upward toward the ear. Do not cut deeply – just cut away the skin. Be aware that the salivary glands sometimes stay attached to the peeled skin. There will be tissue that you have to remove to see the glands. Use the branching of the external jugular vein as a guide to locate the glands and ducts (Figure 37.1). Follow the parotid duct up to where it empties into the mouth. The parotid gland is large and sometimes is pulled up with the skin. Note that figure 37.1 does not show two lymph nodes that are found on either side of the anterior facial vein. The sublingual gland is located under one of those nodes and is found near the mandibular gland.

parotid gland  mandibular (submaxillary) duct
mandibular (submaxillary) gland  masseter muscle
sublingual gland

Digestive system - oral cavity
This dissection starts on p.357 – note that we are not bisecting the head, so you do not need to peel skin away from the head. You do want to see soft and hard palate, and filiform papillae, but that usually just requires taking the sponge out of the mouth and looking in.

hard palate  soft palate
palatal rugae  filiform papillae

Digestive system – abdominal cavity
Text explaining the dissection method is on p.343, although we will not be cutting into the thoracic cavity. From the xiphoid process make a ventral incision down to the groin, keeping the incision slightly off-center. Then make a pair of lateral cuts in order to fold back the abdominal walls (cuts 2 and 4 in lab manual p.343) then use some pins to hold them back. Cut 2 is just below the diaphragm. Cut 4 forms a flap that holds the urinary bladder. Do not cut through pelvis to see end of rectum (as in Fig. 37.10) - you will get to see the rectum later, I promise.

Relevant digestive system figures 36.6 to 36.11, and 37.7 to 37.13. It is good to start with liver lobes, and then follow the digestive system down starting at the stomach.

Liver lobes: quadrate, caudate, left lateral, left medial, right medial, right lateral
pyloric sphincter  urinary bladder
gall bladder  spleen
common bile duct  ileo-colic valve (requires a cut)
greater omentum (p.349)  cecum
stomach - pyloric region and fundus  pancreas
lesser and greater curvature of stomach  rectum (we’ll see more of it later)
small intestine: duodenum, jejunum, ileum
colon - ascending, transverse, and descending colon
Figure 7.6
Ventral view of the salivary glands of a cat.
FIGURE 4.3
Digestive system.
Figure 7.10
Ventral view of the deep abdominal structures of a cat.