

The Brainy Bunch: Blackrock Health Class Gets Interactive Anatomy Instruction

Studying the brain of a cow offered students a hands-on opportunity to better understand how their own minds work.

By [Lauren Costa](#) | May 7, 2013



Apart from the everyday care of [Blackrock Elementary](#) students, School Nurse Melissa Thibodeau also teaches lessons about health, fitness and well-being to fourth and fifth classes.

Throughout the school year, Thibodeau designs lessons that provide students with important information to help them not only lead healthy lifestyles but to also understand how their bodies work. She also incorporates national health initiatives into her teaching, like American Heart Month in February, which [inspired a hands-on anatomy lesson using a real pig heart](#) that was a big hit with students.

Because May is Mental Health Month, Thibodeau decided to utilize another interactive learning tool which came in the form of a cow brain.



On the afternoon that Coventry Patch joined Ms. Thibodeau, she was using diagrams to show Ray Raboin's fourth grade class about the anatomy and functions of the brain. Following the discussion, she unveiled the organ in order to give students an up-close look at what they had just learned on paper.

Thibodeau allowed students on a voluntary basis to take turns holding and touching the brain (with gloves on of course). The fearless group spent the remainder of the class sharing their observations of the brain, which included "awesome", "cold", "gross" and of course, "Oh my God, it feels just like Jello!".

Thibodeau acknowledged that the hands-on lessons really get the students excited and looking forward to learning about what makes them tick and literally, what they are made of.