Paramecium

A paramecium is a one-celled protozoan. Look for organisms that are shaped like the sole of a shoe. When you see a paramecium, look for the structures shown in the diagram.

**Movement** A paramecium moves like a bumper car. The cell is covered with cilia. The cilia beat back and forth to move the cell. Switch the microscope to high power to see the cilia moving.

**Feeding** A paramecium feeds on bacteria and other tiny organisms. Cilia push the food into an opening called the oral groove.

**Reproduction** When a paramecium gets too large, it divides in half. The nucleus splits, too.

**Size** 180 to 300 µm (Three to five paramecia would fit in 1 mm.)

**Answer the following questions.**

1. Water enters the paramecium with its food. Which structure lets the paramecium get rid of extra water?

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2. What might happen to the paramecium if it didn’t have that structure?

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