



High School

National FFA Organization

## Lesson HS.26

# UNDERSTANDING CREATIVITY

**Unit.** Stage One of Development—ME

**Problem Area.** How Do I Begin to Grow.

**Precepts.** J2: Think creatively.

**National Standards.** NL-ENG.K-12.12 — Applying Language Skills — Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes.

**Student Learning Objectives.** As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Define creative.
- 2 Identify strategies of thinking creatively.
- 3 Explain the benefits of creativity for leadership.



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**Time.** Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



**Resources.**

*Gelb, Michael J. How to Think Like Leonardo Da Vinci: Seven Steps to Genius Every Day. New York, New York. Delacorte Press, 2000.*  
*National FFA Organization’s Essential Learnings, 2003.*  
*McCoy, Charles W. Why didn’t I think of that? Think the Unthinkable and Achieve Creative Greatness. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey. Prentice Hall Press, 2002.*  
*Morgan, Ronald R., et al. Rethinking Creativity. Bloomington, Indiana. Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation. 2000.*  
*Webster’s Universal College Dictionary. New York, New York. Random House Inc., 1997.*

✓ **Tools, Equipment, and Supplies**

- ✓ Writing Surface
- ✓ Transparencies
- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ Assortment of markers
- ✓ HS.26.Assess—one per student
- ✓ Copies of handouts—one per student
- ✓ Invisible thinking hats—one per student

 **Key Terms.** The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ Brainstorming
- ▶ Creative
- ▶ Irrational
- ▶ Rational



**Interest Approach**



? Have you ever seen a crazy or silly commercial on television and thought it was pretty funny? Then you think, “What will they think of next?” The people that develop those commercials have creativity skills that everyone else has. However, the people that make those commercials have improved their skills with practice. Today I need for you to use your imagination and dreaming abilities as we work together to understand creativity. First, I need you to close your eyes. Paint this vivid picture in your mind. You are walking down the street where you see a fast car. You get in the car. You start the car and hear the engine purr. As you drive the car down a road you turn on the radio to listen to some music. On the left side of the road, you see something very strange. It is large and it is coming your way. You recognize the thing now, but you have never seen one this big. All of a sudden the thing stops and falls down. May want to slam a book. Open your eyes.

*Pose the following questions to the students and capture student’s answers on the writing surface. Potential answers will vary to all three questions depending on the creativity of your students.*





What did you see? What kind of music were you listening to? What color was your car?  
Wow, we have a creative mind already! You see, everyone has creative thinking skills, but we need to learn how to use creativity to our benefit.

## SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

**Objective 1.** Define creativity.



Now that we have experienced thinking creatively, we need to take a moment to find the meaning of creative. For this next activity, we need to continue being brilliant thinkers as we work together to solve the definition before us.

*Use a Descartes Moment to identify what students know about creativity. After two to three minutes of discussion, be sure to capture the definition of creativity on a writing surface or show HS.26.TM.A.*

I. Define creative.

A. **Creative:**having the quality or power of original thought.

*Use a Choral Response Moment to engage student learning and check for understanding.*

**Objective 2.** Identify strategies of thinking creatively.



Great! Now that we have defined creative, we can begin learning strategies for thinking creatively. In the next activity, we need to use our unstoppable imagination to identify great strategies to think critically.

*Pass out invisible hats, only one per student. You need to model putting your hat on first so that no one puts his or her hat on backwards.*



I am going to ask a couple of questions to warm up your creativity, but first I want to pass out your creative hats to help you think creatively. Be sure your hat is the right size. If your hat is too tight, it will cut off circulation to your brain and you won't be creative. If it is too big, you won't be able to see other people's creative ideas.

*Exchange hats if necessary so everyone has the right size. Have students capture the following answers to the questions in their notebook.*





Now to warm up, think of the last time you had a really creative idea. What was it. What motivated you to be creative. *Possible answers will vary depending on the students' situations and experiences. Have volunteers share with the rest of the class.*

Show HS.26.TM.B, HS.26.TM.C and HS.26.TM.D, or capture the following on a writing surface. Have students capture in their notebook.



Now let's discuss strategies for becoming more creative.

## II. Strategies for thinking creatively.

A. Become more SENSE-itive. Use your five senses to discover the world around you. Exercising your senses will strengthen your creative skills. Creative people are usually sensitive people who use information from all five senses. Most of us tend to rely on one or two senses, usually sight. These activities will help develop your other senses.

### 1. Look

- a. Next time you are in a park, pick out 15 kinds of green.
- b. Find objects and pictures in the clouds of the sky.

### 2. Listen

- a. Stop and distinguish 10 separate sounds in the environment around you.
- b. Listen to the objects around you and pretend they are talking to each other. Pretend you know what they are saying.

### 3. Touch

- a. Reach out like a blind person and touch things around you. How will you remember what they feel like.
- b. Use clay to replicate the texture of objects.

### 4. Taste

- a. Try describing a taste to someone else, such as chocolate.
- b. Try tasting different foods you usually do not eat. Write down on paper a definition for that taste.

### 5. Smell

- a. Conjure pleasant smells in your mind—perfume, wood, smoke—and see, feel, hear where they take you.
- b. Smell-test food in the refrigerator while blindfolded. You have to guess what the food is before eating.

B. Brainstorming can be a fun and successful way to solve problems. Use these steps to aid in the brainstorming process.

1. Brainstorming—a group technique for solving problems, generating ideas, and stimulating creative thinking.

1. Select a group leader to write on a flipchart. This person will lead discussion but will not add his or her own ideas to the flipchart. Every thought from the group is recorded on the flipchart.



2. Take turns giving ideas. All ideas are recorded however silly they seem. Members are encouraged to contribute an idea or “pass”. It may help to number ideas on the flipchart for reference.
  3. After two members “pass”, switch to “popcorn” mode where anyone in the team can call out an idea.
  4. Popcorn mode is when anyone can “pop” out an idea without being called on or waiting his or her turn.
  5. No evaluation of ideas is permitted until the end. Crazy and “stupid” ideas should be encouraged as well as those that are adaptations to ideas already on the flipchart.
  6. Once the leader feels there are enough ideas, everyone works together to find a solution through a process of elimination.
- C. Avoid creative blockers. The following are creativity blockers that you may not be aware that you have. Freeing yourself from the creative blockers will let your creative juices flow.
1. Fear of making mistakes.
    - a. Many people fear making mistakes because they don’t want to lose or look bad in front of other people.
    - b. Realize that everyone makes mistakes and that it is natural to make mistakes.
    - c. Mistakes are great learning tools if treated as such.
  2. Fear of appearing childish.
    - a. Many people are afraid of appearing childish because other people may think they are “dumb” or make fun of them.
    - b. Children are very creative because they are still discovering the world around them and don’t yet worry about what other people think them.
    - c. Don’t be afraid to look at the world through a child’s eyes.
  3. Beliefs.
    - a. Many people inhibit their creativity by refusing to accept another idea. They believe that if it hasn’t changed in years, it doesn’t need to be changed.
    - b. Many great ideas were once unbelievable.
  4. Rational thought.
    - a. Rational—based on or agreeable to reason.
    - b. People are afraid of creativity because it doesn’t always follow rational thought.
    - c. Solutions that are not always obvious have been discovered by being irrational.
    - d. Irrational—lacking sound judgment or logic.
  5. The weight of previous “models”
    - a. People are afraid of a creative change because of the effect it will have on the company or the organization. It would be easier to deal with the current problems than deal with a creative change.
    - b. Many times people don’t want to change the old “model” because it is dependable. This may cause habits, which are hard for people to break.
  6. Fear of consequences.
    - a. Many people don’t want to use a creative idea because of the change it will bring on him or her or the team.
    - b. A creative idea often leads to the unknown and uncharted territory with no turning back. People don’t want to be blamed if something goes wrong.



## 7. Self-doubt

- a. Many people simply don't believe that they have the ability to be creative.
- b. Confidence and practice will help you become a better creative thinker.

*Divide students into four groups. Use a Fred Astaire Moment to engage student learning and check for understanding. Give students three minutes to plan their dance for the class.*

### Objective 3. Examine benefits of creativity used in leadership.



We just discussed strategies for becoming more creative. This next activity will help us determine the benefits of creativity. As a student, I need you to be inventive and then share your knowledge with no limits to your creativity. It has been said that all great accomplishment had been considered to be impossible—unknown. Someone had to think of those ideas for them to become reality.

*Have students think of great accomplishments that were once considered absurd or impossible. Capture student ideas on the writing surface. Possible answers include the airplane, the telephone, electric light, laptop computers, plastic made from corn, genetically modified organisms.*



None of these things would be possible, if it wasn't for creative people. Creative thinking is essential for leadership. Next, we will examine benefits of using creativity in leadership.

*Show HS.26.TM.E or capture the following information on a writing surface.*

### III. Benefits of creativity used in leadership.

- A. Visualize the “big picture”.
  1. Looking at the big picture will allow you to see how everything fits together.
  2. Seeing the big picture will change your perspective to account for other problems and result in new solutions.
- B. Make opportunities out of a problem.
  1. Behind every crisis there is a hidden opportunity waiting to be discovered.
  2. Use creative skills to find that opportunity.
- C. Predict problems before they occur.
  1. Creative thinking allows you to find answers to problems that don't exist yet.
  2. When that problem does occur, you are ready because you have already thought about all possible solutions.
- D. Become positive when others are negative.
  1. When you use creative thinking skills to solve the unknown, you gain confidence and become positive when others have doubt.
  2. Others will look up to you as a leader if you remain positive when facing conflict.

*Use a Party Host Moment to engage student learning and check for understanding.*



 Now that we can define creativity, identify creative strategies, and have seen how creativity benefits leadership, we need to use our imagination to interpret the benefits to the rest of the class. To review, we need to work together creatively by looking for the questions to our answers.

### Review/Summary

Use an A and Q Moment to engage student learning. At the end of the class be sure that everyone returns their thinking hats.

### Application

#### ►Extended Classroom Activity:

Have students think of ideas that are considered to be impossible today, but someday will be a part of every day life.

#### ►FFA Activity:

Have students brainstorm new ideas for the chapter's Program of Activities.

#### ►SAE Activity:

Have students brainstorm ideas to add value to their SAE product or service.

### ✓ Evaluation

HS.26.Assess is provided to measure Objective 1, 2 and 3.

#### Answers to Assessment:

1. Having the power or quality of original thought.
2. Select a group leader to write on a writing surface.  
Take turns giving ideas.  
After two members “pass”, switch to “popcorn” mode where anyone can call out an idea.  
No evaluation of ideas is permitted until the end.  
Once the leader feels there are enough ideas, work together to find a solution.
3. Possible answers include:  
Fear of making mistakes  
Fear of appearing childish



Beliefs.

Rational thought.

The weight of previous “models”

Fear of consequences

Self-doubt

4. A

5. C

6. A



## UNDERSTANDING CREATIVITY

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► **Define:**

1. Creativity

► **Short Answer:**

2. List the five steps of brainstorming.
3. List three creativity blockers that we discussed in class.

► **Multiple Choice:**

**Circle the correct answer.**

4. Creativity can be used to
  - A. visualize the “big picture.”
  - B. take a break and daydream.
  - C. be silly in a meeting.
  - D. all of the above.
5. You own a company that produces egg cartons, but have an unsold stock of 100,000 cartons. Selling the egg cartons to a greenhouse for starting plants would be an example of
  - A. being silly.
  - B. visualizing the big picture.
  - C. turning a problem into opportunity.
  - D. becoming positive when others are negative.
6. Effective leaders use creativity to
  - A. predict problems before they occur.
  - B. show off.
  - C. impress people.
  - D. none of the above.



## DEFINE CREATIVITY

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**Creativity**—having the quality or power of original thought.



# STRATEGIES FOR THINKING CREATIVELY

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Become more **SENSE-itive**. Use your five senses to discover the world around you.

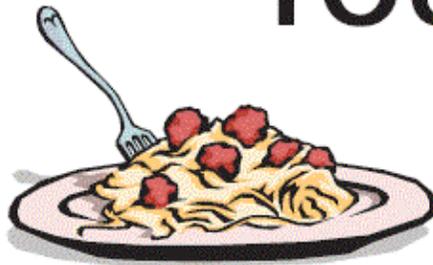
**LOOK**



**LISTEN**



**TOUCH**



**TASTE**

**SMELL**



## STRATEGIES FOR THINKING CREATIVELY (CONTINUED)

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◆ **Brain storming can be a fun and successful way to solve problems. Use these steps to aid in the brainstorming process.**

→ **Brainstorming—a group technique for solving problems, generating ideas, and stimulating creative thinking.**

→ **Select a group leader to write on a flipchart.**

→ **Take turns giving ideas.**

→ **After two members “pass”, switch to “popcorn” mode where anyone in the team can “pop” out an idea without being called on or waiting his or her turn.**

→ **No evaluation of ideas is permitted until the end.**

→ **Once the leader feels there are enough ideas, everyone works together to find a solution through a process of elimination.**



## STRATEGIES FOR THINKING CREATIVELY (CONTINUED)

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◆ **Avoid creative blockers. The following are creativity blockers that you may not be aware that you have. Freeing yourself from the creative blockers will let your creative juices flow.**

- **Fear of making mistakes.**
- **Fear of appearing childish.**
- **Beliefs.**
- **Rational thought.**
- **The weight of previous “models”**
- **Fear of consequences.**
- **Self-doubt.**



## BENEFITS OF CREATIVITY USED IN LEADERSHIP

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- ◆ Visualize the “big picture”.
- ◆ Make opportunities out of a problem.
- ◆ Predict problems before they occur.
- ◆ Become positive when others are negative.

