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**Infusing Creativity**  
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**DEFINITIONS OF CREATIVITY**

“...based on the production of ideas or products that are new, original, and satisfying to the individual or someone else at some point in time.”

**Renzulli**

“Creative thinking requires new combinations of formerly unassociated ideas.”

**Mednick**

“Creative power is the ability to visualize, to foresee, and to generate ideas.”

**Osborne**

“Creativity is a combination of the flexibility, originality, and sensitivity to ideas which enables the learner to break away from usual sequences of thought into different and productive sequences, the result of which gives satisfaction to himself and possibly to others.”

**Jones** (used by Callahan)

“The creative process is the production of novel ideas or products as a result of the interaction between individuals and their environments.”

**Rogers**

“Secondary creativity is the type of creativity that results when one person works with and ‘stands on the shoulders’ of others and consciously proceeds cautiously to conclusions. Primary creativity is the creativeness that is the heritage of every human being and springs forth from the unconscious.”

**Maslow**

“The creative process is the process of change, of development, of evolution, in the organization of subjective life.”

**Ghiselen**

# **THE FOUR BASIC CREATIVE THINKING SKILLS**



## **FLUENCY**

producing a large number of ideas  
or responses

## **FLEXIBILITY**

changing ones way of thinking by producing  
alternative ideas or categories

## **ELABORATION**

expanding on a single idea by adding details, making  
changes, or making ideas more interesting or  
complex

## **ORIGINALITY**

producing unique or novel ideas and responses that  
are new to oneself

## ACTIVITIES THAT FOSTER CREATIVE THINKING

**Pass the Word – Variation #1** - Students form a circle. The teacher chooses a category and asks students to think of four words that could fit into that category. Students hand the ball to the person on their right. As the ball is passed around the circle to a student, he/she calls out a word to fit the category. NOTE: the last person to receive the ball has the hardest job because he/she cannot repeat any words that have been previously spoken. The activity is timed to determine how long it takes the class to complete passing the ball around the circle. If a student has trouble voicing a word that has not already been called, the person on either side may help him/her.

**Variation #2** - A verbal student steps into the middle of the circle.

He/she calls out as many words as possible to fit the category while the class acts as a timer, quickly passing the ball completely around the circle. Another student or the teacher counts the number of responses generated.

**Variation #3** - A student or the teacher controls the ball by standing in the middle. This student randomly tosses the ball to anyone in the circle. When the person in the circle catches the ball, he/she calls out a word in the category. The ball is then thrown back to the student in the center who generates another word and throws the ball to a new person in the circle. The student in the center generates every other response.

**Variation #4** - Paired association

**Expert Game** - two or more participants - Two students assume the role of experts and speak to the audience by alternating one word at a time between them. They are experts in a field chosen by the audience or teacher. The students then answer questions in that field posed by the audience, speaking alternately one word at a time.

**Vocabulary Variation - Vocab Master** - Three to five students create a sentence correctly using the given vocabulary word. The sentence is formed by each student contributing one word at a time.

**Mathematics Variation - Math Roulette or Math All Around** - This is a timed activity with teams of five students. Each team is given 5 basic math facts. They must state the problem and its answer, with each student only offering one word of the problem. Student 5 always gives the answer. As soon as the answer is given, Student 5 runs down and becomes Student 1. In this way, all students will give one of the answers. If the answer is incorrect, another team member may call "time out". The team huddles and the correct answer is given to the person who gave the incorrect number. The team must then restate the problem correctly. Each team is timed as to how long it takes to generate five problems, including the time outs. The team with the lowest time wins.

**Party Game** - 3 to 5 participants - One student is picked to be the person who establishes a scene of getting ready for a party. Before the scene begins, this student leaves the room. The audience chooses three to five guests who will attend the party. These guests can be famous people (like Elvis Presley) or broader characters (such as a ballet dancer). If the teacher chooses, the partygoers can be characters from a novel or a historical era being studied, etc. Once the characters have been selected, the student giving the party establishes the scene. Partygoers knock and enter one at a time. As the host greets them, they must give clues through their dialogue and body actions (if appropriate) as to who they are. The host of the party must identify each character before the next guest arrives. The game ends when all partygoers have been identified.

## CREATIVE QUESTIONING

**Ask open-ended questions:** Show the child a picture, then ask questions to stimulate and create a thinking atmosphere, for example: What are the people in the picture doing? What are the people saying? What would happen if ...?

**Ask children to use their senses:** Young children may often have their creative talents stretched by asking them to use their senses in an unusual way.

**Ask children about changes:** One way to help children to think more creatively is to ask them to change things to make them the way they would like them to be.

**Ask questions with lots of answers.** Any time you ask a child a question which requires a variety of answers, you are aiding creative thinking skills.

**Ask "What would happen if..." questions.** These questions are fun to ask and allow the children to really use their imaginations.

**Ask "In how many different ways..." questions.** These questions also extend a child's creative thinking.

# BRAINSTORMING

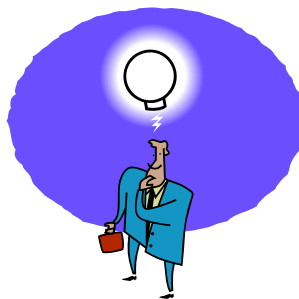
## RULES:

1. Quantity of ideas is initially the goal.
2. Criticism and evaluation are deferred.
3. Wild, imaginative ideas are acceptable.
4. Hitchhiking on others' ideas is encouraged.
5. All ideas are written down or recorded for future evaluation.
6. After all ideas are generated, evaluation against appropriate criteria takes place. Criteria may be student or teacher generated.
7. Students learn to contribute ideas succinctly.
8. Students learn to give each participant a chance to present ideas.

**An excellent brainstorming resource on-line can be found at the following address: <http://www.brainstorming.co.uk>**

## SOURCE:

Dr. John F. Feldhusen  
Gifted Education Resource Inst.  
Purdue Univ. SCC-G  
West Lafayette, IN 47906



## **SYNECTICS**

Developed by William Gordon, the strategy known as synectics attempts to produce creative solutions of problems through the use of metaphorical modes of thinking. The basic idea behind this technique is to make the familiar strange. To apply this strategy requires the individual to look at familiar objects/ideas/scenarios in a new perspective. The use of metaphors to accomplish this goal involves unique comparisons based on three particular techniques:

- **direct analogy** – This is a comparison of two situations or objects to look for similarities. How is popcorn like a flower? How is a sandwich like a crowd.

Synectics also allows students to expand their thinking in a manner that is both creative and critical. Two sets of exercises follow that provide examples of questions that stretch student thinking.

### **SYNECTICS: ANALOGIES**

1. Which has more bounce – a book or a tennis ball? Why?
2. Which is louder – a sunrise or a sunset? Why?
3. Which is more fragile – a democracy or a monarchy. Why?
4. Which is more lasting – lost or found? Why?
5. Which is more restful – a circle or a line segment? Why?
6. Which is quieter - failure or embarrassment? Why?
7. Which is taller - science or math? Why?
8. Which is wider - writing or speech? Why?
9. Which is stronger - a doctor or the President? Why?
10. Which has more stretch - forgetfulness or helplessness? Why?

*Adapted from Lessons from the Hearthstone Traveler, by Bob Stanish*

### **SYNECTICS: MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES**

1. Which country is like your family?
2. Which is more circular - communism or democracy?
3. Which has more stretch - Russia or the United States?
4. Which Eurasian country is most like a supreme pizza? A cheese pizza? Why?
5. Is Christianity more like McDonalds or Burger King? Why?
6. Which ecosystem is most like a duck? Why?
7. Which Eurasian country is most like a cavity? A wisdom tooth? Why?
8. Is Northern Europe more like gummy bears or chocolate? Why?
9. Which form of government are you most like? Why?
10. Which geographic feature is your bedroom most like? Why?

*Developed by Myra Brown-Lee, Wake County Schools*

# The Powers of Observation

When was the last time you took a really good look at a common object? If you observe an object closely, you can apply the observation process to the concept of improving a known object.

Here's the rationale:

- it's hard to think up new ideas
- it's easy to make observations about things
- it's easy to turn an observation into an idea

So, a good way to think up new ideas is to first make observations. Here's an example.

In what ways might we improve upon a computer mouse?

<b>OBSERVATION</b>	<b>IDEA</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>
They are grey in color.	Make them in many colors,	Sell them in many colors to match the user's mood that day.
They are basically oval.	Make them in different shapes.	Consumers can buy them in the shape most comfortable for the fit of their hand.
They are made of plastic.	Make them out of metal.	This makes them more durable.
You have to move them with your hands.	Make them voice-activated.	Consumers could keep their hands free for other things.
They do not bend.	Make them from flexible material.	They could be removed from the computer and used as a hand-grip exerciser.
They are connected to the computer by a cord.	Remove the cord.	They could be sold as remote control devices.
They are very plain looking.	Use many different colorful designs.	Could be removed from the computer and worn as a pin.

*Developed by C. Taibbi and B. Iseminger, 1997*

# **THINKING ABOUT CREATIVE THINKING**

What is creative thinking?

Are there degrees of creative thinking?  
If so, what do you think they are?

Can everyone think creatively?

What keeps us from thinking creatively?

Can creative thinking be taught?

What influences our creative thinking?

