**ANATOMICAL DISSECTION TERMS**

The body can be broken into planes i.e. top and bottom, left and right, middle and outside, front and back etc. These words can be used to help determine the placement of body parts.

Ventral or Anterior = belly or front

Dorsal or Posterior = Back or behind

Caudal = towards the tail or downward

Cranial = towards the head or upward

Superior = above

Inferior = below

Medial = by the imaginary line that bisects the middle of the body (medial line)

Lateral = to the side of the imaginary medial line (outward)

* **Mostly used for bones in the arms and legs:**

Proximal = Near or close to something (in this case the torso of the body)

Distal = Away or further from something (in this case the torso of the body)

EXAMPLES:

the cervical vertebrae are cranial or superior to the thoracic vertebrae

the patella is proximal to the tibia

the heart is medial to the shoulder

the scapula is dorsal while the clavicle is ventral