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How to cite:

Cremin, T. and Barnes, J. (2018). Creativity and Creative teaching and Learning. In: Cremin, T. and Burnett, C. eds. Learning to Teach in the Primary School (4th edition). Routledge.

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Version: Accepted Manuscript

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CREATIVITY AND CREATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teresa Cremin and Jonathan Barnes

INTRODUCTION

Nurturing learner creativity is a key aim for many schools. Teachers and school leaders continue to see the development of creativity as an essential part of their job. They recognise that an appropriate climate for creative thought and activity has to be established (Ofsted, 2006, 2009), and know that pressures to improve standards in ‘the basics’ can crowd creativity out of the curriculum.

In a world dominated by technological innovations and rapid change, creativity is a critical component; human skills and people’s imaginative and innovative powers are key resources in a knowledge-driven economy (Robinson, 2009). As social structures and ideologies continue to change, the ability to live sustainably with uncertainty and deal with complexity is essential. So organisations and governments all over the world are now more concerned than ever to promote creativity (Craft, 2011).

As primary professionals, it is our responsibility to steer the creative development of young people in our care. In the first decade of the twenty-first century, creativity was given a high profile in education policy and the media, and children were expected to think creatively, make connections and generate ideas, as well as problem solve (Craft, 2011). In 2012 the EYFS (Department for Education) acknowledged that, alongside ‘playing and exploring’ and ‘active learning’, the third characteristic of effective learning is ‘creating and thinking critically’. In relation to the current primary curriculum however, explicit references to creativity are few.

Nonetheless, there is professional recognition that developing the creativity of the young cannot be left to chance (e.g. Cremin,2017).

Academic explorations of creative teaching and teaching for creativity continue to expand (e.g. Jeffrey and Woods, 2009; Cremin *et al.*, 2015, 2017; Sawyer, 2011; Craft *et al.*, 2013), and teachers still seek innovative ways to shape the curriculum in response to children’s needs. Creative teaching should not be placed in opposition to the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and understandings in the subject disciplines; neither does it imply lowered expectations of challenge or behaviour. Rather, creative teaching involves teaching the subjects in creative contexts that explicitly invite learners to engage imaginatively and that stretch their generative, evaluative and collaborative capacities.

However, many teachers still feel constrained by perceptions of a culture of accountability. You too may already be aware of the classroom impact of an assessment-led system. Such pressure can limit opportunities for creative endeavour and may tempt you to stay within the safe boundaries of the known. Recognising that tensions exist between the incessant drive to raise measurable standards and the impulse to teach more creatively is a good starting point, but finding the energy and enterprise to respond flexibly is a real challenge. In order to do so, you need to be convinced that creativity has an important role to play in education, and believe that you can contribute, both personally and professionally. You may also need to widen your understanding of creativity and creative practice in order to teach creatively and teach for creativity.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this unit you should have:

- an increased understanding about the nature of creativity;

- an awareness of some of the features of creative primary teachers;
- a wider understanding of creative pedagogical practice;
- some understanding of how to plan for creative learning.

CREATIVE PRACTICE

A class of learners engage with interest as they collaborate to create three-dimensional representations of Egyptian gods to add to their classroom museum. Earlier that morning, at this Northamptonshire primary school, the 6–7-year-olds had generated and discussed their ideas and listened to others. Then, in groups, they sought to turn these ideas into action. Operating independently of their teacher, they found resources in their classroom and others, monitored their activities and talked about their work. A wide variety of representations were created and new ideas were celebrated and appraised. Later, the children wrote instructions for making their images and added them to a huge class book, which contained DVDs of other cross-curricular activities. However, their ability to recall, explain and discuss the finer points of this carefully planned and executed project two terms later was an even richer testimony to the enjoyment and depth of creative learning involved.

In this school, as in many others, the staff had adopted a more creative approach to the curriculum, influenced in part by the significant achievements of what were then called ‘creative schools’ (Ofsted 2006; Eames *et al.*, 2006). This trend was encouraged by many initiatives, including the report *Nurturing Creativity in Young People* (Roberts, 2006), and Creative Partnerships (2002–11), a government-funded initiative that encouraged schools to develop more innovative ways of teaching. It showed that creative and collaborative projects inspired and fostered creative skills and raised children’s and young people’s confidence and aspiration (Eames *et al.*, 2006).

The focus on creative learning has since shifted. Creativity in schools was overshadowed by what became known as the ‘cultural offer’ in 2008 (McMaster, 2008), and the Creative Partnerships programme ended in 2011. A ‘cultural education’ agenda took the former position of creative education, and creativity is currently barely mentioned in education policy documents. Nonetheless, creativity plays a key role economically, and, with increasing evidence of a close relationship between creativity and social and psychological well-being (Barnes, 2013), teachers continue to seek innovative ways of teaching to increase motivation and develop creative learning.

SO WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

Creativity is not confined to special people or to particular arts-based activities, nor is it undisciplined play. It is, however, notoriously difficult to define. It has been described as ‘a state of mind in which all our intelligences are working together’, involving ‘seeing, thinking and innovating’ (Craft, 2000: 38) and as ‘imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value’ (National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education, NACCCE, 1999: 29). Creativity is possible wherever human intelligence is actively engaged and is an essential part of an effective education: it includes all areas of understanding and all children, teachers and others working in primary education. Indeed, it can be demonstrated by anyone in any aspect of life, throughout life.

It is useful to distinguish between high creativity and ordinary creativity, between ‘big C creativity’ (exemplified in some of Gardner’s (1993) studies of highly creative individuals, such as Picasso, Einstein and Freud) and ‘little c creativity’, which Craft (2001) highlights. This latter form focuses on the individual agency and resourcefulness of ordinary people to innovate and take action. Csikszentmihalyi suggests that each of us is born with two contradictory sets of instructions

– a conservative tendency and an expansive tendency, but warns us that, ‘If too few opportunities for curiosity are available, if too many obstacles are put in the way of risk and exploration, the motivation to engage in creative behaviour is easily extinguished’ (1996: 11).

In the classroom, developing opportunities for children to ‘possibility think’ their way forwards is, therefore, critical (Craft et al., 2012; Cremin, Chappell and Craft, 2013). This will involve you in immersing the class in an issue or subject and helping them ask questions, be imaginative and playfully explore options, as well as innovate. At the core of such creative endeavour is the child’s identity. Their sense of self-determination and agency and their understanding of themselves as unique thinkers able to solve life’s problems are essential ingredients of their success, resilience and general health (Marmot, 2010). From this perspective, creativity is not seen as an event or a product (although it may involve either or both), but a process or a state of mind involving the serious play of ideas and possibilities. This generative, problem-finding/problem-solving process may involve rational and non-rational thought and may be fed by the intuitive, by daydreaming and pondering, as well as by the application of knowledge and skills. In order to be creative, children may need considerable knowledge in a domain, but ‘creativity and knowledge are two sides of the same psychological coin, not opposing forces’ (Boden, 2001: 102) and enrich each other.

Imaginative activity can take many forms; it draws on a more varied range of human functioning than linear, logical and rational patterns of behaviour (Claxton, 2006). It is essentially generative and may include physical, social, reflective, musical, aural or visual thinking, involving children in activities that produce new and unusual connections between ideas, domains, processes and materials. When children and their teachers step outside the boundaries of predictability and are physically engaged, this provides a balance to the sedentary and too often abstract nature of school education. Creative learning is often collaborative and uses mind and body, emotions, eyes, ears and all the senses, in an effort to face a challenge or solve a problem. In less conventional contexts, new insights and connections may be made through analogy and metaphor, and teachers

become the ‘meddlers in the middle’ (McWilliam, 2008), not the ‘sage on the stage’ of more transmissive modes of education. Modes of creative thinking, such as the ‘imaginative–generative’ mode, which produces outcomes, and the ‘critical–evaluative’ mode, which involves consideration of originality and value (NACCCE, 1999: 30), operate in close interrelationship and need to be consciously developed in the classroom.

The process of creativity, Claxton and Lucas (2010) suggest, involves the ability to move freely between the different layers of our memories to find solutions to problems. They propose a metaphor of the mind based on the concept of three layers of memory that impact upon our thinking: an upper layer or *habit map*, which is a map of repeated patterns of behaviour; an *inner layer*, comprised of individual conscious and unconscious memories; and an *archetypal layer*, laid down by our genes. Others see the creative mind as one that looks for unexpected likenesses and connections between disparate domains (Bronowski, 1978). Csikszentmihalyi (1996) wisely suggests, however, that creativity does not happen inside people’s heads, but in the interaction between an individual’s thoughts and the sociocultural context. When one considers examples of both big C and little c creativity, this explanation seems to make the most sense, as the social and cultural context of learning is highly influential.



Task 7.4.1 Ownership of learning

Relevance, ownership and control of learning, as well as innovation, have all been identified as key issues in creative learning in children (Jeffrey and Woods, 2009). Imaginative approaches involve individuals and groups in initiating questions and lines of enquiry, so that they are more in charge of their work, and such collaboration and interaction help to develop a greater sense of autonomy in the events that unfold.

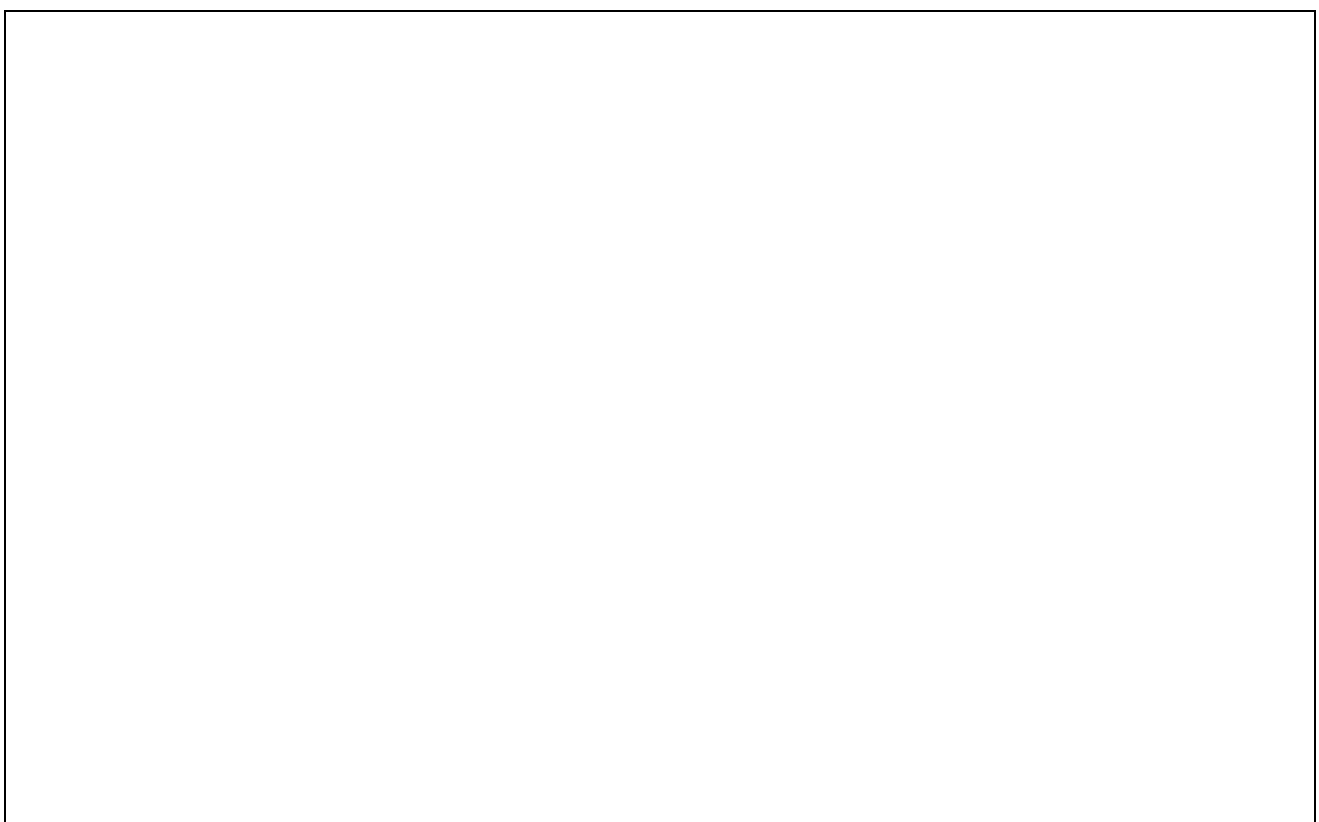
- To what extent have you observed children taking control of their learning, making choices and demonstrating ownership of their own learning? Think of some examples and share these in small groups.
- To what extent was the work also relevant to the children? Were they emotionally or imaginatively engaged, building on areas of interest, maintaining their individuality and sharing ideas with one another?
- If you have seen little evidence of these issues, consider how you could offer more opportunity for relevance, ownership and control of learning in the classroom.

It is clear, too, that creativity is not bound to particular subjects. At the cutting edge of every domain of learning, creativity is essential. It depends in part on interactions between feeling and thinking across boundaries and ideas. It also depends upon a climate of trust, respect and support, an environment in which individual agency and self-determination are fostered, and ideas and interests are valued, discussed and celebrated. Yet we have all experienced schools that fail to teach the pleasure and excitement to be found in science or mathematics for example, or that let routines and timetables, subject boundaries and decontextualised knowledge dominate the daily diet of the young. In such sterile environments, when formulae for learning are relied upon, and curriculum packages are delivered, children's ability to make connections and to imagine alternatives is markedly reduced. So, too, is their capacity for curiosity, for enquiry and for creativity itself.

CREATIVE TEACHING AND TEACHING FOR CREATIVITY

The distinction between creative teaching and teaching for creativity is helpful in that it is possible to imagine a creative teacher who engages personally and creatively in the classroom, yet fails to

provide for children's creative learning. Responsible creative professionals are not necessarily flamboyant performers, but teachers who use a range of approaches to create the conditions in which the creativity of others can flourish. Creative teachers also recognise and make use of their own creativity, not just to interest and engage the learners, but also to promote new thinking and learning. Their confidence in their own creativity enables them to offer the children stronger scaffolds and spaces for emotional and intellectual growth.



Research undertaken in higher education, with tutors teaching music, geography and English, suggests that creative teaching is a complex art form – a veritable ‘cocktail party’ (Grainger *et al.*, 2004). The host gathers the ingredients (the session content) and mixes them playfully and skilfully (the teaching style), in order to facilitate a creative, enjoyable and worthwhile party (the learning experience). Although no formula was, or could be, established for creative teaching, some of the ingredients for mixing a creative cocktail were identified, albeit tentatively, from this work. The

elements are not in themselves necessarily creative, but the action of shaking and stirring the ingredients and the individual experience of those attending are critical, if the ‘cocktail party’ is to be successful. The intention to promote creative learning appeared to be an important element in this work.

The session content included: placing current trends in a wider context and extensive use of metaphor, analogy and personal anecdotes to make connections. The teaching style included: multimodal pedagogic practices, pace, humour, the confidence of the tutors and their ability to inspire and value the pupils. In relation to the learning experience, the themes included involving the pupils affectively and physically and challenging them to engage and reflect. Together, these represent some of the critical features of creative teachers and creative teaching that combine to support new thinking.



Task 7.4.2 Teaching as cocktail party

- Consider the metaphor of teaching as cocktail party for a moment. In what ways do you think it captures the vitality of teaching – the dynamic interplay between teachers, children and the resources available? Select one or two of the features, such as humour or personal anecdotes. Do you make extensive use of either? Remember, the research indicates that such features are employed with others at the ‘cocktail party’.
- Consider your previous teachers. Which were the most creative? Did they create successful cocktail parties in which you felt valued and engaged, took risks, made connections and developed deep learning? How did they achieve this?

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF CREATIVE TEACHERS

It is difficult to identify with any certainty the personal characteristics of creative teachers. Research tends to offer lists of propensities that such teachers possess (e.g. Fryer, 1996; Beetlestone, 1998). Common elements noted in these various studies include:

- enthusiasm, passion and commitment;
- risk-taking;
- a deep curiosity or questioning stance;
- willingness to be intuitive and/or introspective;
- gregariousness and introspectiveness;
- a clear set of personal values;
- awareness of self as a creative being.

This list encompasses many of the personal qualities you might expect in any good teacher, except perhaps the last. Sternberg (1999) suggests that creative teachers are creative role models themselves – professionals who continue to be self-motivated learners, who value the creative dimensions of their own lives and who make connections between their personal responses to experience and their teaching. In addition, a clear set of values, reflecting fair-mindedness, openness to evidence, a desire for clarity and respect for others, are important and among the attitudinal qualities embedded in creative teaching. So, too, is a commitment to inclusion and a belief in human rights and equality. Such attitudes and values have a critical role in creative teaching and are, perhaps, best taught by example.

FEATURES OF A CREATIVE PEDAGOGICAL STANCE

The intention to promote creativity is fundamental. There are a number of features of a creative

pedagogical stance that you may want to consider in relation to your teaching and observation of other creative professionals.

A learner-centred, agency-oriented ethos

Creative teachers tend to place the learners above the curriculum and combine a positive disposition towards creativity and person-centred teaching that actively promotes pupils who learn and think for themselves (Sawyer, 2011; Robinson, 2015). Relaxed, trusting educator–learner relationships exist in creative classrooms, and the role of the affect and children’s feelings play a central role in learning in such contexts. Such relationships foster children’s agency and autonomy as learners and enable for example children to respond to literature personally, imaginatively and affectively (Cremin et al. 2014) . A learner-oriented ethos will also involve you showing patience and openness, reinforcing children’s creative behaviour, celebrating difference, diversity and innovation, as well as learning to tolerate mild or polite rebellion (Gardner, 1999). If you adopt such a person-centred orientation, you will be shaping the children’s self-esteem and enhancing their intrinsic motivation and agency. You might, for example, explicitly plan for small groups to shape and plan for themselves how they might investigate melting, by giving them enormous ‘ice eggs’ (made from balloons filled with water and frozen) and telling an imaginary tale of how these came to be in your possession (see Craft *et al.*, 2012).

A questioning stance

Creativity involves asking and attempting to answer real questions; the creative teacher is seen by many as one who uses open questions and who promotes speculation in the classroom, encouraging deeper understanding and lateral thinking (Cremin *et al* 2009). In the context of creative teaching,

both teachers and children need to be involved in this process of imaginative thinking, encompassing the generation of challenging and unusual questions and the creation of possible responses. The questioning stance of the teacher has been noted as central to children's possibility thinking, and the importance of question-posing and question-responding has been documented (Chappell *et al.*, 2008). You could, for example, play with the idea of 'book zips', new books that have invisible zips which prevent children opening them! (Zipped plastic bags or magical tales often help to extend the patience necessary!). Groups can generate questions about characters, plot, setting and respond to other group's questions.

Creating space, time and freedom to make connections

Creativity requires space, time and a degree of freedom. Deep immersion in an area or activity allows options to remain open, and persistence and follow-through to develop. Conceptual space allows children to converse, challenge and negotiate meanings and possibilities together. For example, through employing both film and drama in extended units of work, teachers raised boys' standards and creativity in writing (Bearne *et al.*, 2004). Through adopting the role of 'Davis Jones', an archaeologist and the brother of Indiana Jones, you could, for example, trigger historical enquiry and exploration (see Cooper, 2013).

Employing multimodal, intuitive teaching approaches

A variety of multimodal teaching approaches and frequent switching between modes in a playlike and spontaneous manner appear to support creative learning (Cremin *et al.*, 2009). The diversity of pattern, rhythm and pace used by creative teachers is particularly marked, as is their use of informed intuition (Claxton 1997). As you teach, opportunities will arise for you to use your

intuition and move from the security of the known. Give yourself permission to go beyond the ‘script’ you have planned and allow the children to take the initiative and lead you, for such spontaneity will encourage you to seize the moment and foster deeper learning (Cremin *et al.*, 2006). In geography, for example, you might nurture creative play through opportunities for transforming and adapting places, making dens, yurts, shelters or tree houses perhaps (see Scoffham, 2015).

Prompting full engagement, ownership and ongoing reflection

In studying an area in depth, children should experience both explicit instruction and space for exploration and discovery. Try to provide opportunities for choice and be prepared to spend time developing their self-management skills so that they are able to operate independently. Their engagement can be prompted by appealing to their interests and passions, by involving them in imaginative experiences and by connecting learning to their lives (Cremin *et al.*, 2009). A semi-constant oscillation between engagement and reflection will become noticeable in the classroom as you work to refine, reshape and improve learning. The ability to give and receive criticism is also an essential part of creativity, and you will need to encourage evaluation through supportive and honest feedback (Jeffrey, 2006). For example, in evaluating children’s dramatic representations that convey mathematical concepts (see Pound and Lee, 2016).

Modelling risk-taking and enabling the children to take risks too

The ability to tolerate ambiguity is an example of the ‘confident uncertainty’ to which Claxton (1997) refers when discussing creative teachers – those who combine subject and pedagogical knowledge, but also leave space for uncertainty and the unknown. You will gain in confidence

through increased subject knowledge, experience and reflection, but your assurance will also grow through taking risks and having a go at expressing yourself. Risk-taking is an integral element of creativity, and one that you will want to model and foster. The children, too, will need to feel supported as they take risks in safe, non-judgemental contexts.

To be a creative practitioner, you will need more than a working knowledge of creativity and the prescribed curriculum. You will need a clear idea of your values, a secure pedagogical understanding and a secure knowledge base, supported by a passionate belief in the potential of creative teaching to engage, inspire and educate. Such teaching depends, in the end, upon the human interaction between teachers and pupils and is also influenced by the teacher's state of mind. The creative teacher, it is proposed, is one who is aware of, and values, the human attribute of creativity in themselves and actively seeks to promote this in others. The creative teacher has a creative state of mind that is both exercised and developed through their creative practice and personal/professional curiosity, connection-making, originality and autonomy (Cremin *et al.*, 2009). Such practice is, of course, influenced by the physical, social, emotional and spiritual environments in which teachers and children work.



Task 7.4.3 Creative engagement

- Make a list of the times when you feel deeply engaged - in 'flow' as Csikszentmihalyi (1996) describes it- or in your 'element' as Robinson (2009) does. What are the characteristics of this engagement?
- How do these relate to the aspects of creative practice described above – are there parallels, and, if not, what might this reveal about the degree to which creative engagement can be prescribed or fostered?

CREATING ENVIRONMENTS OF POSSIBILITY

You may have been to a school where creativity is planned for and fostered, and where there is a clear sense of shared values and often a real buzz of purposeful and exciting activity. Such schools have a distinctive character that impacts upon behaviour, relationships, the physical and ethical environment and the curriculum. An ethos that values creativity will, according to most definitions, promote originality and the use of the imagination, as well as encourage an adventurous attitude to life and learning. In such environments of possibility, packed with ideas and experiences, resources and choices, as well as time for relaxation and rumination, physical, conceptual and emotional space are offered. Schools offering such spaces are, Robinson (2015) argues, revolutionizing education from the ground up. They are not alone; there is considerable interest in such pedagogical practice internationally (Cremin et, 2017).

The social and emotional environment

Taking creative risks and moving forward in learning are heavily dependent upon an atmosphere of acceptance and security. Children's well-being is widely recognised as important, in its own right and to support their creativity, but can only be fostered by a secure ethos. However, creative schools may display apparently contradictory characteristics. The ethos may be simultaneously:

- highly active and relaxed;
- supportive and challenging;
- confident and speculative;
- playful and serious;
- focused and fuzzy;

- individualistic and communal;
- understood personally and owned by all;
- non-competitive and ambitious.

Since Plato, many have argued that there are links between involvement in creative acts and a general sense of well-being. More recent research in cognitive neuroscience (Damasio, 2003) and positive psychology has suggested that the state of wellbeing promotes optimum conditions in mind and body, and ensures constructive and secure relationships. A perceived link between discovering one's own creativity and feeling a sense of wellbeing (Barnes *et al.*, 2008) has led some to make arguments for reevaluating curricula, in favour of educational programmes that offer frequent, planned and progressive creative opportunities across every discipline (Barnes, 2005).

The physical environment

The physical environment in a school that promotes creativity is likely to celebrate achievement and individuality and can be a valuable teaching resource. Children's views on this are important and deserve to be taken into account. Projects have shown how creative thinking in the context of focused work on improving the school building, grounds or local areas can achieve major citizenship objectives and high-level arts and literacy targets in an atmosphere of genuine support and community concern (Barnes, 2007, 2009).

Active modes of learning and problem-solving approaches that include independent investigation require accessible resources of various kinds, so that the richer and more multifaceted a range you can offer the better. This supports genuine choice, speculation and experimentation, happy accidents and flexibility. An environment of possibility in which individual agency and self-determination are fostered and children's ideas and interests are valued, shared and celebrated

depends upon the presence of a climate of trust, respect and support in your classroom/school. Creativity can be developed when you are confident and secure in both your subject knowledge and your knowledge of creative pedagogical practice; then you will seek to model the features of creativity *and* develop a culture of creative opportunities in school. Although in schools in socio-economically challenged contexts a pedagogy of poverty which constrains learner agency, has been documented (e.g. Hempel Jorgensen, 2015). You cannot afford to be complacent.

PLANNING FOR CREATIVITY

Open-ended learning opportunities that offer space for autonomy and collaboration, and have real-world relevance can be created through extended and creative units of work, encompassing multiple subjects. These can be enriched by regularly involving the expertise of partners from the creative and cultural sector; Galton (2017) argues such partnerships can enrich learning and raise children's expectations and achievements. Seek to plan coherent learning experiences in which 'school subjects [are seen as] resources in the construction of the curriculum, rather than determinants of its overall structure and emphasis' (Halpin, 2003: 114). In planning such creative units of work, you will want to build on insights from research. The following ten research-informed suggestions are worth considering:

- Create a **positive, secure atmosphere** in which risks can be taken (Seltzer and Bentley, 1999).
- Profile a **questioning stance** and frame the work around children's interests and questions (Chappell et al., 2008).
- Ensure a range of **practical and analytical, open-ended** activities (Craft et al., 2013).
- Emphasise **learner agency** and individual and cooperative thinking and learning (Hempel Jorgensen, 2015,).

- Agree **clear goals**, some of which are set and owned by the learners (Jeffrey and Woods, 2009).
- Build **emotionally relevant links** to the children's lives, offering opportunities for **engagement and enjoyment** (Barnes, 2007).
- Integrate a manageable number of **relevant subjects/areas of learning** (Barnes, 2007).
- Involve developmentally appropriate **progression** in skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Set the work in a wider framework that includes **concepts, content and attitudes** (Cremin, 2009).
- Provide supportive **assessment** procedures that build security and include time and tools for reflection (Adey and Shayer, 2002).

CREATIVE CURRICULA IN ACTION

Two examples bring such a curriculum, centred upon creative learning, to life. A whole-school community from Tower Hamlets made a winter visit to Canary Wharf, less than 500 metres from the school gates. Many pupils had never been there. The event was grasped as an opportunity to collect as much information as possible. None of the collected impressions could have been gathered from websites or written sources, and so the visit was a genuine investigation, involving every age group – traffic surveys, rubbings, observations of people walking, collections of geometric shapes, still images framed by 'key' describing words, moving images, sensory descriptions of sights, sounds and smells, intricate 360° drawings, mosaics or trees imprisoned in stainless steel, stone and scaffolded containers. Every moment, morning or afternoon, was fully used in information gathering. Children and adult supporters collected digital, drawn, listed, tallied, acted and heard data from a variety of contrasting sites around the wharf.

The library of collected and remembered objects, images and sensations was brought back to school and formed the basis of the curriculum for the next few weeks. Creating responses from

these disparate sources involved very different paths in each class, from Nursery to Year 6. One Year 2 class made a 'sound journey' using mapping and musical skills and knowledge. Groups of five or six composed music to capture different places on their journey and linked them with other compositions of 'walking music'. Separate teams then mapped their journeys using techniques learned in the previous term, and the resultant maps were used as graphic musical scores. A mixed group created large and imaginative abstract constructions from bamboo and tissue and applied decoration from rubbings and drawings, expressing their experience of the towering buildings at the wharf.

Children, along with their co-learning teachers, presented their compositions, artworks, mathematical investigations, stories and dramas to the rest of the school in a series of assemblies. These were especially appreciated across the school, because everyone had shared in the same initial experience. The whole project was evaluated through a continuous blog kept by children, teachers, artists and teaching assistants. Their challenge, like yours, is to take account of individual differences in learning, help each child become a self-regulated learner, and ensure appropriate coverage of the areas of learning and their attendant knowledge bases.

In another context, a class from a rural school decided, through discussion, to concentrate on the value of community in a 2-day project for the website Engaging Places (www.engagingplaces.org.uk/home). They divided into teams of five and went on walks up and down the street in which the school stood. Each group decided upon a sub-theme: improving the community, describing the community now and the community in the future, problems in the community, or litter and the community. After this first decision, the children used the walk as a data-gathering opportunity. The description group used cameras and viewfinders to record the different ages and materials of houses in the street, but also used sound recorders to collect the vastly different sounds at either end of the street. In class on their return, they combined the sound-based and visually based impressions on a street map, which they constructed with great

enthusiasm. Bursts of creativity occurred as pairs decided how to represent the street and the sounds and images they had collected. Eventually, the group decided on a 3D street map, with press-button recordings of different sounds in four different parts of the street. The litter group arrived at a double focus. They decided to design and make attractive dustbins and an anti-littering video. This involved storyboarding, rehearsals, acting, filming and editing. The wild and wacky litter bins were planned in detail and made in model form for a presentation in the school and at a national launch of Engaging Places. Evaluation was crucial at every stage of these activities.

Careful planning for such creative learning experiences is important and perhaps best done in collaboration with others. Some will last a term, others just a few days, but all will seek to involve the children in real, purposeful and imaginatively engaging experiences.

SUMMARY

Creative teaching is a collaborative enterprise that capitalises on the unexpected and variously involves engagement, reflection and transformation, patterned at such a rate as to invite and encourage a questioning stance and motivate self-directed learning. Creative learning involves asking questions, exploring options and generating and appraising ideas, as the learner take risks and imaginatively thinks their way forwards, making new or innovative connections in the process. New thinking happens at the meeting places of different ideas and approaches, and it also takes place when new links occur between people. Many of the examples in this unit show both adults and children involved in thinking and learning together, which can be a key generator of creativity. We hope you will choose to teach creatively and promote creativity through your planning, and will build in choice and autonomy, relevance and purpose in engaging environments of possibility – environments both inside and outside the classroom.

For more ideas on teaching creatively across the curriculum, see the series that accompanies

this handbook. Edited by Cremin, it includes books on *Teaching - English* (Cremin, 2015), *Mathematics* (Pound and Lee, 2016), *Science* (Davies, 2015), *History* (Cooper, 2013), *Geography* (Scoffham, 2015) *Music* (Burnard and Murphy, 2013). *Physical Education* (Pickard and Maude, 2014), *Religious Education* (Elton Chalcraft, 2015) – *Creatively*. New books in the series being developed include *Teaching Art, Languages, Design Technology and In the Outdoors*, – *Creatively*.



ANNOTATED FURTHER READING

Cremin, T. (2017) (ed.) *Creativity and Creative Pedagogies in the Early and Primary Years*, Abingdon: Routledge.

This edited international collection reveals the possibilities and complexities of creative pedagogies in different cultural contexts and offers practical evidence of creative practice from around the world.

Sawyer, R. (ed.) (2011) *Structure and Improvisation in Creative Teaching*, New York: Cambridge.

This US collection provides practical advice for teachers wishing to become creative professionals. It highlights the need for teachers to respond artfully to curricula and the unexpected demands of classroom interactions.



FURTHER READING TO SUPPORT M-LEVEL STUDY

Craft, A., Cremin, T., Hay, P. and Clack, J. (2013) Creative primary schools: developing and maintaining pedagogy for creativity, *Ethnography and Education*, 9.1.

This paper comprises a case study of three schools; it documents their creative practice and the tenets underpinning this.

Cremin, T. Glauert, E. Craft, A. Compton, A. and Stylianidou, F. (2015) *Creative Little Scientists Education 3-13, International Journal of Primary, Elementary and Early Years Education* 43(4):404-419.

This paper, drawing on an EU wide project with 9 partner countries, explores key pedagogical connections between inquiry based science and creative approaches.



RELEVANT WEBSITES

NACCCE report, *All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education:*

www.cypni.org.uk/downloads/allourfutures.pdf

Creative Little Scientists: www.creative-little-scientists.eu/

This offers the materials from the research and is complimented by Creativity in Early Years Science Education, which includes rich examples of practice and support for teachers and teacher educators. <http://www.ceys-project.eu/content/about>

Research rich pedagogies: <https://researchrichpedagogies.org/>

This Open University website seeks to foster creative and innovative pedagogies. It examines evidence from learners and teachers to distil key research messages and propose new approaches and includes a section devoted to reading for pleasure with myriad examples of classroom practice



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