



Creativity

What it is: Creativity is the ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns and relationships to create meaningful new ideas.

“You can't just give someone a creativity injection. You have to create an environment for curiosity and a way to encourage people and get the best out of them.” ~ Ken Robinson

Why it's important: Data show that creativity is the preeminent factor in lifelong success¹, that “creative arts” instruction may lead to improved standardized test scores in math and reading² and is predicted by over 70% of employers surveyed to increase in importance in the 21st Century workplace.³ Creativity requires practice and repetition. During the creative thinking process, neurotransmitters are stimulated and replenished. Going through the motions of generating new ideas energizes the brain and strengthens neurological pathways.⁴

Strategies to implement Creativity in ACCESS Afterschool:

- Create a learning environment that encourages a culture of creativity and innovation
- Foster a “Fail to Succeed” mindset (students are often afraid to make mistakes or take risks, which inhibits creative thinking)
- Create a “Studio” or “Café” atmosphere – studies suggest that music and moderate ambient noise, similar to a café, can stimulate creative thinking processes.⁵
- Allow students time to invent, innovate and explore creative expression without a specific project, process or end-product in mind.

Applications/Examples:

- Anime Club would use creativity to develop their own script, storyboard or animation project
- Beading/Knitting/Sewing classes design an original work (no pattern.)
- Biking/Running class designs a trail or terrain park
- Cooking students might create a new recipe or design a menu
- Fitness students craft a personalized workout based on their unique needs & interests
- Graphic Design students invent a new product and design the packaging for it
- Lego Building students invent and build a structure that solves a defined problem or need

¹ Hokanson, B., & Bart, W. (2014, January 5). Creativity and scholastic achievement in school-aged students. *Minnevale!* Retrieved from <http://minnevale.mnasa.org/inside/work/creativity-scholastic-achievement-school-aged-students/>

² Stalcup, M., & Vaughn, D. (2014, September 10). The data is in: The arts boost student learning, particularly for English Language Learners. Retrieved from <http://blog.artsusa.org/2014/09/10/the-data-is-in-the-arts-boost-student-learning-particularly-for-english-language-learners/>

³ American Management Association (2012). Critical skills survey. Retrieved from <http://www.amanet.org/uploaded/2012-Critical-Skills-Survey.pdf>

⁴ Michalko, M. (2014, May 20). 7 tenets of creative thinking. *Edutopia*. Retrieved from <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/7-tenets-of-creative-thinking-michael-michalko>

⁵ Ravi M., Rui (Juliet) Z., and Amar C. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (December 2012), pp. 784-799