

## Active and Engaging Lessons in an Online Format

### Brain Gym

Even though students may be sitting at home, there is no rule you cannot or should not take short brain breaks (also called Brain Gym™). Build at least one break into your online Zoom session, and you will notice more engagement will result of these breaks.

Getting students to stand up and do a cross-body exercise or have a water break will benefit their online experiences. For 15 great Brain Gym activities follow the link below:

<https://www.stylecraze.com/articles/simple-brain-gym-exercises-and-its-benefits/>

### Virtual Zoom Backgrounds

Engage students with your virtual background on Zoom, or ask students to come prepared to the next Zoom session with a virtual background that fits your course topic well. For example, if you are studying the women's suffrage movement, you can ask your students to find an image from the era to put in their backgrounds. You could even make it a contest and have students vote for their favorite background.

How to add a virtual background on Zoom:

[https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/210707503-Virtual-Background?mobile\\_site=true](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/210707503-Virtual-Background?mobile_site=true)

### Have students build nonlinear stories

Twine is a way to build interactive nonlinear stories (choose-your-own-adventures). It is a free site, and it is available here:

<http://twinery.org/>

Use comics or memes.

ToonyTool is a way to create and share images with captions online. You could also make a contest of it at the beginning of a lesson to have students type a potential comic caption into chat and select a winner of the day.

<https://www.toonytool.com/>

### Video Search

This article has some unique ideas about assigning students to find a video and share it in the discussion board. The goal is to strengthen online research skills and use the videos as a basis for class discussions.

<https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-with-technology-articles/from-passive-viewing-to-active-learning-simple-techniques-for-applying-active-learning-strategies-to-online-course-videos/>

### Active Learning Online

Ohio State University put together a great resource on Active Learning in an Online Course. Some highlights include five ways to use stories to make online teaching more engaging, ideas for role play, and links to other resources.

<https://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/course-design-and-pedagogy/active-learning-online-course>