

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."

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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.