

Think/Pair/Share

Think of a time when you were a student that you felt actively engaged in the class. What was it about the course or instruction that contributed to your sense of engagement?

There are three courses that come to mind when I think about courses that made me feel actively engaged in the class.

1. Anatomy
 - a. This course consisted of dissection, which meant that I had hands-on experience with searching for the structures that I needed to preserve in real-time. This gave me a better understanding of how the structures related to one another spatially, a skill that can be difficult to gain when only reading from a textbook or looking at already dissected cadavers.
2. Osteology
 - a. This course involves identifying bones, the side it comes from (left or right), and the features present on the bone. When quizzed, we were given bone fragments to identify. This sometimes involved using a “brown bag” approach - the bone fragment would be placed in a brown bag and students could reach in and feel the bone. Then we would have to identify the bone, side and any features that were present. This forced me to create 3D images of the skeleton in my head, making me a better osteologist. The brown bag quizzes were my favorite, as it tested my abilities in a way that I did not experience in other courses.
3. Science Communication
 - a. A little different than the other two courses, my science communications course focused on how to discuss our research with different groups of people. Not only to journal reviewers but also to the general public. We read through magazines like American Scientist to gain an understanding of how others approached this and learned the best methods. This course felt especially engaging because I have a passion for public outreach - while I have attended and worked several public outreach events, I did not have any experience with writing my research for the general public. This course was one of my favorite courses, and has been one of the most beneficial courses as I have utilized these skills throughout my graduate career.

Pair: Turn to your neighbor and relate your experience

My partner also discussed anatomy! She also had a very hands-on experience with anatomy.

Share: When prompted – identify common themes in your experiences

We both enjoyed the hands-on experiences that come with courses like anatomy; the hands-on experiences made the course material much more engaging.