Anatomical directional terms

Explained answer key

1. Inferior — The chin lies below the forehead in anatomical position.

2. Superior — Reversing the two structures changes inferior to superior.

3. Anterior — The breastbone is at the front of the chest; the spine lies behind it.

4. Posterior — The spine lies behind the breastbone.

5. Medial — The nose is closer to the midline of the body.

6. Lateral — The ears lie farther from the midline.

7. Distal — The wrist is farther along the limb from its attachment to the trunk.

8. Proximal — The wrist is nearer the attachment to the trunk. Compare this answer with question 7: the reference structure changed.

9. Superficial — The skin is closer to the body surface.

10. Deep — That muscle lies farther from the surface than the skin over it.

11. Their own left — Anatomical left and right belong to the person being described. When you face them, their left is on your right.

12. No — Descriptions retain anatomical position as the reference. The palm side of the wrist remains its anterior side even when the hand turns.

Terminology reference: OpenStax, Anatomy and Physiology 2e, section 1.6. Questions and explanations by Atlas Library.

For another attempt, explain why each opposite term would be wrong. Follow your course materials for the terminology your instructor requires.