

A photograph of two individuals from the waist up, standing against a solid light blue background. On the left, a person with dark skin is wearing a bright green V-neck sweater over a pink collared shirt and an orange tie, paired with blue trousers. On the right, another person with dark skin is wearing a yellow V-neck cardigan over a green top, paired with a magenta skirt. Both individuals have their arms crossed. The lighting is even, highlighting the vibrant colors of their clothing.

USER RESEARCH

GENERAL INTERVIEW SCRIPT

- Hi, _____. My name is Ashlie and I'm going to be walking you through this session today. We're conducting interviews to better understand how people approach learning a new subject and vocabulary. The session should take about 15-20 minutes.
- The first thing I want to make clear right away is that this is not a test. You can't do or say anything wrong here. In fact, this is probably the one place today where you don't have to worry about making mistakes. If you have any questions as we go along, just ask them. And if you need to take a break at any point, just let me know.
- OK, let's get started. I'd like to ask you a few quick questions for a project we're working on about education and learning new vocabulary.

HI, I'M CARLEE



Age: 26

Profession: Veterinary assistant / Student

Education: pursuing A.A. at Valencia College

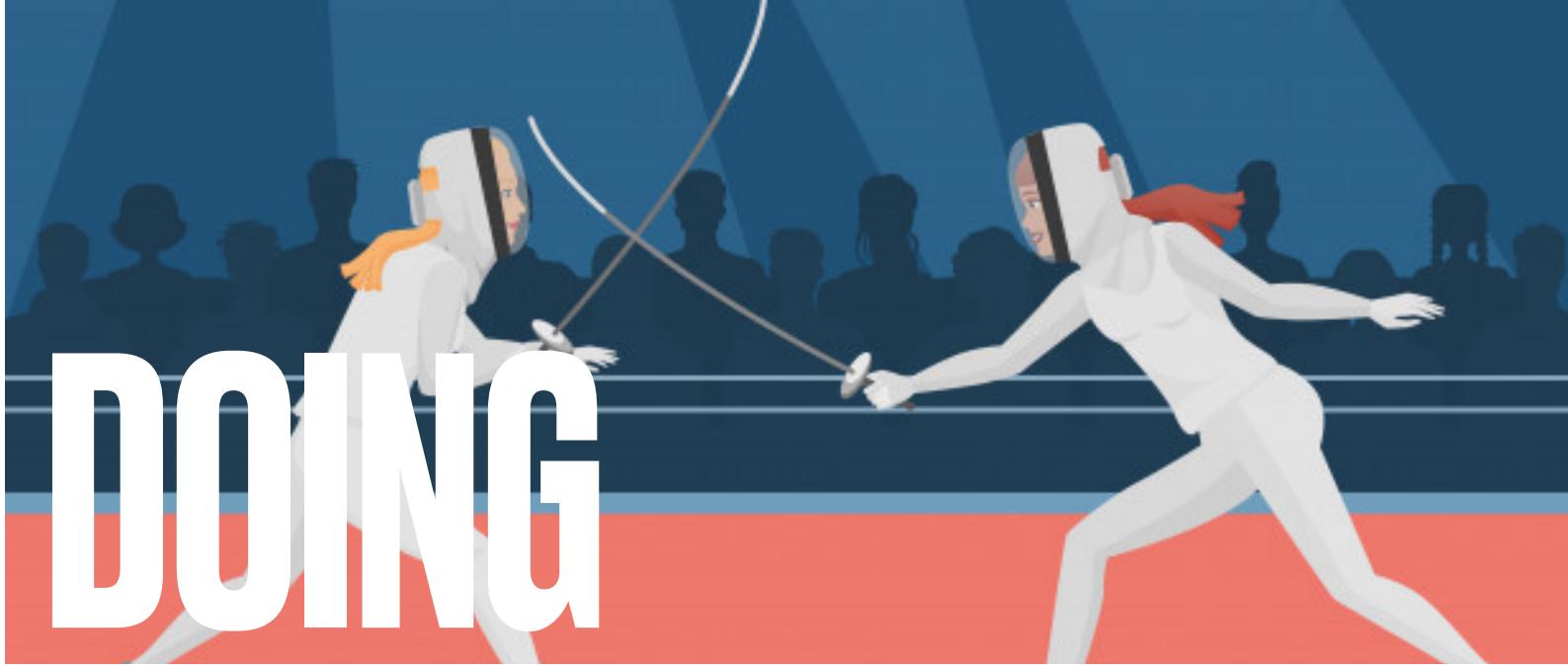
Location:

Origin: Brantford, Ontario, Canada

Current: Orlando, FL

Language(s): English

- **Talk to me about your daily routine (profession, hobbies, etc.). What is your favorite part of your routine and why?** I work at vet hospital five days a week. In my free time, I like to go to concerts, bars, and restaurants with my friends and boyfriend. Since the coronavirus, when I'm home I usually sit on the couch and watch Netflix and play with my cats. My favorite part of my day is dinner time, Netflix, and bed. I am also completing my AA in general studies Valencia College by taking three classes: Biology, Medical Terminology, Statistics.
- **What stimulates you to learn a new vocabulary?** I think that learning new vocabulary helps with overall brain functioning. I have tried to learn Spanish and French using Duolingo, but not seriously.
- **How do you typically go about studying/learning new topics or languages?** I usually listen to lectures, take written notes (not typed), and take the practice quizzes on the Quizlet app. A while back while studying I would make basic, paper flash cards because they were quick and easy.
- **Describe your ideal learning environment? What tools are there to best help you?** My ideal learning environment is with a group of people who learn at the same level as me intellectually. If the group is not similar to my level of knowledge in the subject, I would prefer to be alone. I usually go to Barnes and Nobles or the college library. We use power point slides and text books we can highlight in. Sometimes, whoever knows the topic best will use a dry erase, white board to make a diagram or further elaborate the subject to the group.
- **Tell me about a time when learning something new was challenging for you. How did you overcome that challenge, and if you did not, what would have helped?** My first time learning statistics was very hard because the teacher's lectures were horrible and I was basically having to learn alone. I was getting very frustrated and annoyed. Eventually, I watched YouTube videos on my own and searched for tutorials on the topics I struggled with. I wound up getting an A in the class!
- **What best helps you retain new information when learning? (ie. auditory, verbal, writing, etc.)** For me, writing is best, and I have to write the information at least twice. If I listen to something out loud, have to be really focused to retain any of it. The act of writing it down helps me remember information more.
- **How often and how long do you spend time learning topics/ new vocabulary?** When I'm actively studying, maybe a couple days for no more than two hours at a time. I usually take a couple breaks in between. I like to make lists on my phone of what I need to do and use the reminder notifications on my phone.



DOING

- I write things down repeatedly to learn them.
- I use apps like Duolingo to learn basic French and Spanish words, and Quizlet to take practice tests.
- I use YouTube to watch tutorials to teach myself new topics.
- In group study, we use power point slides, text books, and white boards to learn.
- I make lists on my phone of what I need to complete and enable notifications to meet deadlines.



THINKING

- I think being around those who are at the same intellectual level as you is important for learning.
- I think learning new vocabulary helps with overall brain function.



FEELING

- I enjoy working in groups while learning.
- I felt very frustrated and annoyed when trying to learn a difficult topic from a teacher.
- I feel good when I am at home relaxing on my own terms.
- I don't like having to teach myself if I am also attending class in person.

HI, I'M MORGAN



Age: 25

Education: B.S. Biology from University of Central Florida

Profession: Veterinary Technician / Shift lead, newly stay at home mom

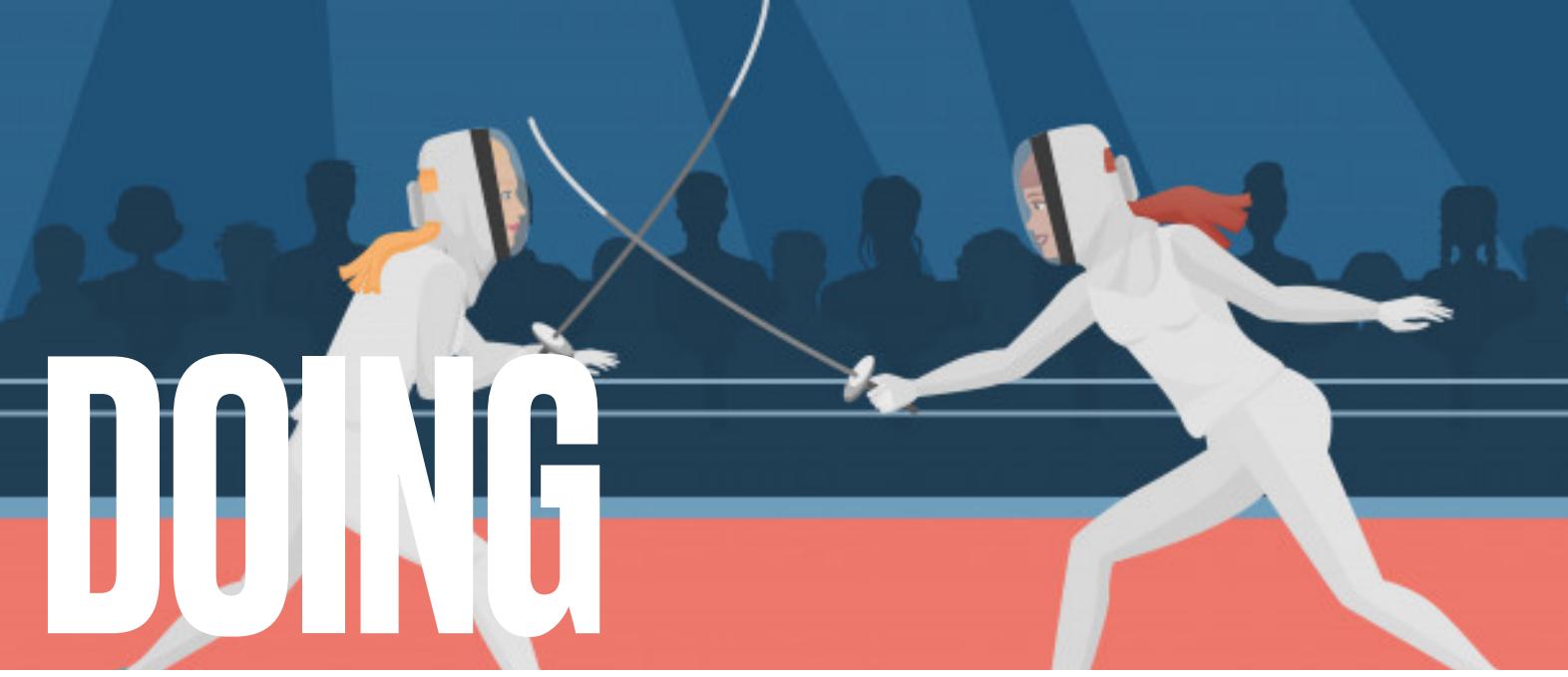
Location:

Origin: Chesapeake, VA

Current: Clermont, FL

Language(s): English, basic French

- **Talk to me about your daily routine. What is your favorite part of that routine and why?** Right now, I am taking care of my three and a half month old baby. My day centers around his needs of eating, sleeping, and playing. I make sure he takes his naps and stays engaged during the day. After I put him to bed around 7:30pm, it turns into my “me time”. I usually cook, have some wine, take a bath, and hang out with my boyfriend. *currently sipping on some wine during the interview* My favorite part of my day is spending quality time with my son and having time to myself at the end of my days. I was recently accepted into University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine and will be moving there with my son and boyfriend (also a veterinarian) in about a month.
- **What stimulates you to learn a new vocabulary?** I want to be able to understand boyfriend’s family (they speak Spanish and are from Puerto Rico). Also, knowledge expands your opportunity base and can bring a lot of possibilities.
- **How do you typically go about studying/ learning new topics or languages?** I usually use Duolingo every day for a few minutes at a time. Also, I listen to a podcast on Spotify called Coffee Break Spanish. When I was driving more, that would be the perfect time. I also watch Spanish movies or shows with English subtitles, or turn on Spanish subtitles while watching shows in English.
- **Describe your ideal learning environment? What tools are there to best help you?** I prefer to be self-taught and alone while learning. I need a completely quiet space like a room in a library or completely isolated at home or in my car. I need a pen and paper, headphones for access to podcasts, and laptop.
- **Tell me about a time when learning something new was challenging for you. How did you overcome that challenge, and if you did not, what would have helped?** Learning Organic Chemistry in college was something I just could not accomplish on my own. I attended in person tutoring sessions and study groups and barely passed with a C. Maybe more practice tests and practicing drawing structures and reactions would have helped, but I’m not even sure.
- **What best helps you retain new information when learning? (ie. auditory, verbal, writing, etc.)** Definitely verbal and writing. I usually type first and write after. There were also computer homework assignments, but those did not do much for me. It was better when I did my own thing.
- **How often and how long do you spend time learning topics/ new vocabulary?** About one to three hours daily. If the topic is particularly difficult, then longer.



DOING

- I use apps like Duolingo and listen to podcasts on Spotify to learn new languages.
- I take care of my son by meeting all his needs in a well-rounded way daily.
- I plan my time around my son's schedule.
- I practice when I can.



THINKING

- I think my “me time” is an important part of my daily routine.
- I think it is important to be able to communicate with loved ones in their native tongue.
- I think driving is a valuable time to learn languages.
- I think practice tests and repeated drawing helps me learn new information.
- I think complete silence is important in my learning.



FEELING

- I feel happiest when I spend quality time with my son and boyfriend.
- I feel independent study is the best way for me to learn.
- I feel unsure about what would have helped when I struggled with a difficult topic and did all I could at the time.
- I like to be alone while learning.

HI, I'M JENELLE



Age: 33

Profession: Veterinary Technician at MetroWest Veterinary Clinic

Education: DVM (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine) from University of Trinidad, West Indies

Location:

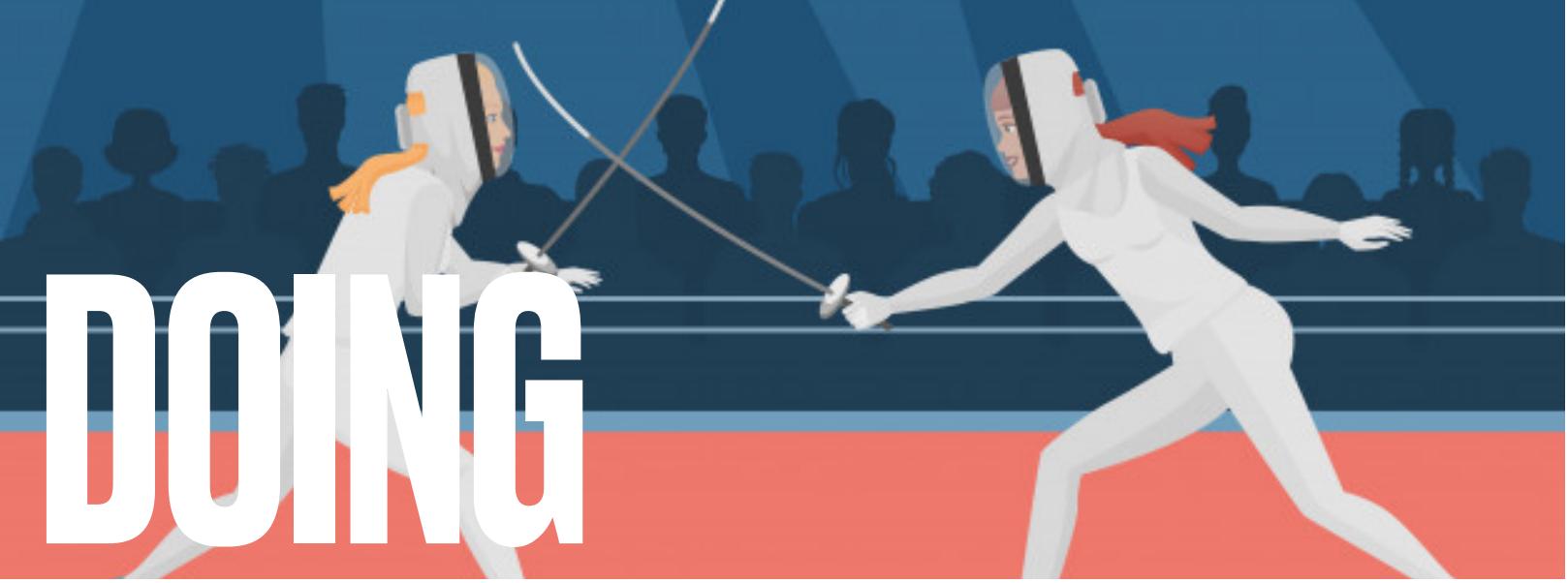
Origin: Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

Current: Orlando, FL

Language(s): English, intermediate French, intermediate Spanish

- **Talk to me about your daily routine. What is your favorite part of that routine and why?** I work 4 days a week. When I wake up I am usually very tired and rush to get to work. On any given day, work could be good, bad, or anything in between. I have my lunch break. I usually get home between 7:00 -8:00 pm, shower, and eat. Then, I spend time with my animals and husband. My favorite part is knowing that when the time comes at the end of the day I can leave work and go home to my family and relax. I am also currently studying to pass my VTNE exam to become a certified, practicing veterinarian in the Untied States.
- **What stimulates you to learn a new vocabulary?** I like learning new things and expanding my knowledge base. Sometimes, just browse the dictionary for fun. I have an affinity for languages and only wish I had more time to learn. I enjoy being able to converse with other people in their language as well.
- **How do you typically go about studying/learning new topics or languages?** I usually buy text books. So, I have one Spanish text book and Spanish dictionary, one French text book and French dictionary, and will use Google online for quick word searches. If i'm actively trying to learn something, I need to be holding a physical book and require a lot of structure. I also watch Spanish TV shows (ie. Ana Casa de las Flores) while using English subtitles. *She speaks phrases to me in both French and English*.
- **Describe your ideal learning environment? What tools are there to best help you?** I need complete quiet, and more recently I have found that binary sounds and meditation music can be helpful. However, I cannot study if know beat to music or music lyrics. If I know the song, I can't concentrate. I need a table, chair, quiet space, +/- meditation music, and minimal distractions. I use a weekly planner to stay on track and write my goals for the week.

- **Tell me about a time when learning something new was challenging for you. How did you overcome that challenge, and if you did not, what would have helped?** Trying to remember fluid rate calculations specific course in large animal medicine in college. It was remembering things like concentrations and fluid rates, and what you had to add to things to get other things. Usually, math is my thing, but this gave me a hard time. I succeeded, but had to practice a lot. Instead of learning in terms of calculations, I turned it into a logical situation vs. mathematical equation. I felt frustrated, but not ashamed. I just couldn't understand why I wasn't understanding the material.
- **What best helps you retain new information when learning? (ie. auditory, verbal, writing, etc.)** I would put the information into a song, or beat, or pattern that I knew. I still remember songs I made up from anatomy. *She sings me her song she made years ago from her Anatomy class about the structures of the brain to N'SYNC's "Pop"** Other than that, I usually write it once, then go back over and write down important things. I am also very visual and repetition helps.
- **How often and how long do you spend time learning topics/ new vocabulary?** Because now I am focusing on my vet exams, I don't really study languages, but usually a few times weekly. I spend 1 hour to 1 and a half hours studying at a time with breaks in between of 10 minutes to 30 minutes. I have to have breaks.



DOING

- I hold conversations with other people in their native tongue when possible.
- I use a weekly planner to write down goals that need to be accomplished.
- I make up songs to remember topics I need to learn.
- I use text books, dictionaries, Google, and watch T.V. shows to learn new languages.



THINKING

- I think writing and repeating helps me retain information.
- I think it is important to have a vast knowledge base.
- I think structure is important in learning.
- I think math is my thing.



FEELING

- I feel very frustrated when I cannot learn new topics easily.
- I become easily distracted with noise or listening to music I know.
- I feel relaxed when my busy day ends and I can spend time with my family at home.
- I feel very tired and rushed in the mornings when I am getting ready for work.
- I wish I had more time to learn new things.



-All participants are female between the ages of 22-35 and work in the same profession.

-Participants value speaking another language to expand their minds, allow for possibilities/opportunities, and better communicate with other people or loved ones.

-Participants vary in learning styles, but seek out ways to learn through apps and media.

-Balancing work with quality leisure and study time is intrinsically important.

FINAL THOUGHTS