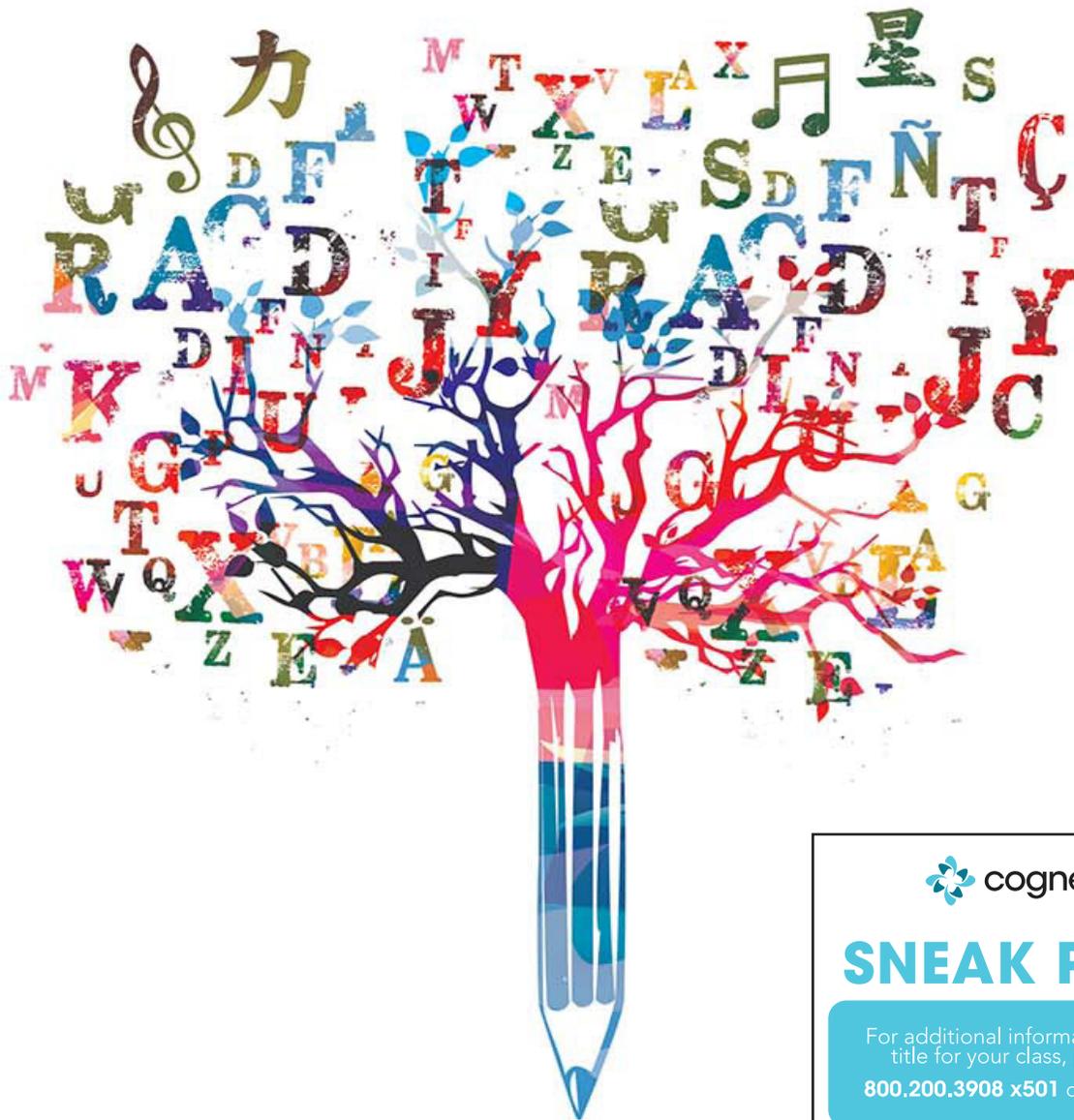


PRACTICAL CREATIVITY

Activities and Ideas for Your Language Classroom



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PRACTICAL CREATIVITY

Activities and Ideas for Your Language Classroom

FIRST EDITION

ANNE CUMMINGS HLAS



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PRACTICAL CREATIVITY

Activities and Ideas for Your Language Classroom



**TO MY MOM, "WOW," FOR TEACHING ME THE
POTENTIAL AND POWER OF CREATIVITY.**

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This book would not have been possible without my creative partner, Amy Young, who co-leads the Creativity in the Classroom summer institute with me at the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota. I would also like to thank Brian Hodge-Rice, one of our talented workshop facilitators, for inspiring me to learn more about improv comedy. Additionally, I'd like to thank the participants from our 2015, 2016, and 2017 workshops who were always willing to share their insights and take risks. Also, the staff at CARLA, specifically Karin Larson, made the workshop possible.

One of the finest divergent thinkers I know, my husband Chris, greatly supported me throughout this project with his wit, steady feedback, and creative problem solving. He introduced me to wuzzles and then doodles, proofed puzzles, brainstormed with me, and constantly broadened my thinking. Our children "Sophie and Calvin" also participated in this book, jumping at a moment's notice to help model or build with me. Their daily playfulness was a constant source of creative energy for me.

I am also fortunate to be surrounded by visionary friends and colleagues, who constantly feed my creative engine and push me to new challenges. They provided feedback and shared insights while I was writing this book. Ally Fregoso shared her vast knowledge of literacy and kindergarten. Kelly Conroy tested creative challenges and read early drafts of chapters. Trisha Koch and Pamela Larson shared ideas from the secondary classroom and read drafts of chapters. Susan Hildebrandt coached me through the book-writing process and provided feedback on versions of the chapters. John Wolfe provided me with connections to the English language learner world. Debbie Hammons taught me about positive psychology. Pete Swanson sent me resources. Jessica Miller shared insights on teaching French, Josh Brown provided sage writing advice, and Tomomi Kakegawa shared knowledge regarding teaching Japanese.

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My family has also greatly supported me in the making of this book. My mom Janet's creative spirit is inherent to many of the ideas in the book, allowing me to reflect and be grateful for the truly creative environment in which I was raised. My dad Patrick and stepmom Jackie gifted me the "key to creativity," and my sisters, Ellen and Jill, checked on me regularly and always invited me to discuss my notions of creativity. In addition, my extended family continually offered words of encouragement and support. My academic family, Dr. Leslie Schrier and Dr. Michael Everson, also guided me as a writer and brought back fond memories of graduate school at the University of Iowa.

Finally, I'm grateful for the team at Cognella publishing who were open to new formats and supported the creative nature of this book, and to my content editor, Susana Christie, who was with me every step of the way.

My creative spark began when I was a child and my parents, along with my sisters, provided constant opportunities for creative expression. Our backyard hosted the neighborhood Olympic games with events that we designed, including carrying a tray with cups of waters while we ran an obstacle course and tossing a raw egg back and forth trying not to break it. We even designed home-made medals for everyone who participated. In elementary school, my creativity continued to flourish when I met my best friend. Together we sought novel projects (novel to us!), such as forming an original band called the Double As, designing a clothing line, and writing original mystery audio books. In this creative environment, I let my imagination run wild, building and designing as much as I could. Over the years, my creativity has grown through lots of practice, a supportive environment, a drive to learn more about the topic, and a creative attitude. Many of these elements form the foundation of this book and will be examined more closely in each chapter.

Using a creative mindset, I invite you to approach this text knowing creativity can be learned and developed (Sternberg, 2006). There *are* ways to increase creativity in the classroom in both our students and ourselves. To this end, the text offers a set of practical classroom applications designed to boost language learning through multimodal practices and creative play—without having to reinvent everything that we do. In addition, we will prioritize establishing an atmosphere that supports creative thinkers who take risks and work collaboratively.

In an ever-changing landscape of hurdles related to assessment, it can be challenging to carve out time for creativity, but it is essential. When we think back to our most memorable lessons and learning experiences, we see that they typically tap into our creativity, inspiring more imaginative play in our students and pushing us as educators to be more creative. Unlocking our creative potential, even one lesson at a time, can boost learning and revitalize our classrooms.

PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

This book was written for practicing teachers with the intention of providing examples of practical creativity for the language classroom. It is intended for those concerned with teaching language at the elementary, middle, and high school levels as well as at the post-secondary level. In addition, it is a guide for both method and content teachers working with language learners (e.g., mainstream, immersion). The book centers around essential questions:

- What is creativity?
- What can it look like in the classroom?
- How can I inspire creativity in my students?
- How can I approach my content more creatively?

These questions are essential to teaching and learning and, therefore, they are questions we need to address.

Each chapter of the book contributes to the overarching goal of walking through the process of planning creativity-inspired lessons. With these questions in mind, the text includes a summary of the research and theory that supports creativity in the classroom. Additionally, it includes many concrete activities that can be transferred to your learning context and learning goals. Regardless of the planning template or method that you use, you can use the book to help you get started with ideas to use in your classroom. For example, you may read a creative challenge tied to an objective for describing cities. In the task, students are asked to build a city block from a set of provided materials in a fourth-grade immersion classroom. It is my hope that this idea could be adapted to your ninth-grade French classroom (e.g., students build the ruins of an ancient city and describe it) or to a post-secondary classroom (e.g., students build a city of the future and describe it). Piggybacking off an idea is one tool used to generate creative ideas for your own context.

Additionally, each chapter begins with a creative warm-up to get you “in the zone”, contains opportunities for creative play throughout the chapter, and concludes with a creative challenge to keep you thinking. Opportunities to fuel your creative engine run throughout the text and are designed to capture your interest and spark creativity. Further, the last segment of each chapter includes a creativity journal, a reflection opportunity that allows and encourages you to make connections between your own experiences and the ideas presented in the chapters. As a final point, I would like you to interact with the book as you read by jotting notes in the margins, adding three stars to your favorite activities, circling ideas with colored markers, and writing notes to your future self about what you want to remember.

It is my hope that the activities and ideas presented will lead to a more creative you.

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PART I:

In a competitive and challenging world, our students must develop complex problem-solving skills in order to achieve long-term success. Regrettably, our education system seems to be pushing intellectual conformity and discouraging risk-taking (Sternberg, 2003; Sternberg & Williams, 1996). Now, more than ever, we need our future generations to be willing to think outside of the box and embrace the complex world in which we live.

This process begins with recognizing the inherent creative potential in all of our students as something that should be nurtured and facilitated throughout the education process. Providing students with skills to support novel thinking, encouraging students to be curious, and using problem-solving skills work toward supporting learning. The inclusion of creative play in the classroom not only stimulates learning, but is a core objective in and of itself.

In the first half of the book, we will address many of these areas by providing rationale and reasons for creativity as well as examining thinking skills

UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF CREATIVITY IN LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING

and the characteristics of creative thinkers. In his model of how to become a more creative person, Gary Davis (1982) focused on four elements:

- 1 increasing creative consciousness;
- 2 becoming more familiar with the topic of creativity;
- 3 using creative thinking techniques; and
- 4 being self-actualized (e.g., realizing one's potential).

Following Davis's (1982) lead, these chapters will provide opportunities to challenge and sharpen your creative abilities using many of the tools presented.

In the first part, we will examine variables that optimize creativity as well as learn more about the theory and research behind them. Chapter 1 addresses characteristics of creativity and its importance as a twenty-first century skill. Chapter 2 describes ways to cultivate the creative thinker. Chapter 3 works to describe and sharpen your divergent and convergent thinking skills. Chapter 4 presents Quick Thinks, creative challenges that connect language and play.

Establishing a foundation and rationale for the integration of creativity is a first step toward building a more creativity-inspired classroom.

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WHY CREATIVITY IN THE CLASSROOM?

C H A P T E R

1

I begin with an idea, and then
it becomes something else.

—Pablo Picasso (artist)

OBJECTIVES FOR CHAPTER 1

- 1) DESCRIBE CHARACTERISTICS OF CREATIVITY
- 2) EXPLAIN CREATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING
- 3) EXPLAIN TEACHING FOR STUDENT CREATIVITY
- 4) GIVE REASONS WHY WE NEED CREATIVITY

CREATIVE WARM-UP: DRAWING WITH PICASSO

Pablo Picasso is often viewed as a creative role model who shaped the world of art. He was a prolific painter, sculptor, and illustrator. Throughout his career, he often played with new styles of art and many times used animals as a focus. In one series, Picasso drew abstract sketches of animals with a few simple lines or only one stroke of his hand ("Pablo Picasso Dog," n.d.). Looking closely at his famous Dove of Peace (Figure 1.1) or his rendition of Pigs (Figure 1.2), we can examine how he drew these animals as simple line graphics and can trace the continuous line of his brush.



FIG. 1.1 Picasso's Dove of Peace

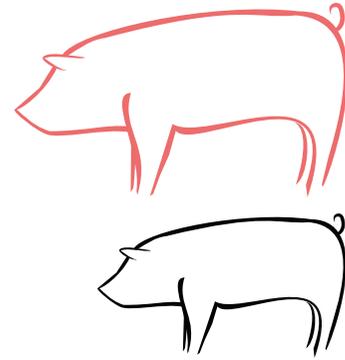


FIG. 1.2 Picasso's Pigs

DIRECTIONS: Using only one stroke of your hand, draw two different animals.	



REFLECTION QUESTION

What is the nature of creativity? Is it reserved for creative artists like Picasso, or is it something in all of us? Explain.

INTRODUCTION TO CREATIVITY

Are all students capable of being creative? Is being a creative teacher enough to inspire creativity in students? Why is creativity important? In this chapter, we'll address some of the questions that define and explain creativity, but first let's begin by examining the prominence of creativity in our education system. Ken Robinson, in a passionate plea to educators during his TED talk, notably said, "Creativity is as important as literacy and numeracy" (2006). Thanks to thinkers like him who challenge the status quo of education, we know the importance of and benefits to promoting creativity in the learning process. We also recognize that the advancement of creativity necessitates its purposeful inclusion in the classroom. Robinson believes that we must value creativity and that education must embrace creativity to survive and solve problems in today's ever-changing world, but it is often difficult to visualize what a more engaging learning environment can look like and how it can simultaneously promote language learning. Let's begin by examining some definitions of creativity.

HOW IS CREATIVITY DEFINED?

Creativity is often difficult to define. It is a complicated and multifaceted construct with numerous definitions (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2006; Runco, 2007; 2004). Some definitions of creativity focus on the characteristics of individuals and others on their process and products. A few often-cited definitions are:

- "novelty that is useful" —from The Irish Historical Library (1724);
- "the emergence of a novel, relational product, growing out of the uniqueness of the individual" —Carl Rodgers, psychologist (1954)
- "creativity is the process of bringing something new into being" —Rollo May, from *The Courage to Create* (1975)
- "digging below the surface to find previously undetected patterns, and finding connections among unrelated phenomena" —Roger von Oech, author, (2002)

While the body of work related to creativity is extensive, for the purposes of this book we will focus on a few of the characteristics of creativity that directly relate to language teaching.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CREATIVITY

When we think of creativity, we often associate names like Michelangelo or Beethoven—exceptional people whose ideas transformed their field and who received public acclamation. Is creativity a trait of the few, or is it something that can be fostered and developed in everyone? Think about a time when you built a new sandwich or invented a new word like *dramatical*. Aren't we all creative? For many, creativity is generally seen as a property of all people and used in daily life (Craft, 2001; Runco & Richards, 1997; Richards, 2007). This kind of creativity is often referred to as "everyday creativity" as opposed to "extraordinary creativity" (Craft, 2003, p. 114). Therefore, our first characteristic is that everyone can

be creative; all students have creative capacities. For this reason, let's focus on everyday creative acts and how each learning episode can provide opportunities to foster creative potential in our students.

The second characteristic is that creativity is often viewed as a process in which novel ideas or new connections become generated or recombined from existing ideas (Simonton, 2008; Jones & Richards, 2016; Runco, 2004). The daily creative acts of teachers, and the creative use of language itself, can provide opportunities for us to refashion something known to something new and different. This novelty, however, does not mean we have to reinvent the wheel. Part of being creative is piggybacking on the ideas of others or adapting something known to create something new.

The third characteristic is that creativity, by its very nature, is a collaborative endeavor (John-Steiner, 2000). In the classroom, purposeful uses of creativity are not accomplished in isolation. This book takes a sociocultural view of creativity, in which it is "not just of individual inspiration but also social factors like collaboration, networks of support, education, and cultural background" (Sawyer, 2006, p. 4) that help develop creativity. That is, creative processes and ideas are generated in social interactions and these playful interactions lead to the formation of creative products and ideas.

The next characteristic originates from observations of children playing make-believe. In these observations, Vygotsky came to understand that playfulness matters (Vygotsky, 1967). A three-year old playing make-believe constantly takes everyday objects and changes the meaning of that object. The child may use a calculator as a phone to order pizza as he plays restaurant. Then, he may use the same calculator in different situations as a remote control, a scanner, or a cash register. Playing with new ideas encourages us to ask new questions, be creators, and consider other viewpoints. Tapping into natural curiosity and imaginative play may help convert everyday activities into meaningful, participatory experiences for our students (Moller, 2015). We want to encourage the same playfulness in our students by teaching flexibility and ways to cope with novel situations.

The fifth characteristic is openness. In research examining personality and creativity, openness is often associated with more creative people (Silvia, Beaty, Nusbaum, Eddington, Levin-Aspenson, & Kwail, 2014). In measures of creativity that assess openness, Kaufman (2011) notes that openness to experience is defined as "openness to fantasy (showing a good imagination), to esthetics (being artistic), to feelings (experiencing and valuing feelings), to actions (trying new things, having many interests), to ideas (being curious, smart, liking challenges), and to values (being unconventional, liberal)" (p. 680). In the classroom, it serves us as teachers to tap into the multi-faceted nature of openness to support our students' imagination, feelings, and curiosity.

CREATIVE PLAY: How open to new experiences are you?

Based on research, openness to new experiences is a personality trait often identified as one closely related to creative achievements. Take the following survey to self-assess your creative potential.

These statements describe people’s behaviors related to openness to new experiences. Using the rating scale below, select to what degree the following describe you.

	Very inaccurate	Moderately inaccurate	Neither inaccurate nor accurate	Moderately accurate	Very accurate
1. Believe in the importance of art	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have a vivid imagination	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Can carry conversation to a higher level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Enjoy hearing new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Enjoy thinking about things	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Enjoy wild flights of fantasy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Get excited by new ideas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Can say things beautifully	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Openness to experience survey items from the International Personality Item Pool, a public domain personality measure (International Personality Item Pool, 2017).

The last and perhaps most important thing to mention is that creativity is a choice. As teachers, we can carve out a place for creativity in education by letting our students know that we value creativity. In doing so, we choose to push ourselves as teachers to increase our instructional creativity. According to Sternberg (2006), creativity is a decision. We *decide* to think in unconventional ways, to generate different responses to a given situation, or to explore new

areas. As such, we can promote creativity in our classrooms by telling our students we value creativity and by encouraging play in the classroom.

WHY DO WE NEED CREATIVITY?

In an ever-changing landscape of standardized assessments, teacher effectiveness, and core curricula, it is not surprising that, as Ken Robinson notes, creativity is often neglected. Traditional approaches to education may focus on convergent thinking skills more than divergent ones (Sawyer, 2012) or prioritize literacy skills over creative skills (Runco, 2004). Recently, however, there has been a burgeoning interest regarding creativity in education. This interest stems from the need to develop flexible problem-solvers who can think differently.

CREATIVITY AND TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY SKILLS

Against a backdrop of an uncertain future, the skillset of creativity is essential to our students. Craft (2003) explains the importance of creativity as “a fundamental attribute to enable adaption and response in a fast-changing world” (p. 114). Organizations, such as the Partnership for 21st Century Learning and Microsoft in Education, have identified collaboration and creativity as key goals for the future success of our students. We know that we cannot possibly visualize the skills that tomorrow’s world will need. Therefore, learning how to be creative (and thus adaptable) is extremely important for preparing students for life beyond the classroom.

In addition, we must acknowledge that creativity is a skill that is best incorporated across each content area (Gardner, 2007). Creativity is not owned by a specific domain; each day in the language classroom there are opportunities to advance and practice creativity with students. As Sawyer (2012) states, “The research shows that creativity is grounded in a deep understanding of domain knowledge, and schools are essential in socializing children in creative domains” (p. 395). As educators, we can foster creativity by providing an opportunity for our language students to produce language, to solve problems, to ask questions, and to work together to find unlimited solutions. Runco (2004) notes that creativity “underlies problem solving and problem finding” (p. 658). As such, language teachers can promote creative play through language, problem solving, and interaction to teach students skills for reacting to and handling challenges in life.

BILINGUALISM AND CREATIVITY

There is a well-established connection between the cognitive processes of creativity and multilingualism. That is, being bilingual is thought to impact executive functioning and consequently our cognitive system (Bialystok, Craik, Klein, & Viswanathan, 2004; Bialystok & Craik, 2010; Leikin & Tovli, 2014). As such, bilingualism seems to have an impact on certain aspects of creativity. Bilinguals seem to demonstrate better performance on nonverbal creative tasks such as using selective attention (Bialystok, 2005), synthesizing two or more figures (Kharkhurin, 2010a), or solving problems with conflicting cues (Bialystok & Martin, 2004). Bilinguals are also thought

to demonstrate an advantage in convergent thinking skills, or the process of searching for one possible result (Hommel, Colzato, Fischer, & Christoffels, 2011) and divergent thinking skills, finding multiple solutions to a problem (Leikin, 2012; Simonton, 2008). It should also be noted that monolinguals have been found to outperform bilinguals on verbal creativity assessments, or creative tasks that are framed in a linguistic context (Kharkhurin, 2010a, 2010b).

Bilinguals outperform monolinguals in general creativity measures, however. For example, in a study of bilingual and monolinguals, children were asked to find multiple solutions to an everyday problem (Leikin, 2012). For example, kindergarteners were given a picture and asked to find multiple solutions to help a raccoon reach his hat (see Figure 1.3). In the image, there are numerous hints that children could use to solve the problem such as climbing on the chair or the stool to get the hat. The act of climbing, however, is only one solution to the problem; thus, the image is carefully designed with visual clues in order for students to generate more ways that the raccoon could accomplish the task such as jumping up. Leikin (2012) reported that bilingual children, who performed the task twice, demonstrated more variety and a greater number of solutions than their monolingual counterparts during the second performance a year later. In sum, there seems to be a relationship between bilingualism and various types of creativity that help our students to become more original and flexible thinkers.

We can take advantage of this connection and use language and culture as a way to embrace this creativity-language connection. The more students see communication as an interactive and creative process, the more they will engage in the language learning process. Creativity will facilitate student investment in the language learning process, providing them with tools to express themselves in a variety of ways and making them more flexible thinkers. In general, developing a toolbox of creative skills can only be viewed as a positive skill for our students in our ever-changing landscape.

CREATIVE PLAY: Problem-solving: Come up with at least 10 different solutions to help the raccoon get his hat. To challenge yourself, try to not include solutions that are all related to the same act, like “climb on _____.”



FIG. 1.3 Problem solving example

Image source: Leikin (2012), p. 447

HOW DO WE DEFINE CREATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING?

As can be seen so far, creativity is not optional in education; it is essential (Jones & Richards, 2016). On a daily basis teachers plan, teach, and assess students using a creative skill set. While boosting creativity is a worthy goal, within the language classroom all learning tasks should also promote language acquisition.

Creativity is more than just creating a new fun project; it is about using language to solve problems, connect with classmates, and push our imaginations beyond limitations. With careful attention to multimodal communication, to supporting more complex language production and to developing creative thinking skills, we can more carefully analyze the creative acts of language teaching. Let's look more closely at examples of creative language teaching.

CREATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

Creativity in the classroom is often filtered through two lenses: that of the teacher and that of the students. Starko (2014) notes that there is a difference between creative teaching and teaching for students' creativity. The first side, creative teaching, emphasizes taking something we are already doing in the classroom (concrete task, concrete learning objective) and examining it through new lenses, pushing our thinking out of the box. As teachers, we need to take each week's lesson plan and examine it through different angles to provide multiple representations of the content, more creative outlets, and more language supports.

As an example, one way to present content creatively is to incorporate more multimodal practices. That is, use actions, visuals, and words to develop a holistic message or one that allows learners to encode and activate information through multiple representations (An & Carr, 2017; Hlas & Hlas, 2012). We can also connect to students' emotional centers. For example, to teach the difference between when to use the preterite versus imperfect in Spanish (two forms of the past tense), one of my teachers presented new material in a creative way. She excused herself during her own mini-lecture, left the classroom, put a silly mask on, and re-entered the classroom creating chaos for two to three minutes by moving things around and stealing a pencil. When the silly stranger left, the teacher (now de-masked) re-entered "unaware" of what had happened and we, the students, had to retell the story using the two different forms of the past tense. While this was a very creative way to present the past tense, it did not provide much room for us, as students, to be creative ourselves. Now, could this type of creative teaching lead to more creative students? We would hope so. By doing creative teaching, we send a message to students that we value creativity.

TEACHING TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' CREATIVITY

The other side of creativity is viewed as boosting student creativity. In addition to teaching content creatively, we can also, and perhaps more importantly, allow room for students' creative processes and for fine-tuning creative thinking practices. Instead of students thinking in one

way, we can challenge them to be divergent thinkers and creative problem solvers. Creative classrooms consider the students' side as well as the teacher's side by dedicating time for imaginative play, tasks, and challenges. In the next segment, we will examine the relationship between creative language teaching and teaching for students' creativity more closely.

TABLE 1.1 The relationship between creative language teaching and teaching for students' creativity			
Students' creativity	High	3.	4.
	Low	1.	2.
		Low	High
		Creative Language Teaching	

Table 1.1 outlines the continuum between student and teacher creativity. Let's look at each quadrant. To do so, let's focus on one learning outcome and then examine how different tasks and activity designs move it around the quadrants. This is our learning objective: *Students will be able to thank someone for a gift.*

Quadrant 1 represents low creative language teaching and low teaching for students' creativity. It represents many of our go-to activities where the language piece may not be well embedded in the task and students may not be required to be creative. An example activity based on our learning outcome may ask students to read and practice a pre-written dialogue, without much language support, where someone thanks someone else for a gift. These types of activities may help develop focused practice in our classrooms, but they do little to support creativity and push our students' language abilities.

Quadrant 2 represents high creative language teaching and low student creativity. Quadrant 2 incorporates activities that support language by using visuals or content in interesting ways but may not ask students to push their creative boundaries or think outside the box. An example activity in this quadrant may have a thank-you letter written to the class from a character in a book, someone at the school, or a favorite object in the classroom. The letter is then cut into sentences where students re-order the letter to make it logical, focusing on discourse markers in the letter to guide them. This type of activity includes a language component, but student creativity is not enhanced by solving this puzzle with one correct answer.

Quadrant 3 represents low creative language teaching and high teaching for students' creativity. Activities in this quadrant may be creative problem-solving tasks that ask students to be divergent thinkers or may be writing prompts that allow them to tell an original story. An activity with our example learning outcome may ask students to write a large class thank-you card to the school librarian or another community figure where they are given paint, markers, scissors, and different colored paper. Collaboratively, they have to come up with a design for the thank-you note. Quadrant 3 activities may push students to be creative but may lack the language support needed to provide scaffolded support. For example, students may be asked to design the thank-you note without being provided with linguistic support, such as key vocabulary or visual support, as they interact.

Quadrant 4 is high student creativity and language teaching. Activities in quadrant 4 may have students doing problem-solving challenges with specific functions and forms or using improv to practice receiving a gift. For example, students may play the classic improv game, "What's in the Box?" (Improv Encyclopedia, 2017). To play, the students are asked to form two lines, a giving line and a receiving line. A student in the receiving line begins the conversation by asking "What's in the box?" A student in the giving line presents an imaginary gift to the student in the receiving line, stating the name or contents of the gift. The student receiving the gift has to accept the gift happily, whatever it may be, using appropriate language, such as "Thank you so much! I've always wanted a _____ because_____". This type of activity addresses the same learning outcome, thanking someone for a gift, but presents the content in a creative way. Students use specific language forms related to thanking someone and simultaneously are asked to be creative as they have to decide what the gift is and how they will accept it appropriately. In this activity, multiple modes, such as visual, action, and auditory, interact, linking and activating multiple representations of the content.

CREATIVE PLAY: What's in the Box? Using the image, move through a few sequences of giving and receiving a gift. In each sequence, imagine you are accepting a gift from different people and remember that the gifts may be silly, mundane, or surprising. For each gift, accept it using different language and explain why you like it.

For example, accepting a gift from a friend you may say a simple "thank you"; accepting a gift at an awards banquet may lead to a more complex expression such as, "I would like to express my gratitude." To begin, imagine five situations where you may receive a gift and from whom. An example is provided.

Example script:

Grandmother: You have one more present to open!

You: What's in the box?

Grandmother: It's white undies and socks. I heard you needed some new ones.

You: Thanks, Grandma. That is thoughtful of you. My favorite socks do have a few small holes in them.



FIG. 1.4 An example of scaffolded "What's in the Box"



FIG. 1.5 An example of "What's in the Box," where one gives a gift and the other accepts it spontaneously

FINAL THOUGHTS

Each of the four quadrants presented in this chapter values creativity and fosters flexible thinking in its own way. As Richards and Cotterall (2016) state, "All teaching involves acts of creativity" (p. 97). By raising awareness, we can begin to recognize and appreciate all types of creativity. In fact, Davis (1982) argues that one of the ways to develop as a creative person is to increase your creative consciousness. Albeit in different degrees, creativity is a central component in our everyday lives; we just need to look for it.

CREATIVE CHALLENGE—MAPPING CREATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

In the next section, push your creativity by applying some of the ideas presented in the chapter. The creative challenge presented will ask you to create your own examples and solutions by connecting to your prior teaching and learning experiences.

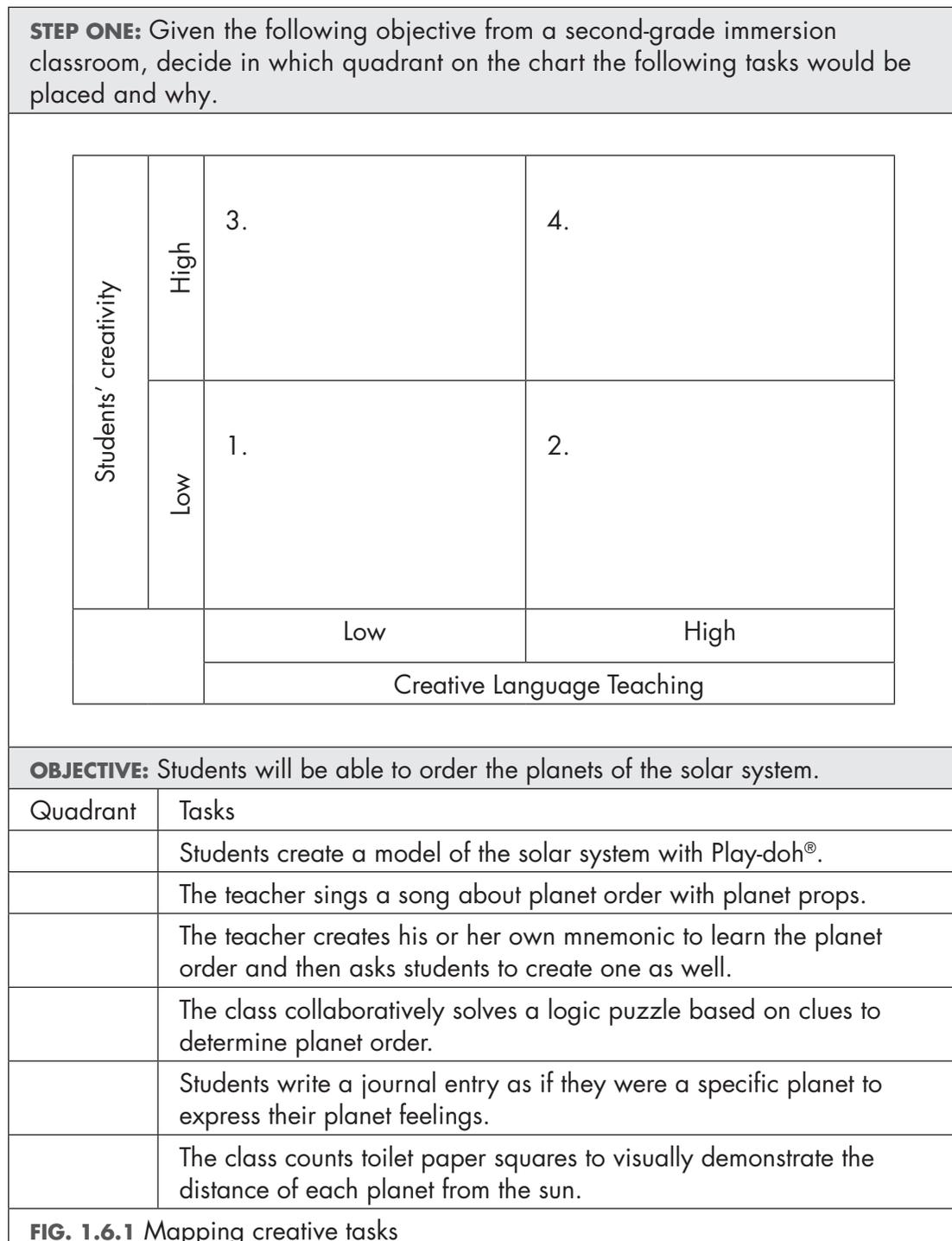




FIG. 1.6 Solar System

STEP TWO: Before you begin, think of a family you have seen in a movie, a television show, or a text. Next, select one of the following objectives or your own objective. Then, using that objective, create an activity for each of the four quadrants by thinking of activities that will foster high and low teacher and student creativity.

OBJECTIVE 1: Students will be able to identify members of a family from television, movies, or a text.

OBJECTIVE 2: Students will be able to describe responsibilities within a family from television, movies, or a text.

OBJECTIVE 3: Students will be able to make recommendations for a family reunion for a family from television, movies, or a text.

OBJECTIVE 4: Your own objective

Activity for Quadrant 1:

Activity for Quadrant 2:

Activity for Quadrant 3:

Activity for Quadrant 4:

CREATIVITY JOURNAL

Journaling is a wonderful way to connect issues that you read about in the book to your personal experience. Try to write freely, meaning without much concern for eloquence or grammar. Also, feel free to express your thoughts through words, sketches, drawings, or doodles. Choose two of the following prompts or write your own prompt and answer it.

- 1 Think of someone you consider to be a creative person and draw them in the circle below (e.g., family member, friend, child). Then, on each branch, explain why you think he or she is creative (See Figure 1.7).
- 2 Think of someone you consider to be a creative teacher. Give two or three reasons why.
- 3 How would you define creativity in your own words?
- 4 Write down key ideas related to a project or product from any subject in your schooling that you remember as creative. Why do you think you still remember it? What made it particularly creative: the process, the product, or something else? In which quadrant would you place that activity?
- 5 Think about a recent activity or task in which you have taught or participated. In which quadrant would you place it and why (See Table 1.1)?

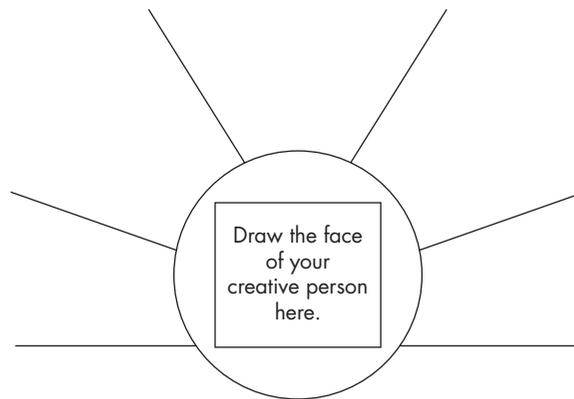


FIG. 1.7 Sun Graphic Organizer

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