

# BLOOMING CREATIVES TEACHER GUIDE



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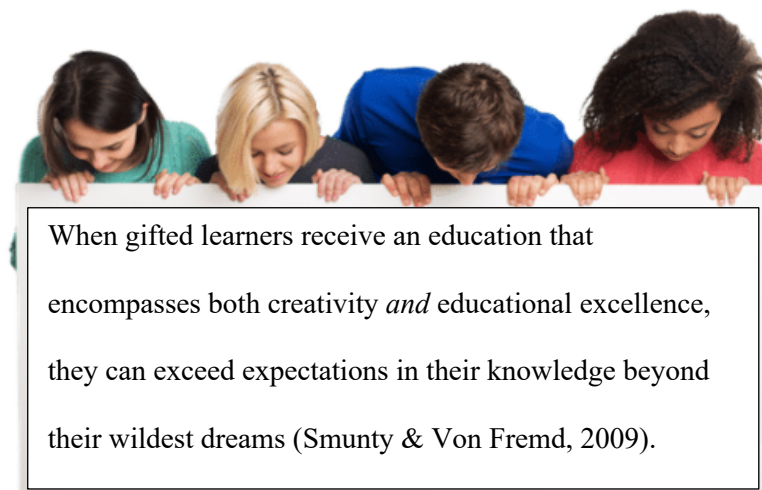
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Hello and welcome to the Blooming Creatives teacher guide. This guide is designed to help you support students demonstrating creative/productive gifted behaviours. Creativity is quickly becoming a **core curriculum component** throughout the world (Chan & Yuen, 2014), and teachers need access to pedagogy that closes the divide between creativity and academic instruction. In 2002, The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB Act, 2002) defined gifted students as "those who display evidence of high capability in intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership areas and who would benefit from services that their school does not ordinarily provide to develop their capabilities fully" (NCLB Act 2002; as cited by Kim, 2019, p.121).

In this guide, you will find:

- A brief introduction to four theories of creativity
- A description of creative/productive gifted behaviours
- Information on the classroom environment and how it affects student creativity
- Student assessment options
- Four unit plans

Use this guide alongside the [Blooming Creatives website](#) for more information and downloadable content.



When gifted learners receive an education that encompasses both creativity *and* educational excellence, they can exceed expectations in their knowledge beyond their wildest dreams (Smunty & Von Fremd, 2009).

## **What is Creativity?**

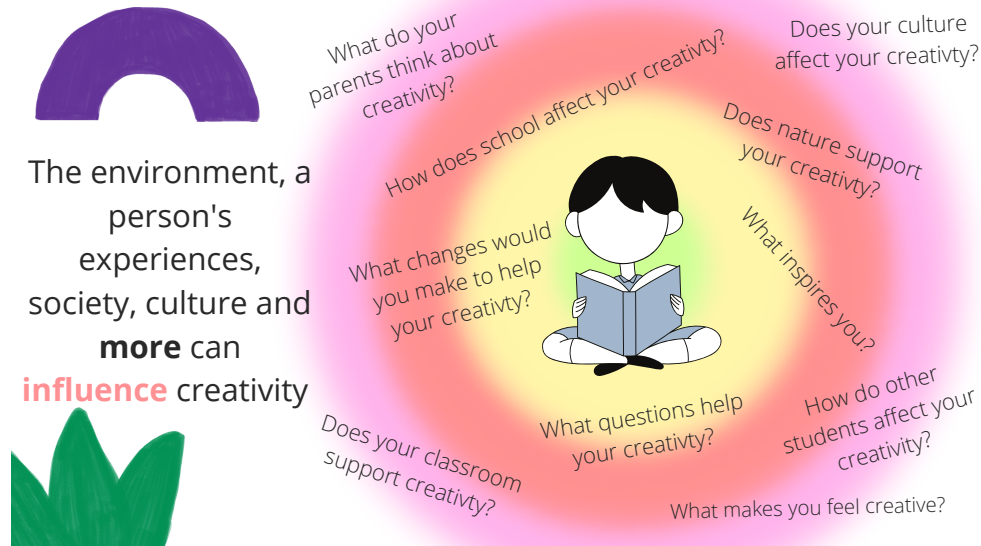
As a concept, creativity has been studied, debated, and has captured the attention of artists, philosophers, teachers, and researchers for centuries. Creativity has multiple definitions and theories, and yet remains ambiguous. So how do we as teachers teach and nurture creativity? There is no clear, straightforward path, but these four creativity theories highlight key considerations. For an in-depth explanation, [please see the website](#).

- (a) Divergent thinking - Gilford, 1957
- (b) The Four P's – Rhodes, 1961
- (c) The Four C Theory – Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009
- (d) CATs Model – Kim, 2019



## **The classroom environment affects how students think about creativity.**

The school and classroom environments are excellent spaces for potential opportunities to nurture creative individuals. Unfortunately, current public-school environments do not always provide space for creative expression because of inflexible schedules, lack of funding and space, lack of creative growth instruction, and variations in teacher and school administrators' beliefs about creativity (Chan & Yuen, 2014; Renzulli, 2014).



## Ways you can encourage creativity in your classroom

- Schedule unstructured time within the week for students to work on personal projects.
- Have discussions on what creativity means in your classroom.
- Brainstorm with students' alternative ways of presenting class material.
- Set up creativity corners in your classroom that students can engage with once they have completed regular classroom work. These can include books on creative people, small weekly creative activities, and creativity prompts.
- Use student's learning and expression styles to group like-minded or complementary styles of students together when doing group projects.
- Encourage students to find alternative ways of presenting and learning using choice boards. For example, in a history lesson on Ancient Egypt, offer students alternative options based on their expression and learning styles. Instead of a traditional poster presentation, offer students with a shared interest in animation and audio /visual expression styles, the option to animate a short video sharing knowledge on Ancient Egypt.
- Consider out-of-school activities such as field trips, guest speakers, mentor programs, or demonstrations.
- Share audiovisual materials and various technologies such as Ted Talks and virtual museums.
- Utilize role-play activities.

## What are creative/productive gifted behaviors, and how do I identify these students?

Just as creativity is difficult to define, students who display creative/productive gifted behaviours are as unique and varied as their work; therefore, the definition must be flexible and multidimensional. When evaluating students' creative/productive gifted behaviours, educators can consider students' unique talents within any area of interest. **It is essential to be aware that students do not always have interests and skills in the arts. Students with creative/productive gifted behaviors may be interested in any area, perhaps science, math, literature, or the natural world.** These students may demonstrate some of the personalities, attitudes, and behaviours below. It is not uncommon for this group of children to be labeled as button pushers, rebels, or disruptive (Rimm et al., 2017). Historical figures corroborate this theory. For example, Salvador Dali and Marcel Duchamp pushed the boundaries of art but are now widely celebrated artists of the Dadaism and Surreal art movement (Kim, 2019). Other famous minds such as Albert Einstein, Pablo Picasso, Marie Currie, Isadora Duncan, and Oprah Winfrey, who faced similar biases and were not recognized for their talent by others.

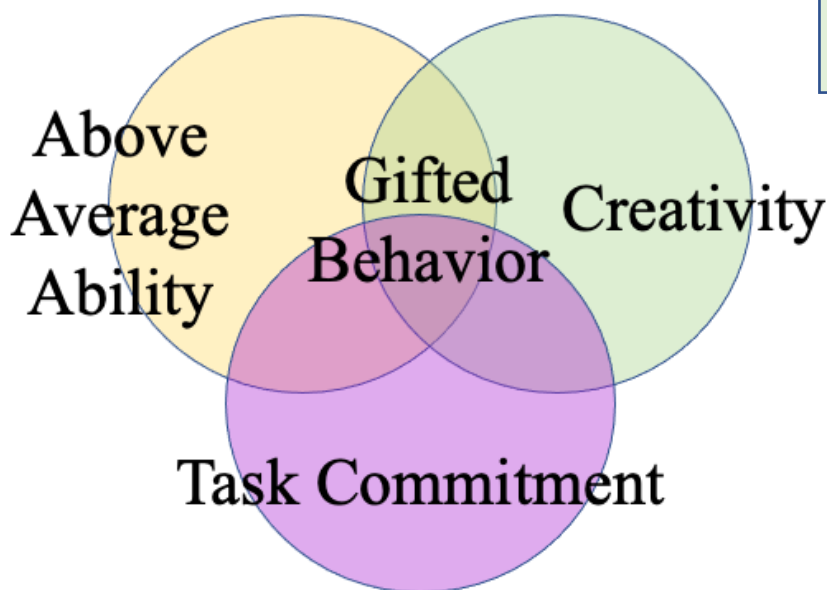
Personality	Attitude	Behaviors
High self-confidence High sense of wonder Good sense of humor Playful Empathetic Imaginative Original Thinkers Disruptive Impulsive	Risk-taker – eager to try new things Questions societal norms Persistent Passionate Grit (Duckworth et al., 2007) Cognitively flexible Constantly questioning ideas and the world around them (Rhodes, 1961) Able to navigate conflict and tension (Rhodes, 1961) Opposed to conformity (Rhodes, 1961) Convergent and divergent thinkers (Gilford (1957)	Inquisitive Visionaries Courageously Persistent Complex Collaborators Compassionate Rebels (Kim, 2019) Overexcitability (Martowska and Romanowicz, 2020)
<b>Interests</b>		
Artistic or aesthetic interests such as art, drama, music, dance Affinity for unusual problems or ideas		

## Assessment of a student with creative/productive gifted behaviors

When assessing if students are showing creative/productive gifted behaviors, you can refer to the Three Ring Concept of Giftedness and consider the student's personality, attitude, behaviors, and interests.

Students with *above-average abilities* have high performance or high potential (roughly the top five percentile range) within general and specific abilities. Examples of general abilities include processing information, numerical reasoning, and spatial awareness. Specific abilities can be defined as skills, performance, or knowledge in any area, such as math or drama.

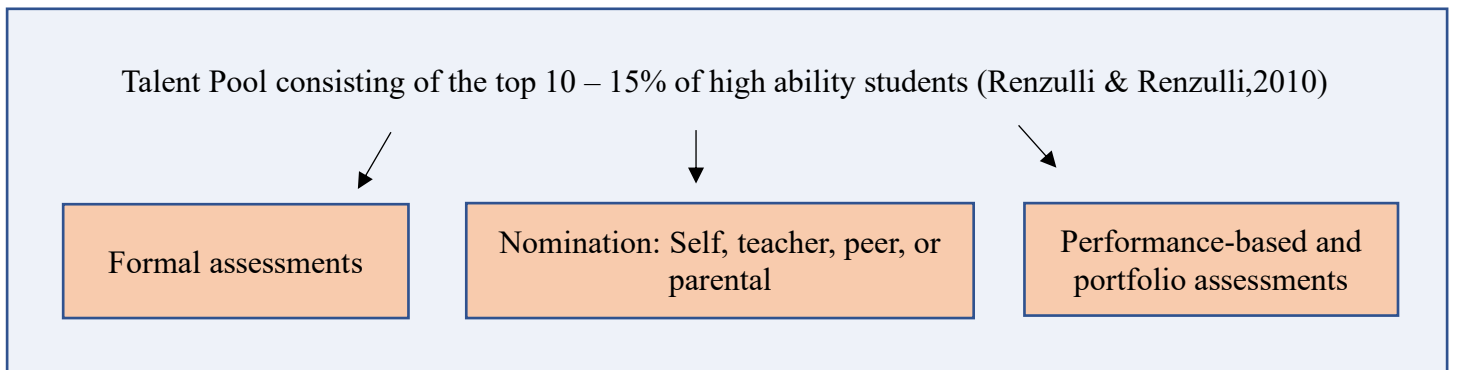
When expanding on the definition and educational services required to support students' creative/productive gifted behavior, it is essential to consider creativity theories.



*Task Commitment* is the student's motivation to focus on a specific problem or performance area (Renzulli & Reis, 2018).

*Figure 1. Renzulli and Reis's (2018) Three Ring Concept of Giftedness states that gifted behaviours can be nurtured and identify three human traits that interact.*

Use a multi-method approach with a combination of formal assessment, nomination, and performance-based / portfolio assessments. Renzulli and Renzulli (2010) recommend creating a talent pool consisting of the top 10 -15 percentiles of high-ability students. Selecting from a larger group of students lowers the risk of missing potential candidates such as minority students, twice-exceptional students, and students who do not score in the top 5% of IQ tests. Please see the website for more information on the [relationship between IQ and creativity](#).



## **Formal Assessments**

Formal assessments are standardized tests developed and tested by many over time. One such test is the Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (TTCT). The TTCT measures divergent thinking in verbal and non-verbal tasks, measuring the same three qualities: fluency, flexibility, and originality (Ambrose & Machek, 2015; Kaufman et al., 2012; Rimm et al., 2017). The test consists of several tasks, including verbal and non-verbal sections. An important consideration is that the TTCT can only be conducted by a psychologist or specially trained individuals. This test is not practical for teachers as they cannot administer the test themselves unless they receive and pay for specific training. Refer to your resource teacher or school psychologist for more information on formal assessments.



## Nomination

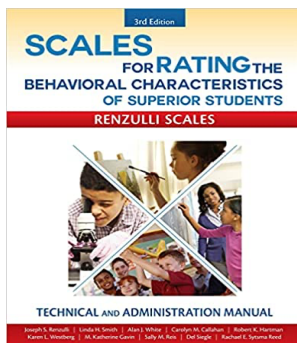
A more effective way of recognizing and reaching more students during assessment would be including teacher, parent, peer, or student nominations. Nominating individuals who demonstrate creative/productive gifted behaviours may reach more students and cast a wider net during an assessment. Identification can be formal, using creativity checklists or behavior rating scales, or informal such as students signing up or being casually nominated to participate in gifted programs (Kaufman et al., 2012; Renzulli & Reis, 2018; Rimm et al., 2017).

At the high school level, self-nomination allows highly motivated students to join specialized programs while identifying which programs or services they need (Kaufman et al., 2012; Rimm et al., 2017).

Peer nomination can be presented as a game whereby students nominate students other than those in their exclusive friend group.

Parental nominations can be particularly useful for children in elementary schools, as parents observe behaviors that their child may not showcase in the school environment (Rimm et al., 2017).

## Creativity Checklists and behaviour rating scales

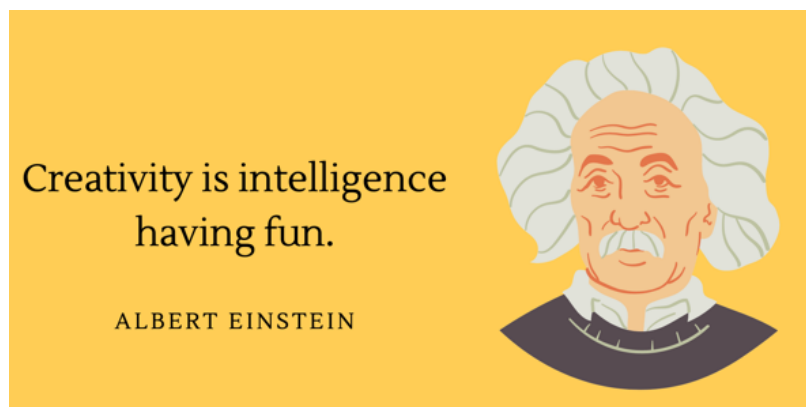


The Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (SRBCSS) created by Renzulli et al. (2013) is one helpful tool for **educators or parents**. Before assessing students, the assessor should be familiar with the checklist and interact with the child in multiple contexts

(Kaufman et al., 2012). [This guide can be purchased for under \\$100 and is user-friendly.](#)

## **Performance-based and portfolio assessments**

Use performance-based and portfolio assessment tools to recognize student's performance and work within the school, community, and in the student's area of interest. Assessment can entail reviewing the process, quality, depth, and innovation reflected in the student's work (Ambrose & Machek, 2015; Rimm et al., 2017). One assessment tool you can use is The Creative Products Semantic Scale (CPSS), created by Dr. S. Besemer. The CPSS assesses products in novelty, resolution and elaboration, and synthesis (Ambrose & Machek, 2015; Besemer, 1998). Using a Likert-style rating scale, evaluators examine a student's work's originality, innovation, and newness. When evaluating the resolution of students' work, evaluators consider the usefulness, practical needs of a problem, and whether the project makes sense. When assessing the elaboration feature, evaluators rate the style and craftsmanship of the students' work (Besemer, 1998).



## The goals of Blooming Creatives Units

- Raise awareness of creativity, the creative environment and gain an appreciation for creativity
- Practice creative thinking skills
- Engage in creative projects and activities
- Merging creativity and academics

[Download unit materials student learning style and expression style inventories on the website.](#)

## How to use the unit plans

This guide is meant to be **flexible and based on your student's strengths**. If you find your students gravitate to one activity or theme, give them the time and space to fully explore and expand their knowledge. You may choose one unit to weave into your current curriculum or offer this as an outside school activity. Creativity requires flexibility, and you can adapt the unit plans to fit your classroom needs. Match material to your school curriculum and use exercises and techniques in this guidebook as enrichment activities for current class plans. For support, please contact Blooming Creatives using the [‘Contact Me’](#) button through the website.

### **Option 1**

Follow the unit plans chronologically with a group of 10 – 15 students demonstrating creative/productive gifted behaviors. I recommend you break each lesson into 1-hour sessions over a period of 2 – 4 weeks. This way, your students have time to explore and process what they are learning.

**Option 2**

From the time gained as a result of curriculum compacting, use portions of the units for student enrichment programs. Enrichment can be done individually or within small groups. You can tailor the content to match your student's area of interest.

**Option 3**

Choose a theme or activity and weave it into your current curriculum. Themes such as creative thinking and creative reading can equip students with specific skills that may be helpful in other subjects. Use the activities and projects to support your curriculum goals and expectations.

**Each unit includes****In-class activities**

These activities allow students to practice skills highlighted within the unit. They can run between 30 – 60mins. Allow unstructured time for your students to engage and have fun completing these mini-projects. Students should share with their classmates what they have created. Creating and presenting within the same activity helps students practice sharing and engaging with unpolished work and focusing on the creative process rather than the final project.

**One Large Unit Project**

The project activity is a larger project associated with each unit that students work on for extended time periods. The projects require students to engage in the creative process of planning, creating, presenting, and reflecting. Each activity is flexible, so students can choose which medium and area of interest they would like to combine with the project. Student-led choices will increase engagement and motivation and help each student develop their creative voice.

## **Evaluating**

This guide does not include evaluation forms. If an evaluation is necessary, create short- and long-term goals as part of the project planning process. Work together with your students to develop a project criterion. Discuss work habits, problem-solving, student development, the process, and the final product. Use your school's curriculum competencies to help shape your evaluation.

## **Processing questions**

Allow approximately 15 – 20 minutes at the end of each class for students to ask, discuss and record their reflections in their creativity journals. Creativity journals help develop practical self-reflection skills. Processing question prompts are provided (in the unit PowerPoints), *but* you can tailor the questions based on the students and how the class responded. Effective self-reflection is a lifelong reflective practice that allows students articulate and document their experiences and thoughts.

## **Before you begin**

- Assess your student's expression and learning styles using the guides provided [through the website](#). This information will help you decide which units and activities are best suited for your students.
- Provide options for students. Share units, project or activities with your students using choice boards and let students decide what they would like to engage with.
- Discuss the use and benefits of creativity journals with your students. Students may want to decorate and customize their journals to add a personal touch.

- Review the unit and see if any supplementary activities would be beneficial. Some potential supplementary activities could be:
  - A library workshop – teaching students how to find and evaluate information in text and media.
  - Critical thinking – discussion and practice of critical thinking.

## **Unit 1: What Is Your Creativity?**

*Use this lesson plan to encourage students to think about what creativity means to them. Explore how creativity expands beyond fine art subjects.*

### **Unit focus and goals:**

- Explore and broaden student's perception of creativity
- Discover that creativity is multidimensional and limited within the arts
- Think about creative spaces and what influences creativity

### **Materials needed:**

- PowerPoint "What is Your Creativity?" provided through the website
- Whiteboard & markers
- Creativity Journals (1 per student)
- Large sheets of paper
- Writing & drawing materials
- Lego\*
- iPads\*

\*These materials are not necessary but, if available, can be beneficial

### **Structure/Activity:**

#### **Introduction - PowerPoint 2 - 4** (15mins)

Introduce the entire program and share your overview of the program using "What is Your Creativity?".

#### **Brainstorm Activity – PowerPoint 5** (15mins)

Discuss with students and write down ideas on paper pre-set up on the wall or table.

- What is creativity? How are you creative? How do you express yourself?
- What do you need to be creative? What stops you from being creative?

#### **Discussion - PowerPoint slides 5 – 9** (25mins)

Use PowerPoint Slides 5 – 9 as a starting point to discuss creativity with your students. Tailor your discussion based on your student's interests, age, and engagement. Some points to consider and potentially expand are: theories of creativity, ways of thinking creatively, the effect of the environment, creativity as activism, creativity in unexpected places, creativity not within fine arts, collaboration and making a space creative.

**Creative Space - Project PowerPoint Slide 10** (60mins+)

Run this activity in two sessions. Session 1 is introducing the activity and planning. Session 2 is creating and presenting.

Instruct students to design and describe a space that will help them be creative. Ask them to think about the physical space, the materials, behaviour expectations, teachers, students, etc. Ask students to (alone or in groups), create this imagined space.

This is no specific method which students must follow. Students can use their preferred expression and learning styles to create. Some potential methods include using Lego, drawing, creating a diorama, written descriptions (brochure/poster), brainstorming, etc. Students will share their ideas with classmates.

**Reflection - PowerPoint Side 11** (20mins)

Go back to the original brainstorming question, discuss, and add new ideas it to the original paper. Discuss how it is different, what is the same, and how have perspectives changed?

**Processing Questions** (15 – 20min)

Students respond in their creativity journals.

- How have my perceptions of creativity changed and stayed the same?
- What qualities do I have that contribute to my creativity?
- How does my environment support/hinder my creativity? How can I change this?



## **Large Unit Project - My Creativity Portrait**

In this larger project, students plan and create a creativity portrait to showcase how they are creative. Student portraits can be in the form of a presentation, piece of artwork, an idea, etc. This project is your class's opportunity to start broadening their perceptions of creativity and encouraging creative attitudes and behaviors. Give students time to brainstorm, plan, create and showcase this portrait. Alongside their creativity portrait, students complete a creator's statement. The creator's statement encourages students to reflect on their work and process. Worksheets are included below.

### **Presenting "My Creativity Portrait" (1+hour)**

Set up the classroom in gallery style where students have their own space to display their work. They may walk around the room and explore their peer's work. For performance-based work, create an open space where students can gather around and watch.

Before students present, discuss how to view and ask questions about others' work respectfully. As a class, students will gather around each piece of work. The creator will share their creator statement, and students will discuss each creation. Teachers will act as moderators. When talking about other's work, follow this outline:

### **Discussing other's creations**

- 1) Students describe what they see.
- 2) Discuss elements, colors, and movements that stand out.
- 3) Discuss what mood or theme the creation feels like.
- 4) What do you think the creator is trying to say?
- 5) What questions would you like to ask the creator?

# MY CREATIVITY PORTRAIT

Imagine and plan a way to introduce your creativity to your classmates

**Step 1:** In your creativity journal brainstorm what creativity means to you and how you express it.

**Step 2:** Choose your medium. This is very open!

- Spoken
- Written
- Performance
- Designed
- Illustrated
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3:** Plan your idea in your journal.

What materials do you need?

How are you going to showcase your portrait?

What do you need help with?

**Step 4:** Begin to create

**Parameters: Time limit - 3 minutes, plan how you want to show your portrait.**

**This needs to be presented in class - consider your space and resources.**



# The Creator's Statement

**It's important for creators to reflect on their work, the process behind it, and their thoughts behind it. You can do it too!**

*Before we present our portraits to everyone, we'll prepare a Creator's Statement. During our gallery day, we will share our statements with the class.*



**My creativity portrait will be called:**


**The materials I used are:**


**While creating I learned:**


**If I could change something about my portrait, it would be:**


**...because:**


**One thing that's special about this artwork is:**


**Name**

--

**Date**

--

## **Unit 2: Creative Thinking**

*Introduce students to divergent and convergent thinking. Lead activities that teach and help students practice creative thinking skills in many situations.*

### **Unit focus and goals:**

- Introduce vocabulary: convergent, divergent, fluency, flexibility & originality.
- Practice convergent and divergent thinking skills in multiple domains.
- Practice presenting to class without much preparation.
- Feel comfortable taking creative risks and participating in class.

### **Materials Needed:**

- PowerPoint “Creative Thinking” provided through the website
- Straw, twist tie, plastic container, elastic bands, tinfoil, and plastic wheel/bottle cap
- Whiteboard & Markers or large sheets of blank paper
- Story cards \*

\*The story cards provided can be switched out to represent your community better. Use well-known tales from your community and culture that your students will connect with.

### **Structure/Activity**

#### **Introduction - PowerPoint Slide 1 -5** (20mins)

Introduce students to the vocabulary of creative thinking.

Use PowerPoint slides 6-8 to practice convergent and divergent thinking.

#### **Redefine and Redesign challenge - PowerPoint Slide 9** (60mins+ you can gauge how your students are responding to the activity)

Break students into groups of 3-4, and invite students to look and touch the household items provided.

Ask students to use divergent thinking to list and discuss how the items provided can become new inventions.

Ask students to use convergent thinking to pick 1 idea.

Students now elaborate, plan, and create their inventions.

Students present their idea to the class.

**Reimagined Endings - PowerPoint Slide 10** (30 – 40minutes)

Read group the nursery rhyme Jack and Jill but stop at "to fetch a pail of water."

As a group, share an idea of what could happen next - this can be the worst thing, the best thing, most random, etc. Ask the group what would happen if they changed one thing in the rhyme - e.g., changing 1 letter in the character's name, changing the location, etc.

**Reimagined Endings Part 2 - PowerPoint Slide 11**

Separate students into small groups, and using the story cards provided, students first read and then plan out an alternative ending to their story.

Students act out their stories as short skits in class. For students who do not enjoy performing this can become a creative writing activity, where students write out an alternative story.

**Processing Questions - PowerPoint Slide 13** (20mins)

Students respond in their creativity journals.

- What are convergent and divergent thinking? List some examples from class
- Why is it important to use both convergent and divergent thinking?
- How did I feel when working and presenting with my peers today?
- How can I use convergent and divergent thinking in other parts of my day and learning?

## **Larger Unit Project – New Solutions**

Begin this larger project by discussing the creative process. Students have practiced divergent & convergent thinking, planning, and executing their plans within the in-class activities. Using this knowledge, students can practice creative thinking skills within a larger activity.

Begin by discussing and brainstorming what your students enjoy about their classroom and school. Now, discuss and brainstorm challenges or problems within their classroom and school. These problems can be specific to your classroom or the larger school community. Use convergent thinking and as a group, select one problem. Brainstorm all possible solutions to this challenge.

As a group, choose the best possible solution. Remember to consider the longevity of the solution – this can be a single event or a more long-term project. Depending on the solution, students will have to consider time constraints.

### **Give students realistic boundaries and time constraints.**

Plan, execute, and implement this solution.

Once this solution has been executed, as a group, discuss the following

- What worked well?
- What needs to be improved? Are these small or large changes?
- How can you use this kind of thinking in other scenarios?

For older students: get students to create a school survey, survey their peers, analyze their data, and use this to help inform the problem choice.

## **Unit 3: Creative Reading**

*This unit guides students to discover the power of storytelling. Student will engage with activities that encourage considering different perspectives and looking beyond the text.*

### **Unit focus and goals**

- Introduce or review a story arch
- Consider viewpoints other than the narrator
- Imagine alternative scenarios
- Discover the power of storytelling

### **Materials needed:**

- PowerPoint "Creative Reading" provided through the website
- A long, large piece of paper
- Tape
- Markers
- Story prompts
- Short stories provided through website\*

\* The short stories provided can be switched out to represent your community better. Use materials from your community and culture that your students will connect with.

### **Structure/Activity**

#### **Pictures tell stories – PowerPoint Slides 3-7** (20mins)

Show students a picture of the landscape in the PowerPoint. Ask students to describe what is happening in the picture - encourage them to use descriptive words and go into detail.

Then ask students what is happening outside the frame? Get students to discuss among themselves and share.

Using a large, piece of paper, ask students to draw extensions of this world. If students are stuck, you can provide prompts such as opposite, upside-down, miniature, gigantic, dark, light, etc.

#### **Short, short stories - PowerPoint Slide 8** (15mins)

Tell students a story in 6 words, e.g., The door shook and slowly opened...

Share and discuss Ernest Hemmingway's 6-word story "For sale: baby shoes. Never Worn"

Students take turns sharing their 6-word stories.

**Story Road – PowerPoint Slides 9 – 10** (20 – 30mins)

Discuss what is essential in a story and a story arc – Who, what, why, when and story arc (characters, setting, initiating event, problems, levels of difficulties, solution, and morals)

Tape a long piece of paper onto the floor of your classroom. Tell your class a story about yourself from the weekend while walking along with the piece of paper. Pause at parts of a story arc, beginning (setting & characters), middle (problem, building on the problem), and the end (solution).

Tell your story again, only this time when you step onto the road, ask students to identify parts of the story arch. As students identify the arcs [e.g., the setting, characters], you will write down a prompt on the piece of paper. Invite students to walk on the story road, telling their own stories. The stories can be made up, personal, or retelling of their favorite story.

**Same story - Different takes - PowerPoint Slide 11** (30 – 45mins)

Separate students into small groups. Each group receives the exact instructions (below) inside an envelope. Students work together to create a short scene (written or performed), but they must include the directions in the envelope.

- Level 1 - The story must include something breaking, a moment of stillness and laughter.
- Level 2 - The story must include: something scary, a box, and a switch
- Level 3 - The story must include: the feeling of pink, a spark, a rumble

**Creative Reading Activity – PowerPoint Slide 12** (30 – 45mins)

Separate students into small groups. Students will read a short story.

Ask students to brainstorm what could happen next? Who are the characters in the story? Would their narration of the story be the same or different? Ask students to write out an alternative perspective/version of this story.

Elementary students - This is the House That Jack Built- Simms Taback.

Middle /High School - The Fun They Had - Isaac Asimov

This exercise helps students think beyond the text at hand and consider different perspectives. They are using their imaginations to go beyond the text.

**Processing Questions – PowerPoint Slide 14** (20mins)

- How can you use creative reading in your everyday life?
- How will this affect how you read and think about stories?
- Why is it important to think beyond the text?



## **Larger Unit Project – Town Hall**

Pick an article from your local newspaper on a topic with multiple points of view, e.g., an essay on homework or single-use plastic. Pick a piece that is appropriate for your student's age, community setting, and level.

- Elementary and middle school– Time for Kids, CBC Kids news, or community newspaper
- Highschool - Canadian points of view, any major newspaper, academic journals

Read the article as a group. Discuss what the article is about, who wrote it, and what perspectives have been shared. Clarify any questions about vocabulary and provide context for the content.

Discuss the central issue and different perspectives around the story.

Identify what students know and need to investigate about the subject.

Separate students up into research groups. Each group will focus on one perspective.

Once students have gathered enough information, hold a town hall meeting in which students roleplay different perspective holders. Teacher will act as a guide and group moderator.

This activity requires students to use their imagination to consider different perspectives, research current events, roleplay, and use critical thinking with text.

## **Unit Four - Creative Movement**

*Students will gradually explore Laban's Eight Efforts (Laban n.d. as cited by Espeland, 2015) through movement and then apply and expand this concept into other disciplines. For example, students can explore how moving a paintbrush indirectly or lightly will create different patterns or write down how a familiar cartoon character moves using Laban's movement vocabulary. [Click this link for more information before beginning this unit.](#)*

**For younger students** focus and explore the four components and elements of movement: direction, weight, speed, and flow.

**For older students** as they become familiar with the four movement components, introduce and explore Laban's eight efforts.

For students with movement differences adapt the movement prompts to suit their needs. For example, prompt students to move their wheelchairs, or focus on the body parts that students can move. Students can move with partners or have assistance moving with the prompts.

### **Unit focus and goals**

- Introduce and familiarise students with the Eight Efforts of Laban movement
- Encourage students to explore different ways of moving their bodies
- Apply this style of movement to other mediums
- Use imagination and movement to spark creative ideas and emotion

### **Materials**

- PowerPoint "Creative Movement" provided through the website
- Clear, open space for movement
- Clothing that allows for lots of movement
- Projector, laptop, or smartboard to show short video clips
- Speaker to play music
- Scarves or pieces of fabric for movement
- Balloon or light ball
- A bell, shaker, or musical triangle. Something to capture student attention without speaking

### **Introduction – PowerPoint Slide** (15mins)

Ask your students to watch a short video. As a group describe and make a list of the movements observed in the videos. Consider the camera movement as well as the video content.

- Video on birds suggested for younger students – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rX40mBb8bkU>
- Video of dancers suggested for high school students - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnUesmL-1CQ>

### **Warm Up Games (15 – 20mins)**

“Go As \_\_\_\_\_, Come Back As \_\_\_\_\_”

- Students line up against one wall and the leader calls, “Go as (an animal or object), come back as (a different animal or object).” ex. “Go as a lion, come back as a balloon.”
- Students then cross the floor as the object or animal.

Balloon dance

- Students must dance keeping their balloon in the air.
- Alternate music with different tempos and styles.

Gravity Race (aka Moonwalk)

- A slow-motion race moving across the room without gravity - the last person wins!

### **Introduce the first four components of Laban movement - PowerPoint Slides 1 - 5**

*Initially, start with students exploring Laban’s four movement components and elements. Once students are comfortable with the main movements, they will then explore Laban’s Eight Efforts. Finally, students may apply Laban’s movement vocabulary to help expand their creative thinking, create versatile projects, feel comfortable within their bodies, and use a common movement vocabulary (Espeland, 2015).*

**Note** – This unit is an **introduction** to Laban’s movement. More intensive and formal certification is provided through Laban movement institutions such as [Laban International](#).

Ask students to find a spot in the room with an arm’s length of space between themselves and other students. Explain to students that you will read out movement prompts. Students will follow your voice while moving around the room freely acting out your prompts. Take your time and let students fully explore each movement component. You can break this up into 2 sessions or more.

Read the following movement prompts for each component of movement.

### **Direction – PowerPoint Slide 6** (minimum 10 mins)

*We are going to explore Laban’s first component of movement: Direction. Direction is divided into 2 elements: direct and indirect. Let’s explore how it feels to move directly. Act out the movements as I read them out loud, you can add your own*

*creative flare to these movements. Focus on your own movements, you do not need to interact with your classmates.*

*We are going to explore how it feels to move directly. Imagine you are sitting in your backyard, and you hear the familiar sound of the ice-cream truck. You jump up and walk directly to the sidewalk looking for the ice cream truck. You don't stop or wander around; you are taking the shortest route to the ice cream! Your steps are determined as you take the quickest path through your backyard gate, down your driveway and straight to the sidewalk. Notice how your arms are moving, how do they move directly? Are they swinging side to side or are they straight and at your side? Now imagine you are a train on a railway track, how do you move? You move forward and back from one station to another. As you are moving forward you notice a turn up ahead, how do you move directly in a turn? When I clap my hands, you are going to stop moving directly and return to your regular body. Give your whole body a shake, letting go of the feeling of direct. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, what did you feel when you were moving directly?*

*Now we are going to explore how it feels to move indirectly. When you move indirectly you wander around and you may not even know where you are going. Imagine you are a butterfly fluttering around the field, you move this way and that, bouncing from flower to flower. A breeze gently blows through the field, this may change the direction you move. Now imagine you are a toddler playing. How do you move your body? Can you walk or are you still crawling? You move from toy to toy, maybe you flop down or move your arms around in random circles. When I clap my hands, you are going to stop moving indirectly and return to your regular body. Give your whole body a shake letting go of the feeling of indirect. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, what did you feel when you were moving indirectly?*

### **Discussion** (minimum 5mins)

- Discuss with students how it felt to move directly vs indirectly. Ask students to think about different parts of their bodies and other examples of direct and indirect movement.

Get students to move around the room moving to the music. When you ring a bell students switch between direct and indirect movement.

### **Weight – PowerPoint Slide 7** (minimum 10mins)

*We are going to explore Laban's second component of movement: Weight. Weight is divided into 2 elements: heavy and light. Let's explore how it feels to move weight in our bodies. Act out the movements as I read them out loud, you can add your own creative flare to these movements. Focus on your own movements, you do not need to interact with your classmates.*

*We are going to explore how it feels to move heavily. Start by sitting in a comfortable position. Imagine you are made from stone all the way from your toes to your fingers. Move your head, looking from side to side. Can you wiggle your shoulders? How does it feel to move your body when it is made of heavy stone? You begin to move around. Can you stand up? How does it feel to take a step forward or to lift your arm up? Explore how to move this heavy body around the room. Now imagine you are a giant. You are as tall as the biggest building in town and stronger than 6 elephants combined. You are trying to push a heavy boulder across the room. This boulder is heavier than you expected, and you must use all your strength to try and move the boulder. You push and push, using all your strength! Are you successful? When I clap my hands, you are going to stop moving heavily and return to your regular body. Give your whole body a shake letting go of the feeling of heavy. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, what did you feel when you were moving heavily?*

*We are going to explore how it feels to move lightly. Start by standing or sitting up straight. Imagine your body is filled up with helium gas. We use helium to inflate balloons. Bounce up and down on your heels, lightly bending your knees and shaking your shoulders. Start to move around the room. How does it feel to be as light as a feather? Suddenly a light breeze carries you across the room just like a leaf blowing down the street. What kind of person would move lightly? A young child? Someone who is extremely happy? Explore how it feels to move lightly around the room on your own. When I clap my hands, you are going to stop moving lightly and return to your regular body. Give your whole body a shake letting go of the feeling of being light. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, what did you feel when you were moving lightly?*

### **Discussion** (minimum 5mins)

- Discuss with students how it felt to move heavily vs lightly. Ask students to think about different parts of their bodies and other examples of heavy and light movement.

Get students to move around the room moving to the music. When you ring the bell students switch between heavy and light movement.

### **Speed – PowerPoint Slide 8** (minimum 10mins)

*We are going to explore Laban's third component of movement: Speed. Speed is split into 2 elements: quick and sustained. Let's explore how it feels to move quickly in our bodies. Act out the movements as I read them out loud, you can add your own creative flare to these movements. Focus on your own movements, you do not need to interact with your classmates.*

*We are going to explore how it feels to move quickly. Start by moving around the room at a normal pace, not too fast and not too slow. Now, imagine you are*

*walking on a busy street full of people. You must move quickly if you want to get to class before the first bell. As you walk along the street you need to move past people stepping from side to side. How do you feel? Are you feeling rushed or excited? You quickly dodge people turning street corners and racing along the sidewalk. Now imagine you are a tiny frog deep in the Amazon rainforest. You quickly leap from tree to tree. You speedily bounce onto a big leaf which dips and sways. How do your frog feet feel bouncing and gripping leaves and branches? Explore how it feels to move quickly around the room on your own. When I clap my hands, you are going to stop moving quickly and return to your regular body. Give your whole body a shake letting go of the feeling of being quick. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, what did you feel when you were moving quickly?*

*We are going to explore how it feels to move in a sustained way. Start by moving around the room at a normal pace, not too fast and not too slow. When you move your body in a sustained way your body moves at an even, constant, and smooth tempo. Imagine you are sloth, crawling continuously along a tree branch. Move your arms slowly and steadily in big arching circles. Stretch your fingers all the way out in front of you. Perhaps you find something to eat? How can you use the same amount of energy for every single movement? Now imagine you are a sailboat steadily traveling in the open sea. You move up and down with each smooth wave. A light breeze is blowing straight ahead at an even speed. How can you use your breathing to help you move in a sustained way? Try to match your inhales and exhales. Explore how it feels to move in a sustained way around the room on your own. When I clap my hands, you are going to stop moving in a sustained way and return to your regular body. Give your whole body a shake letting go of the feeling of sustained. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, what did you feel when you were moving in a sustained way?*

### **Discussion** (minimum 5mins)

- Discuss with students how it felt to move quickly vs sustained. Ask students to think about different parts of their bodies and other examples of quick and sustained movement.

Get students to move around the room moving to the music. When you ring the bell students switch between quick and sustained movement.

### **Flow – PowerPoint Slide 9** (minimum 10mins)

*We are going to explore Laban's fourth component of movement: Flow. Flow is split into 2 elements: bound and free. Let's explore how it feels to move quickly in our bodies. Act out the movements as I read them out loud, you can add your own creative flare to these movements. Focus on your own movements, you do not need to interact with your classmates.*

*We are going to explore how it feels to move with a bound body. Start by tensing all the muscles in your face, feel your jaw clench and your lips press against each other. Let that feeling go and relax your face. Now stand or sit up as high as you can. Try to engage all the muscles in your back and tummy. Try to activate all the muscles in your body at once. How do your hands feel when they are bound? Are they stretched out or held firmly closed? How does your belly feel? Try to engage your core. You can do that by trying to get your belly button to touch your spine. Notice what your shoulders are doing? Are they reaching up towards your ears? Try to keep all your muscles engaged but let your shoulders slide down so you aren't crunching your neck. Imagine you are wearing a full suit of armour. Move around the room with this full suit of armour on. This suit is a little bit heavy so you will have to use your full body to move around. Now imagine you are a judge. You are stern but fair. How would you move around the room like an important judge? How do you look around the room and use your neck in a bound way? Explore how it feels to move in a bound way around the room on your own. When I clap my hands, you are going to stop moving in a bound way and return to your regular body. Give your whole body a shake letting go of the feeling of bound. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, what did you feel when you were moving in a bound way?*

*We are going to explore how it feels to move with a free body. Let's start by moving our spines in circles. Let your shoulders and neck join in as you move your back around and around. Wiggle your fingers. Pull some funny faces, can you let your tongue hang out and blink your eyes open and shut? Imagine you are a bubbling brook. Your water moves around freely, bouncing and flowing this way and that. You feel as if you can move in any direction. How would a little fish swimming in this small stream move? Imagine you are this little fish. You move along with the water searching for some food. How do your fish fins move? Now imagine you are a tiny dandelion seed floating in the wind. Your movements go along with the wind, and you have no idea where you are going. Explore how it feels to move in freely around the room on your own. When I clap my hands, you are going to stop moving in a freely and return to your regular body. Give your whole body a shake letting go of the feeling of free. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, what did you feel when you were moving freely?*

### **Discussion** (minimum 5mins)

- Discuss with students how it felt to move in a bound vs free way. Ask students to think about different parts of their bodies and other examples of bound and free movement.

Get students to move around the room moving to the music. When you ring the bell students switch between bound and free movement.

**Combo Dance - PowerPoint Slide 10** (30+ minutes)

Students explore moving with multiple movement prompts at the same time. Assign each component a number from 1 – 8. Students pick 2 numbers from a hat and as a group explore moving with the 2 movement prompts. For example: Steff picks the numbers 4 and 8. The class will explore how it feels to move lightly and free at the same time.

- |              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| 1 – Direct   | 5 – Quick     |
| 2 – Indirect | 6 – Sustained |
| 3 – Heavy    | 7 – Bound     |
| 4 – Light    | 8 – Free      |

**Older students PowerPoint slide 11** - As students become familiar and comfortable with exploring multiple movement prompts you can begin exploring Laban’s Eight Efforts using the movement chart.

**Laban Music - PowerPoint slide 13** (20mins)

In small groups or alone, students search and present on a piece of music that they feel represents one of Laban’s efforts. For example, the song Here Comes the Sun by the Beatles could be described as Laban’s effort Glide– direct, light, sustained and free.

Students present their rationale as to why the song they chose fits into a certain effort. Students may consider how the composition, lyrics, emotions, and instrumentation contributes to their chosen effort.

Students will listen to a portion (or full song) and ask their peers to guess which effort they chose. The presenters will then reveal and present on their chosen effort and music piece.

**Literature Search- PowerPoints slide 14** (60mins) **Older students**

In small groups students will search and present on a piece of written text (poem or paragraph) that they feel represents one of Laban’s efforts. For example, the poem Backyard by Leonard Cohen could be described as Laban’s effort Wring– indirect, heavy sustained and bound. If your students are only familiar with Laban’s main components, they can choose 1 element. For example, Tigger could represent Flow - free

Students will analyse the written text and present their rationale as to why they connected the writing to an effort. Students may consider how the punctuation, vocabulary words, content, and emotional connection to the text contributes to their chosen effort.



Students will read their text aloud to their peers. Students' classmates will guess which effort student presenters connected to their text. The presenters will then reveal and present on their chosen effort and text.

**Character Search – PowerPoint Slide 15** (30 – 40minutes) **Younger Students**

In small groups students will search and present on a fictional character that they feel represents one of Laban's efforts. For example, the character Tigger from Winnie The Pooh could be described as Laban's effort Flick– indirect, light, quick and free.

Students will analyse the character and present their rationale as to why they connected the character to an effort. Students may consider how the punctuation, vocabulary words, content, and emotional connection to the text contributes to their chosen effort.

Students will draw and present a picture to their peers. Students' classmates will guess which effort student presenters connected to their character. Presenter will then reveal and present on their chosen effort.

**Processing Questions PowerPoint Slide 16** (15- 20mins)

- How can you use Laban's movements in other parts of your life?
- How could you use Laban's movements to enhance your learning?
- How does movement connect you to your emotions?

## **Larger Unit Project - Maze**

Using Laban's Eight Efforts students will imagine, plan, and design a maze and travel vehicle.

Begin this larger project by discussing how students applied Laban's movement prompts to different mediums (text, music, and characters). Using this knowledge, students will practice using the eight Efforts as inspiration for a design challenge. In groups students will discuss, plan, and design a maze blueprint and vehicle prototype. Students can create a 3D version of their maze and vehicle or create detailed blueprints.

Begin by discussing and brainstorming how Laban's Efforts could be translated into creating a maze and the vehicle that will travel through the maze. Students may consider the following.

- Maze path
- Terrain
- Time limit
- Weight
- Movement of the vehicle
- Construction of the vehicle

Students must use at least 2 of Laban's movement components as inspiration for their creations.

Set up the classroom in gallery style where students have their own space to display their work. They may walk around the room and explore their peer's work.

As a group, discuss the following

- How did Laban's movement prompts inspire your design?
- What was challenging during this project?
- How can you use the eight efforts in other situations?
- How did you use divergent and convergent thinking to complete this task?

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