

Write Team Teachers' Conference

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What is creativity?

- ‘An advanced learning capability which is engaged when normal learning alone won’t do the trick.’
(Guy Claxton)
- ‘The ability to come up with ideas or artefacts that are *new, surprising and valuable*.’ (Margaret Boden, 2004:1)

Creativity enables us to:

- to come up with new ideas when we need them;
- to make judgements (to tell good ideas from bad ones);
- to have tenacity i.e. to see ideas through to their conclusion.

The Romantic Myth: Creativity is not:

- **Grand:** available to only a few;
- **Remote:** the Romantic notion of the poet in his (sic) garret;
- **Divinely inspired:** located in the artistic temperament of the individual;
- **Always successful/right first time;**
- **Just 'released':** discipline and effort required to transform good ideas into real solutions.

The Arty Myth: Creativity is not:

- **only arty**: think of scientists, economists, engineers, surgeons...
- **opposed to logic**: ‘imagination versus logic’, i.e. the notion that creative people do not make judgements about what they do; it is a composite of both
- **‘anything goes’**: the need for pattern, coherence and frameworks; the importance of collaboration, teamwork, feedback
- **just one trainable skill or generic faculty**: it is a composite of many skills, attitudes, learning and habits. Creative people are ‘conductors of a mental orchestra’ (Guy Claxton).

The Cuddly Myth: Creativity is not:

Creativity is not always desirable

It can be uncomfortable because:

- it asks questions which we would rather overlook;
- it takes risks;
- it makes connections which are not always obvious;
- it is not always satisfied with the status quo

Writing Theory

- Flower and Hayes (1980, 1981)
 - Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987)
 - Kellogg (1994)
 - Sharples (1999)
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- Poetry/Creative writing as ‘knowledge transformation’? Or ‘knowledge discovery’ (Galbraith, 2009)?

'Signs of progress'

Dunn (2001)

- Surprising yourself; having knowledge of what might surprise others
- Saying what you did not know you were going to say beforehand
- Taking steps into the unknown

Sharples (1999): Creativity theory

- Narrowing range of possibilities at each step
- Relaxing the constraints
- Returning again to a previous point

Habits of mind which could be called inventive operational schema: a 'web of tactics'

Nature of the research

- We want to capture pupil and teacher voice
- The research is not done 'to you' but **by** you

Some questions

- What do you want to get out of the project?
- How do you want to capture the data?
- What is the difference between how writers and teachers teach writing?
- What 'observable behaviours' can you classify as more confident?