

Assessment and Creativity

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Creativity in Education

- Creativity is widely acknowledged as vital for social and economic innovation as well as for individual development and well-being
- It is a major education policy priority in countries across the world
- Yet there is no widely shared definition of creativity in education policy
- There are also significant challenges for assessment of “open” learning – where outcomes are unknown
- Some forms of assessment have the potential to undermine creativity

An Overview: Three kinds of assessment

- Summative assessment
 - Teacher-developed tests
 - Large-scale standards-based tests
 - May be norm-referenced or criterion-referenced
- Formative assessment
 - Classroom-based dialogue, extended questioning, student projects
 - Feedback (timely, task-focused, includes suggestions for improvement)
 - Always criterion-referenced
- Ipsative assessment
 - Portfolios, tracking tools
 - Referenced to the individual learner's progress

Each of these assessment methods gathers different kinds of information for different purposes, and on a different timeline



An Overview of Creativity

Creative Dispositions

- Personality variables, such as “openness to experiences”; curiosity, willingness to explore the unknown’ and ability to tolerate ambiguity.
- Cognitive and affective variables such as effort and persistence, the ability to generate a variety of ideas., to question and to reflect critically, and to synthesise ideas from diverse sources.
- Creative self-efficacy – that is, belief in one’s capacity to address challenges and to persist – as well as willingness to take intellectual risks – are particularly important. Intrinsic motivation, engagement and intense focus.
- Active participation in social networks has been identified as important to enhancing creative potential.



Creative processes

- Creative individuals are exploratory, analytical, are able to bring together ideas, and evaluate them. They have also developed effective approaches to problem finding and problem solving in different domains.
- Creativity in any given domain entails deep knowledge and the capacity to access and structure that knowledge.
- Learners may strengthen creative capacities, ability to solve problems when addressing significant problems or when confronted with new information that challenges their previous conceptions.

Creative products

- Among experts on creativity, there is fairly wide agreement that creative work is novel, appropriate to the task at hand, and of high quality as compared to some reference group.



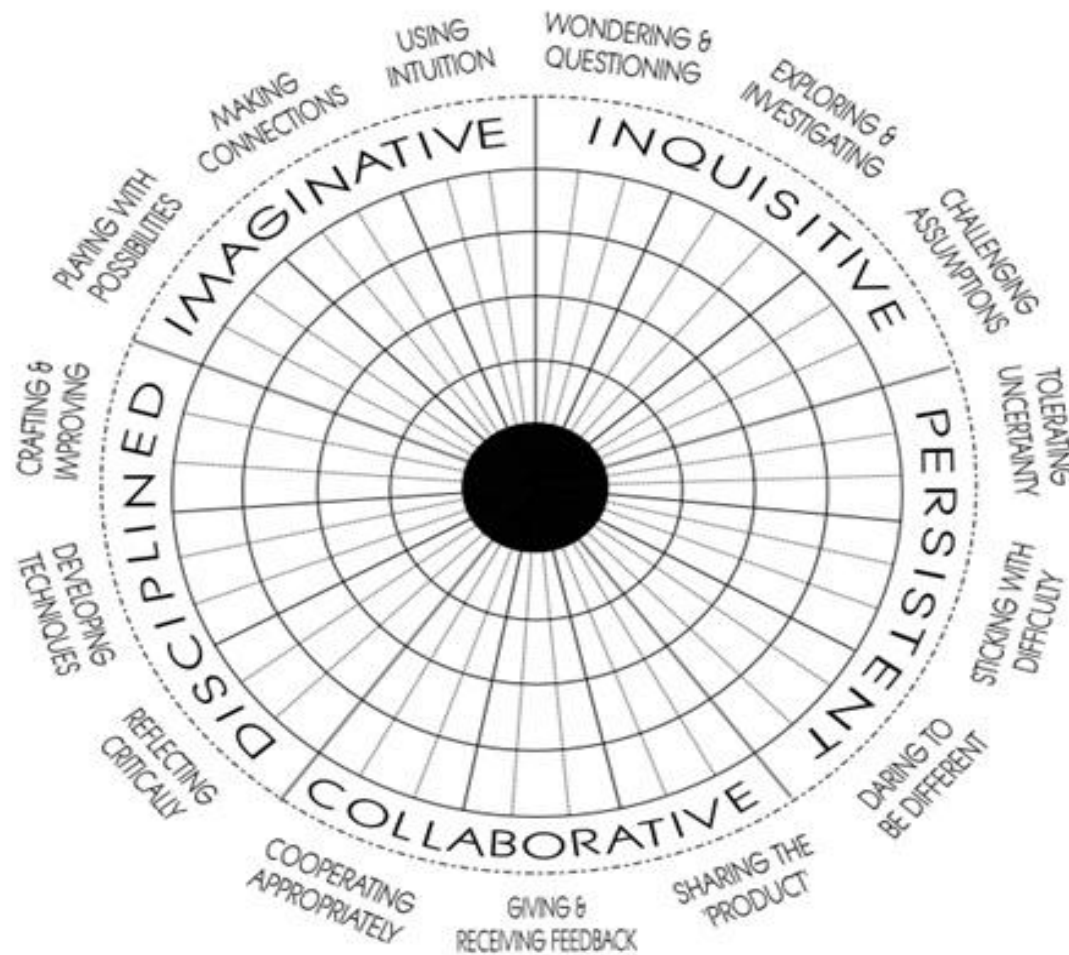
Challenges in assessing creativity

- Lack of a shared definition of creativity
- No clear reference standards
- A perception that *all* assessments undermine creativity, rather than supporting it

As a result

- Learners receive little guidance on how they might improve or deepen their work
- In schools (and universities?), neither professors nor learners are encouraged to develop their own sense of what counts as high-quality creative work

A tool to assess learners' creative dispositions



Spencer, Lucas and Claxton (2012)



Developing competences to assess creative work (processes and products)

- Develop classroom-based formative assessment
 - Focus on the quality of work, rather than the learner's ego
 - Make suggestions for improvement
 - Support a growth mindset
- Refine judgments of what counts as high-quality creative work
 - Co-construct understanding of quality, criteria for its assessment
- Develop competences for self- and peer-assessment
 - Draw on cognitive and non-cognitive capacities in new and unfamiliar situations (i.e. to assess novel products)

Thank you

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