

Sample Lesson Plan (The Normal Human Swallow)

The purpose of this sample lesson plan is to give a sneak peek into one of the ways I tackle teaching a new concept through the use of an active learning technique. The classroom design, purpose of the activity, and content that will be covered are all explained. This lesson plan should allow the reader to envision what it would be like to participate in a portion of my class. This particular lesson plan is from a swallowing/dysphagia course at the graduate level.

The chosen content for this lesson is the pathway that food or liquid follows in the typical human swallow. The active learning technique that will be employed to solidify this content is that of think-pair-share. After learning about the swallowing mechanism and the pathway that is followed in a normal swallow, the students will individually write down the path that food or liquid should follow. They will include key anatomical features and physiological components while doing so. Then, the class will be divided into pairs and discuss their responses with each other. After doing so, the whole class will reconvene and one student from each pair will synthesize and share what they discussed. While each group is doing so, I will sketch out the components shared on the white board. As each new pair presents, I will change the color of the marker and add in any new components that are introduced. At the end of the activity, I will praise the class for their findings, add in any components that may have been missed, and allow a few minutes for the class to jot down notes from the exercise.

For this content, I chose think-pair-share as the active learning technique for a few reasons. For one, as a speech-language pathologist, we need to be able to clearly articulate what a normal swallow looks like so that we can effectively educate and empower our patients, clients, caregivers, family members, and fellow staff members. Furthermore, to be able to talk about and address how someone's swallow deviates from the norm, we must be able to form a clear picture of what is 'normal' in order to be able to highlight that deviation. Another benefit of using the think-pair-share technique is how it engages every member of the class into the learning exercise. Finally, this technique allows the students to practice synthesizing information on a smaller scale. The notetaking on the whiteboard during the group sharing, will also allow them to visualize synthesis on a larger scale.

Ideally, the classroom will be set-up in a flexible design with moveable chairs in a general horseshoe shape. This way, the students can easily pair up with someone next to them and during group component everyone will be able to visualize whoever is presenting. The purpose of the horseshoe shape will allow for everyone to see the whiteboard located at the opening of the horseshoe.