

Going Back to Show and Tell: Using your Research to Engage Undergraduates

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Smaller community active learning discussion sections are one of the best opportunities for students in a large lecture to practice and master course material. However, graduate students are frequently reluctant to serve as teaching assistants, because they might not know how to structure a discussion or engage students with the material. A solution to this setback is to incorporate graduate student's research into their discussion sections which will engage both TA and students. This solution also gives TAs confidence in developing their own lesson plan. In this workshop, we will demonstrate a sample active discussion for introductory biology undergrads based on a graduate student's research. We provided guidelines for graduate students to consider when planning with their own discussion plan. By the end of this workshop, attendees were able to identify guidelines for simplifying real-world research into modules for undergraduates and create a class activity integrating personal research and course objectives. This activity is best suited for graduate students leading smaller discussions within a larger lecture course (and those who mentor them), but is relevant to anyone who wishes to bring real-world research and experimental data into an introductory course.

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