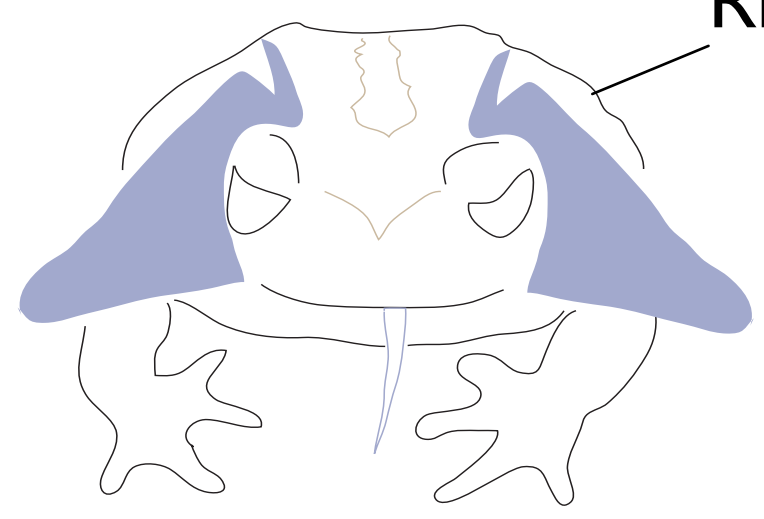


# What does "control" mean?

Ribbit?

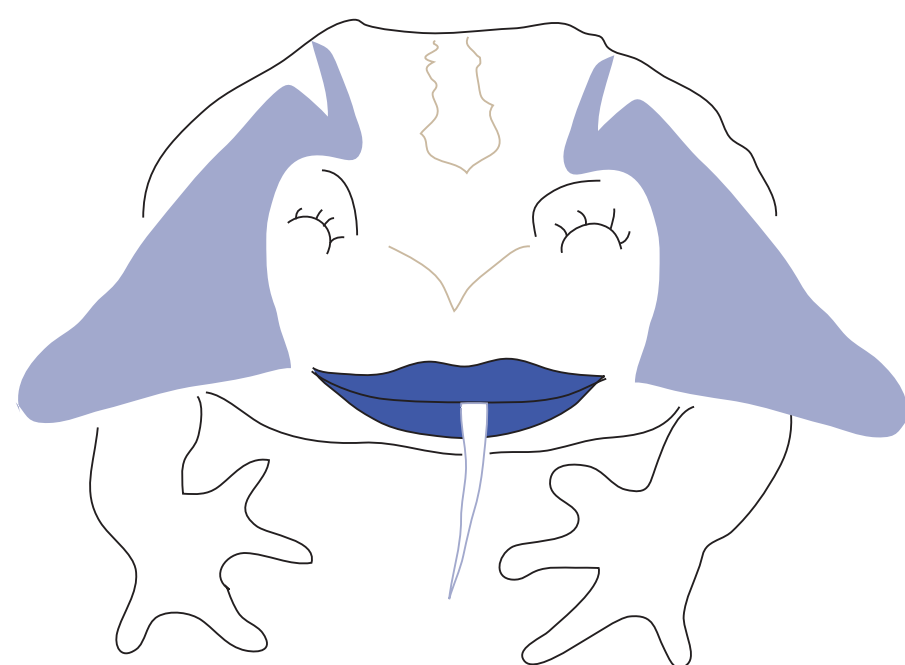


In science "control" can either be a noun or a verb.

You use a control when you are manipulating something in your experiment, and you want to account for that manipulation.

**Does Betty bat-frog get more dates when she wears Red or Blue lipstick?**

*Dear Diary,  
I got 4 dates this week!*



*This week I got 5 dates!*

But what if wearing **any lipstick** makes her get more dates, and the color doesn't matter?



I don't know about this...

I can have a control of clear lipstick to account for this. If she gets just as many dates with clear lipstick I know color doesn't matter, just keeping her lips moist and shiny is enough!



You control for external variables that might bias your results, but are not the main focus of the experiment.

**Does Betty bat-frog prefer Fancy Feast<sup>®</sup> over Meow Mix<sup>®</sup>?**

Why don't I ever get flies anymore?



But what if Betty chose the Meow Mix<sup>®</sup> just because there was more of it?



So I control for this bias by making sure I give Betty the same amount of each food.



If I'm accounting for something I am manipulating I have used a control, but if I am accounting for some external variable that is not under study I have controlled for it.