



Creative

Inviting children to consider ‘what if?’ They encourage investigation, inquiry and artistry to explore new possibilities and ways of thinking.

Establishing a culture of creative inquiry is founded in an atmosphere of encouragement, and acceptance of young learners’ ideas and contributions. Creative classrooms are characterised by shared adult-child decision-making, collaboration and willingness to test out ideas. Developing creative thinking is supported through processes that require young learners to articulate their ideas, to think about a problem from more than one perspective, to hypothesise and test out solutions, and to evaluate working theories.

Practices that support creative thinking

Creating a culture of inquiry involves:

- explicitly teaching cooperative behaviours that support creative thinking, for example, how to work as a team and accept different points of view
- modelling a range of think-aloud strategies for example, ‘When I have lots of things to bring to school I make a list to remind me.’
- encouraging young learners to raise questions and record them on a class ‘What if?’ chart
- posing open ended questions
 - I wonder what might happen if?
 - What’s another way we could solve that problem?
 - How did you...?
- showing genuine interest in young learners’ ideas through adult responses and actions
- involving young learners in classroom decision-making, for example, planning seating arrangements, the location of resources and use of space
- promoting an inclusive classroom climate where contributions are accepted and valued through verbal and non-verbal communications
- providing space and time for young learners to develop ideas (maintaining flexibility with the classroom timetable)

- offering supportive feedback when young learners are engaged in creative experiences by focusing on the observed behaviour. For example, ‘I noticed that when you were planning the design for your bridge, you talked together, took turns to draw the plan and worked as a team.’
- providing open-ended resources to support young learners’ creative thinking and constructions.

Creativity across the curriculum

The expression of creative thinking is a process that is not restricted to the arts. It is a way of thinking that extends across all aspects of the curriculum. Knowledge of young learners’ interests, curiosities and learning styles, combined with curriculum content knowledge, helps teachers to work from a position of confidence where it is easier to take advantage of spontaneous learning opportunities as they arise.

Reflective questions

- How is creative thinking supported in everyday classroom practices?
- How is creative thinking embedded across the curriculum?
- Are there particular forms of creative thinking that are actively supported?

‘Creativity requires that students be allowed to express their thoughts and ideas in a warm and open atmosphere. Teachers should encourage their students to play with ideas, laugh and have fun...’¹

¹ Renzulli, J. (2016). Developing Creativity Across All Areas of the Curriculum. In R. Beghetto & J. Kaufman (Eds.), *Nurturing Creativity in the Classroom* (Current Perspectives in Social and Behavioral Sciences, pp. 23-44). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/9781316212899.006



