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## **CREATIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Creativity is a means of independent expression. Ingenuity, cleverness, and the ability to use one's imagination are all accurate descriptors of creativity. Creativity can transcend into all subject areas and ways of life. It is an attribute that students can practice and grow, but why?

What if farmers never discovered how to plant and grow crops? What if the pizza was never invented by experimenting with different ingredients? What if cell phones and computers were never created because no one was brave enough to test out the technology? What if medicines that make life easier for those with chronic illness were never found? We can thank creativity for all of these wonderful, and in some cases, life-changing inventions!

Being creative means you can think about a task or problem in a new or different way. You'll use your imagination to come up with ideas to solve the problem or task. It's all about: Imagination, generating ideas, visualising, designing, innovative, resourceful. Creative teaching describes approaches and activities, developed and delivered by those who lead learning, which are usually exciting, innovative and often use unexpected techniques to engage learners. Creative teaching requires teachers to make learning more interesting and effective by using imaginative approaches in the classroom.

### **KEYWORDS**

**Creativity, Classroom, Teaching, Learning, activities, innovation, Environment, Teaching-learning process, library, feedback, culture**

## INTRODUCTION

Creativity is about more than just paints and pencils. It's a process and a way of thinking that's just as important for people who envision a future in STEM as it is for those who love the arts. Learning how to tap into sources of creativity and make use of this essential skill starts at a young age — making the classroom the perfect environment for fostering creativity.

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Creativity is the ability to generate new and innovative ideas or concepts, make connections between seemingly unrelated things, and think outside the box. There are different types of creativity, including artistic or visual creativity, scientific or technological creativity, and social or collaborative creativity. Creativity is an essential component of education because it fosters critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and innovation. Examples of creativity in the classroom can range from students coming up with unique solutions to problems to creating new and original pieces

of art to collaborating with others to develop innovative projects.

Having the opportunity to create a learning environment that encourages creative thinking, teachers are in a unique position to help students develop one of their most important life skills. Although creativity can seem to be an abstract or even mysterious concept at times, there is a growing science behind infusing classrooms with creativity and the benefits it yields to students in the classroom, as well as later in life. Read to learn more about the importance of creative learning environments and how teachers can learn to nurture creativity in a classroom environment.

### **WHAT IS A CREATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?**

A creative learning environment is one that encourages students to learn through trial and error, use their imagination, and to think critically to solve problems. By leveraging such learned skills as setting goals, sharing knowledge, and building relationships, a creative learning environment can help students practice and develop their own theories, and ideas, and set them in motion.

### **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO FOSTER A CREATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT?**

When a teacher makes developing creativity part of the school day, students can have greater long-term success in a variety of areas. They can become more comfortable and skilled with self-expression and creating and executing original ideas. Helping students develop their creative capacities can have both direct and indirect benefits. Rather than feeling penalized or embarrassed for taking chances, students can feel comfortable trying new things and making mistakes inside a creative learning environment.

Engaging creatively with tasks is also highly engaging, stimulating and energizing. Fun learning activities that encourage kids to flex their creative muscles can support more sustained focus and overall satisfaction in the process.

Having students write their own lyrics to a song or create a melody to help them memorize a definition or math equation are just a couple of ideas. Arsenault also believes that music can play an integral role in team-building exercises.

Even if there aren't any impressive-looking "results" from in-class creativity, it's still a highly valuable skill for students to build.

When the learning environment is designed to make students stronger learners, problem solvers, critical thinkers and innovators, it's preparing them for greater success beyond the classroom.

As students are encouraged to pursue creative solutions to a problem, they can learn persistence in the process of continually trying a new approach to solve that problem. Additionally, students can also become better at:

- Working as a team
- Solving complex problems
- Thinking critically.
- Retaining information.
- Exhibiting deeper comprehension.
- Making connections across subjects.
- Taking standardized tests.
- Finding new ways to learn

### **WHY DO STUDENTS NEED TO BE CREATIVE?**

In the modern world, where entire industries are born and die every decade, there's little doubt that creativity is an increasingly important asset. Creativity is a critical component for the type of divergent thinking necessary for innovation. Expanding their creative capacity can make students more adept at forming original ideas, as well as

exercising their critical thinking skills. Creativity is also a life skill, which can help students unlock new avenues in their personal self-expression.

### **WHAT IS THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN ENHANCING CREATIVITY?**

Controlling the classroom environment where students spend hours each day, teachers have ample opportunities to nurture and cultivate creativity. In practice, that usually means two things: serving as a role model for students, and finding ways to stimulate their creative thinking processes. Although creativity can develop outside of the classroom, teachers play an indispensable role in maintaining and encouraging its continuous development.

### **HOW TO PROMOTE CREATIVITY AMONG STUDENTS AND FOSTER A CREATIVE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT?**

There's no single recipe for developing creativity in students, but there are some simple things you can do to make your classroom a little more creative. Many of the most effective ways to encourage creativity in a classroom environment are simple augmentations to existing practices. Others are as simple as learning to identify opportunities to help students exercise their

creativity. Here are a few different ways to help build a creative classroom:

### **Create a Flexible Classroom Layout**

A classroom that provides options for learning can help to unlock a student's creativity. For example, some students may enjoy reading at their desk, while others may want to sit in a comfy chair in another part of the room. You could also reorganize desks into pods or in a U-shape to make it easier for students to work together on projects. By making the classroom more versatile, can provide students with a creative learning environment.

### **Follow a classroom theme**

One of the most fun and immersive classroom decor ideas is to follow a classroom theme, from the bulletin board to the classroom door. Whether you choose an Ancient Egyptian theme to align with your subject matter or a superhero theme to remind your students of their unique powers, explain the motif to your students and encourage them to find parallels between the theme and what they're learning.

### **Create a Library in your Classroom**

Creating a classroom library is an excellent way to provide students with easy access to literature to help them fine tune their reading

skills and spark creative ideas. A classroom library can also be an important resource for students who may not have books of their own or easy access to a public library. A teacher may choose books for the library that complement the creative learning activities in the class.

### **Visualize ideas and goals**

Empower your students to set their own goals and map out ideas in their own original ways. Teach them how to use different types of graphic organizers like concept maps, Venn diagrams, maps, circuit diagrams, visual timelines, and other resources. Help your students get started with templates from Canva etc.

### **Display inspirational quotes**

Featuring inspirational quote posters in your learning environment can lead the way to great conversations and critical thinking. Urge your class to consider and discuss the meaning of each message and how it can be applied. Some quotes directly encourage students to unleash their creativity as well.

### **Open-Ended Assignments**

Allow students to exercise their creative instincts by substituting assignments that have a single correct answer with those that

offer multiple ways of discovering a solution.

### **Seek Alternatives to Rote Memorization**

Deprioritize memorization-focused tasks and replace them with tasks that allow students to challenge assumptions. Try rewording assignments to promote creativity by adding phrases like “suppose” or “imagine.”

### **Exercise Patience**

Don't rush to demonstrate creative solutions for students. Instead, give them time to figure things out on their own.

### **Work in Groups**

Two heads are better than one. Groups tend to find more creative solutions, as well as foster a sense of collaboration. This can provide a low-stakes environment to make students more comfortable exercising their creativity, and also cognizant of each member of the group's individual strengths and how those strengths can be leveraged to solve a problem in a unique way.

### **Give Feedback**

Giving creative feedback is one of the simpler ways to stimulate creative thinking, which can make it easy to overlook. Students with enormously creative solutions may not realize the value of their creativity unless a teacher articulates why their

solutions are so effective. Peer feedback can also be useful and help students recognize the value of their creativity, too. Educators can set the guidelines for how students can offer constructive feedback in ways that will be well-received and helpful to their classmates.

### **Exercise Your Own Creativity**

Teachers are better role models when they possess the qualities they aspire to in still in others. Sometimes building your own creativity is as simple as changing up daily routines, taking small risks, or building your own creative rituals.

### **Take Advantage of Curiosity**

Students have countless curiosities about the world that they're eager to explore. Leverage their intrinsic motivation to learn by giving them opportunities to choose their own topics while learning and sharing that knowledge with the class.

### **Explore different cultures**

Developing students' ability to consider multiple perspectives is an important part of thinking creatively. Celebrate cultural differences while learning from them. Invite members of your class to bring their own cultural context into tasks and discussions. Recognize different global holidays and the origins behind them, host a family Heritage

Day at school and assign readings that explore diverse worldviews and practices.

### **Teach When Creativity is Most Appropriate**

When teaching creativity in early childhood classrooms, students may not understand the context where creativity is most valuable or appropriate. For instance, during the planning stages of a group project vs. during a standardized test. Help students to adapt to different learning styles and methods of communication / knowledge sharing.

### **Introduce multimedia learning materials**

Go beyond textbooks and worksheets and work with a variety of learning materials. For a high school class, you could bring some of the most inspiring minds into your classroom by sharing TED Talks and podcasts. For a middle school class, you might incorporate music, videos and interactive media like gamified educational software into your lesson plan.

### **Support hands-on learning**

Hands-on learning provides students with an arena to express new ideas, think critically and voice their opinions, ultimately engaging them on a deeper level. The trick is to let students dive into the real thing first, and then introduce the theory.

For a media class, let students create their own websites before discussing web design principles. For a math lesson, have students build paper airplanes and use “flight” information to estimate things like speed and velocity.

### **Experiment with New Activities**

Creative thinking classroom activities can be as simple as asking students to do free-write exercises, allowing them to explore their creativity and analytical skills. A good visual-based alternative is concept cartooning.

### **Utilize Free Tools**

There are many free online tools that educators can access to help create activities for creativity in the classroom. Get information Online tools to Develop Creative Lesson Plans for ideas and inspiration. Online sites like Canva provide templates for worksheets and presentations that are free and easy to use. YouTube is also an excellent resource for videos on creative learning activities that teachers can use in their classes.

### **DISCOVER MORE WAYS TO INSPIRE CREATIVITY IN STUDENTS**

Creativity is a critical life skill, and teachers can help their students to build it in the classroom and carry those lessons moving



forward throughout their lives and careers. The science of creativity in classroom settings is both complex and evolving. If you're interested in learning more about developing creativity in students, take a moment to learn more in Creativity and Innovation.

### **CONCLUSION**

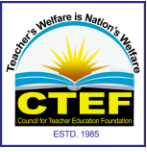
Fostering creativity in the classroom is essential for nurturing well-rounded individuals equipped with the skills needed for success in an ever-evolving world. By incorporating creative activities, encouraging exploration, and embracing diverse perspectives, educators can cultivate an environment where students feel empowered to think critically, solve problems innovatively, and express themselves authentically. As we strive to prepare the next generation for the challenges and opportunities ahead, embracing creativity in the classroom isn't just beneficial—it's imperative. It's not only about teaching subjects; it's about empowering minds to envision and create a better future.

Creativity in the classroom is essential to prepare students for the future, where they will need to solve complex problems and adapt to rapidly changing

environments. Schools and teachers can encourage creativity by using strategies such as project-based learning, cross-disciplinary projects, and personalized learning, among others. While implementing these strategies can present challenges, schools and teachers can overcome them by building a supportive community of educators, parents, and students who are committed to fostering creativity and innovation in education. By fostering creativity in the classroom, schools and teachers can help students develop the skills and mind-set needed to thrive in the 21st century.

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