Play It Safe!

Your skull acts like a hard helmet and protects the soft brain inside. However, it is still important to wear a helmet when you ride a bike or scooter or do other activities.

Imagine you have a friend who does not want to wear a helmet when he or she rides a bike. Write a letter explaining why it's important to wear a helmet.

Dear _____ ,

_____

_____

_____

_____

Your friend,

_____

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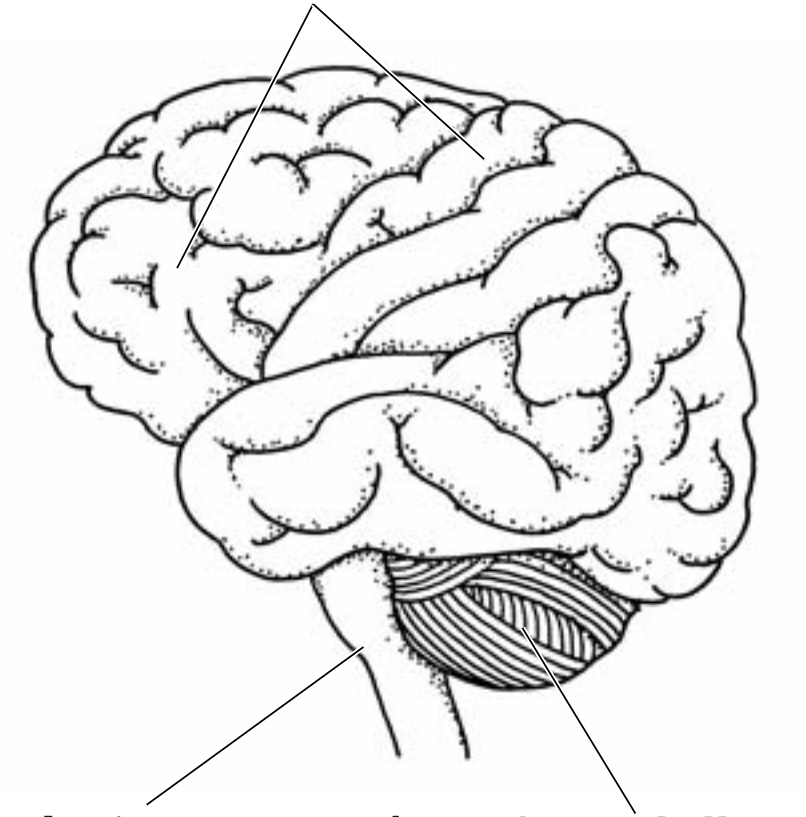
My Book About the Brain and Nervous System

by _____

Your Amazing Brain

Your brain controls everything you think, feel, and do. The brain has three main parts.

The **cerebrum** is the largest part of the brain. It controls activities such as thinking, speaking, hearing, and smelling.



The **brain stem** controls activities such as your heartbeat, breathing, and digestion.

The **cerebellum** controls your balance and helps with movement.

The brain, spinal cord, and nerves make up the nervous system.

Explain what would happen if a part of the system did not work properly.

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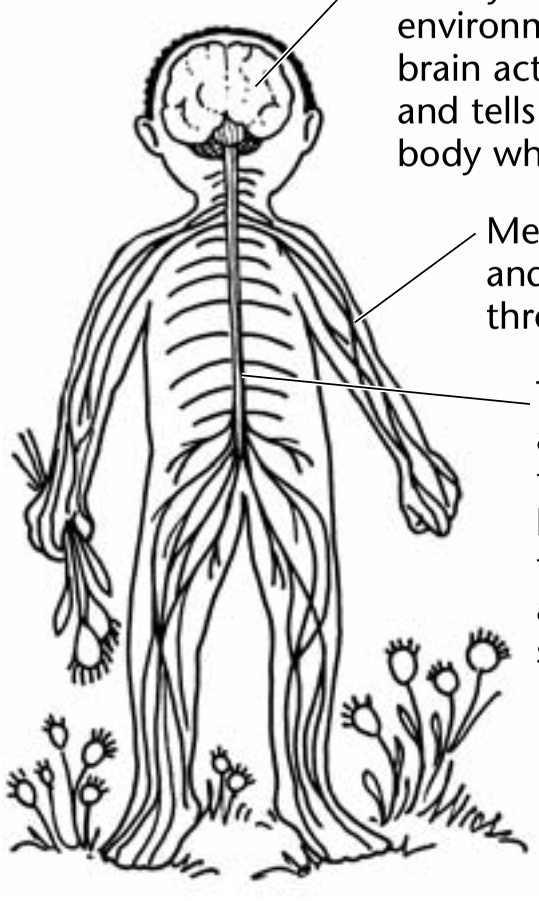
The Answer Is . . .

B. Your brain receives and sends messages from every part of your body through the spinal cord and nerves.

Here's how it works:



Your **brain** receives messages from your body and your environment. Then your brain acts on these messages and tells other parts of the body what to do.

Messages travel to and from the brain through **nerves**.

The **spinal cord** is about half an inch thick and links the brain to the rest of the body. Nerves are attached to the spinal cord.

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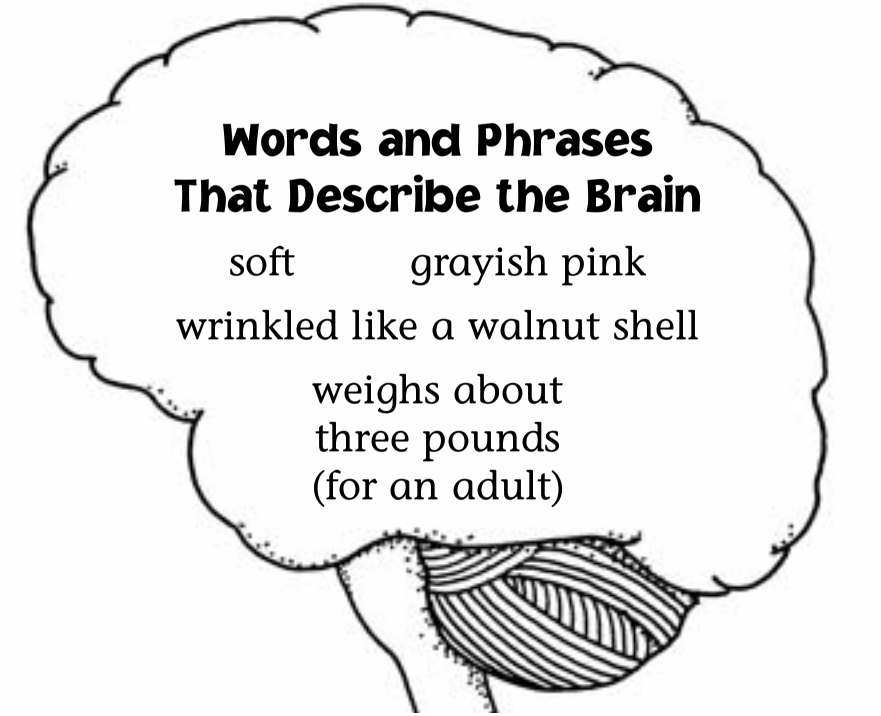
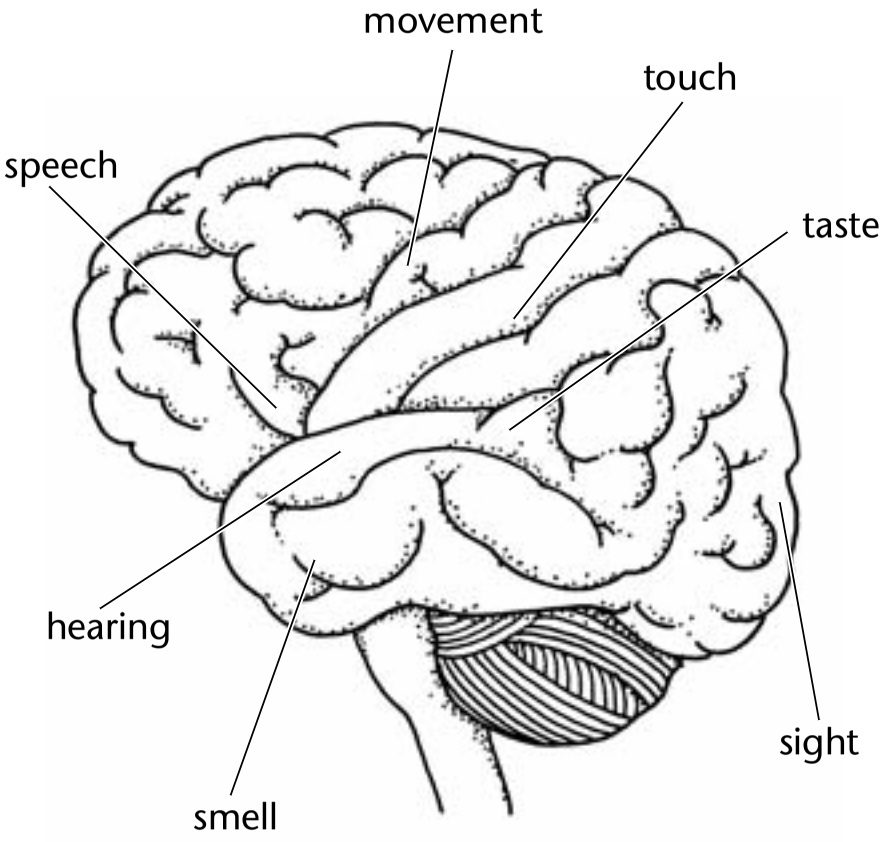


Write a paragraph that describes what you've learned about the brain.

A Closer Look at the Cerebrum

The outer layer of the cerebrum is called the **cerebral cortex**. Different parts of the cerebral cortex do different jobs. Scientists have labeled these areas on a brain map.



How do you think your brain communicates with your arm when you want to throw a ball? Or with your mouth when you want to speak?

A. It's magic! Your body just knows what to do.

B. Your brain receives and sends messages from every part of your body through the spinal cord and nerves.

C. Your brain is attached to your skull, and your skull communicates with the rest of your body.

Which answer do you think is correct? _____

Why? _____