Teaching for Creativity

An evidence-informed playbook

CREATIVITY COLLABORATIVES

ANGLIAN LEARNING

LOTTERY FUNDED

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Contents

Page 03 Foreword

Section 1 – The research journey

Page 05 The Creativity Collaboratives programme

Page 06 Summary of national projects

Page 08 Definitions of creativity

Page 09 Myths, barriers and opportunities

Page 10 The pilot research: The journey of Teaching for Creativity

Page 11 Year one – Exploration of inquisitiveness

Page 14 Year two – Testing pedagogies for inquisitiveness in the classroom

Page 16 Year three – Enabling conditions for Teaching for Creativity

Page 22 Developing understanding of creativity and inquisitiveness

Section 2 – In practice

Page 24 Early Years and Primary in practice

Page 52 Secondary in practice

Page 59 Secondary toolkit

Page 92 Legacy Phase of Creativity Collaboratives

Page 94 Further reading

Foreword

As CEO of Anglian Learning, it is my pleasure to introduce **'Teaching for Creativity'**. This resource emerges from an ambitious three-year Creativity Collaboratives research initiative, supported by Arts Council England and the Freelands Foundation. Colleagues at Anglian Learning explored how to teach for creativity and the conditions that enable pupils to think creatively. This endeavour reflects the commitment of Anglian Learning to actively engage with research as a fundamental aspect of our ongoing professional learning culture.

At Anglian Learning, we strive to cultivate a sense of curiosity and inquisitiveness in our pupils. We seek ways for pupils to apply their knowledge creatively and in different contexts. Throughout the research, our colleagues observed that those pupils who were engaged in this project were notably more open to taking risks, willing to learn from their mistakes, and more deeply reflective about the subject matter. By emphasising application, creation, and inquisitiveness, we found that pupils were able to articulate their thoughts more clearly and demonstrated a deeper awareness of the "why" behind their learning.

The findings of the research revealed the importance of creating opportunities to generate and explore ideas, alongside the power of actively Teaching for Creativity, for example through teacher modelling and pupil practice. By fostering autonomy, agency and an exploratory approach, built upon strong foundations of knowledge and in the context of subject disciplinary approaches, the joy of learning and discovery was reignited for both pupils and colleagues.

Through the culmination of our research and professional dialogue with the wider teaching community, we are proud to present this playbook, which shares the practices we have found to be particularly helpful in Teaching for Creativity. I hope that leaders and teachers find the playbook to be supportive and inspiring as you work to cultivate pupils' creative thinking within your school. Together, let us nurture a learning environment where curiosity thrives and creativity flourishes.

Jonathan Culpin
Chief Executive Officer

1

Section 1
The research journey

The Creativity Collaboratives programme

Creativity Collaboratives is a pilot action research programme aimed at building networks of schools to test a range of pedagogical approaches in Teaching for Creativity. The explicit goal is for this shared learning to facilitate system-wide change..

The programme responds to one of the recommendations of the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education, which sought to investigate the role of creativity in the education system and find ways to make creativity a more significant part of young people's lives in education and beyond. The Creativity Collaboratives programme was largely based on Bill Lucas and Ellen Spencer's book, 'Teaching Creative Thinking: Developing learners who generate ideas and can think critically' *(2017, Crown House Publishing)*.

The programme launched in October 2021. Arts Council England has invested and led the programme which has been generously supported by Freelands Foundation. Anglian Learning has been a part of the programme since 2021 and continues to be involved in the legacy phase of the programme.

Working alongside existing school structures, teachers, and educators have co-developed creative strategy and pedagogy, tested out approaches to teaching and learning, and evaluated their impact on pupils, schools, and communities.

There are eight lead schools in the programme nationally, which have each worked with their own network of local schools to cascade learning. The networks have tested varied approaches to developing and delivering the curriculum to support children and young people in nurturing their creative capabilities. Each of the lead schools have measured the individual impact on their setting, with Durham University conducting the overarching evaluation. Learnings from the pilot will then be shared and applied more widely throughout the education sector.

This playbook is designed to support leaders and teachers in the journey to develop creativity and creative thinking in their schools. It aims to:

- Outline the research process and findings from our Collaborative.
- Present the findings from the action research projects across Anglian Learning.

The Creativity Collaboratives pilot programme has offered valuable insights into Teaching for Creativity for the staff and pupils involved. We recognise that the scope of the programme is specific to the lead collaboratives involved and the schools who were directly involved in the project. We also recognise that the group of schools and teachers involved were self-selecting, with an interest in Teaching for Creativity, and that our findings are limited to what these teachers and pupils have reported.

As a pilot phase, the purpose was to explore Teaching for Creativity pedagogies in the classroom and to reflect on their impact. We are pleased to be involved in the Legacy Phase of the project which will consolidate the learning and build more robust evidence on the impact on pupils in our classrooms.

Summary of national projects

The Creativity Collaboratives Pilot research programme was one of the recommendations from the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education and ran from 2021 – 2024. Eight Creativity Collaboratives, spread across England, tested a range of innovative practices in Teaching for Creativity.

Three overarching themes were observed throughout the pilot phase:

1. For most Collaboratives, there was a clear process of establishing foundations (particularly research, resources, knowledge, understanding and confidence); testing, experimenting and reflection; and embedding and planning for future sustainability.
2. The Creativity Collaboratives pilot led to a significant development in pupils', teachers', senior leaders', and in some cases partners', understanding of Teaching for Creativity, including developing a shared language for creativity within and across schools and often challenging the perception that creativity is the domain of the arts.
3. In many cases, Creativity Collaboratives unlocked an increase in agency for teachers and pupils, and this was supported by whole school changes to valuing agency and freedom. This is both an outcome and condition for success, and seems to have been at the heart of enabling change.

Throughout the pilot phase the following short- and medium-term outcomes were observed:

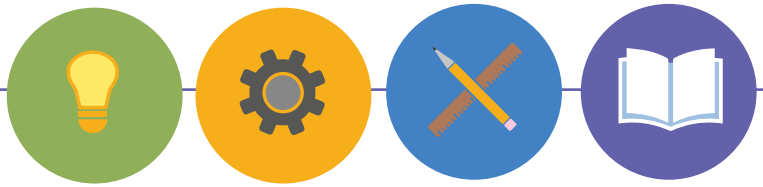
- Pupils gained more **ownership over learning.**
- Improved **engagement and participation** among pupils.
- Pupils demonstrated increased **confidence and resilience.**
- Pupils **developed creative skills** such as problem-solving, collaboration, critical thinking, and meta-cognition.
- Teachers developed **increased knowledge and understanding about creativity.**
- Teachers **improved and evolved** their **teaching practice.**
- Teachers found **more enjoyment in teaching.**
- An increase in **senior leadership/whole staff investment in creativity.**
- An emergent **shared language and understanding of creativity** between pupils, teachers, senior leaders and, in some cases, partners.

In the last phase of data analysis additional emerging themes were highlighted:

- More evidence of pupils gaining **skills for their futures.**
- Increased **collaboration** amongst pupils was particularly well-evidenced.
- Increased **enjoyment** was particularly important to pupils being more engaged in learning.
- The most commonly evidenced creative capacity was **persistence.**
- Pupils feeling a greater sense of **imagination and possibility.**
- Pupils and teachers continued to emphasise outcomes around **agency** and being **more able to take risks**.
- Teachers feeling a greater sense of **validation** in their practice and pedagogy.
- Teaching for Creativity was increasingly **prioritised and embedded within whole-school strategy and values.**
- More **widespread implementation of pedagogies that support pupils' creativity**, enabled by more changes in curriculum design.
- Increased recognition of Teaching for Creativity as a vehicle for **school improvement.**

Learn more about Creativity Collaboratives

Scan or click the QR code to learn more



Definitions of creativity

We used the Durham Commission's definitions to help define Teaching for Creativity:

Creativity	The capacity to imagine, conceive, express, or make something that was not there before.
Creative thinking	A process through which knowledge, intuition, and skills are applied to imagine, express, or make something novel or individual in its contexts. Creative thinking is present in all areas of life. It may appear spontaneous, but it can be underpinned by perseverance, experimentation, critical thinking, and collaboration.
Teaching for creativity	Explicitly using pedagogies and practices that cultivate creativity in young people.

Myths, barriers and opportunities

Busting myths

The four most common myths about Teaching for Creativity are:

"Is Teaching for Creativity just about the Arts?"

No – Teaching for Creativity supports pupils' ability to problem solve, apply knowledge flexibly, and see the world through a variety of different lenses. This is as appropriate in a maths classroom as it is in an art studio.

"You cannot teach creativity. You either have it or you do not."

You can, if you give pupils the opportunity and explicitly model the process. For example, by giving them tasks that have no set answer, tasks that link learning from multiple areas or tasks that relate to a real-life stimulus, underpinned by teaching relevant technical skills, disciplinary processes and subject knowledge.

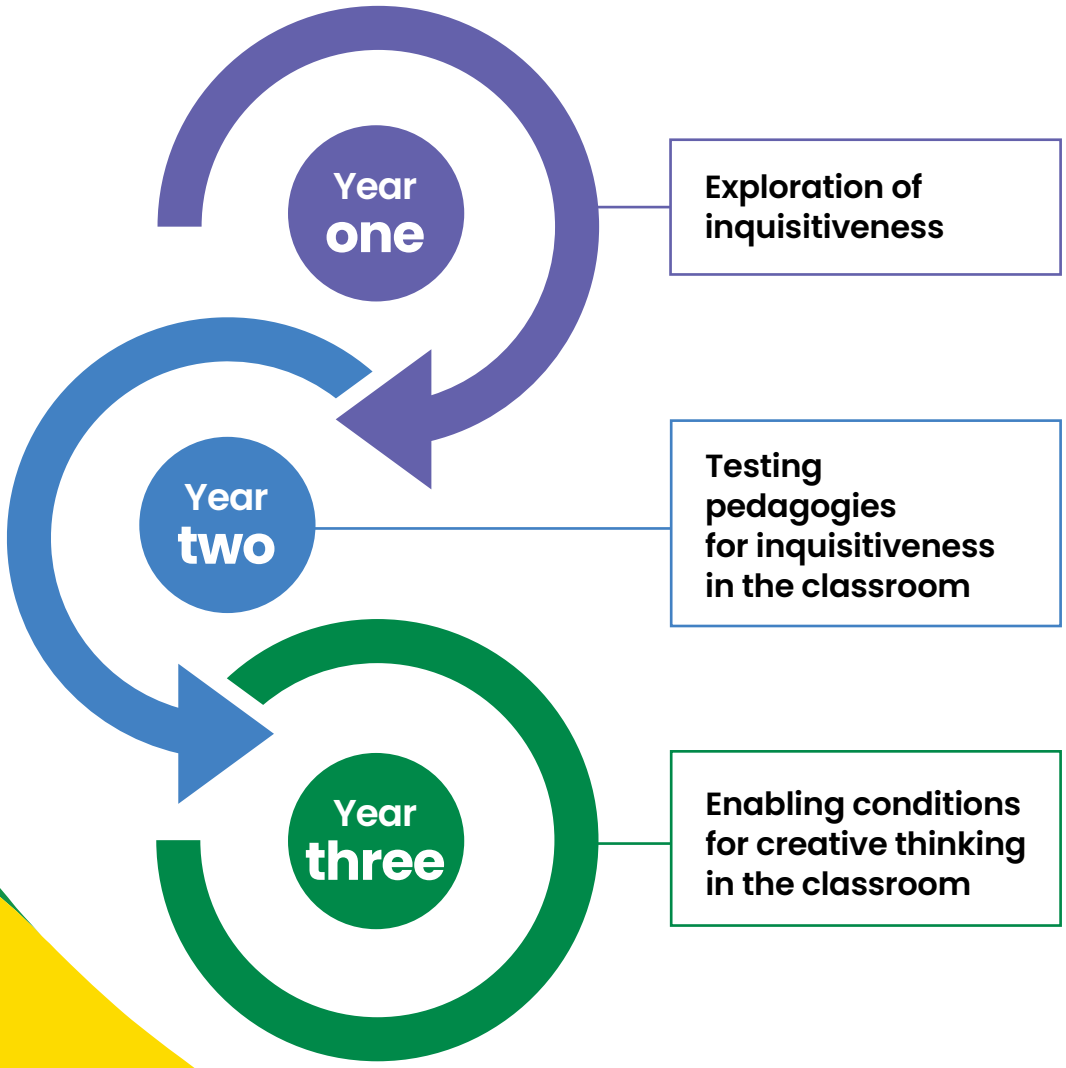
"Teaching for Creativity has no substance."

Quite the opposite! The project found that it deepened pupil understanding and encouraged them to build on their knowledge whilst adding layers of complexity.

"I have not got time to be creative because I have too much content to cover."

What is the point of covering all the content if: (a) pupils have not had to think hard about it, supporting their ability to remember it? (b) do not have the in-depth understanding to use it? The project prompted teachers and leaders to reflect on what content can be removed or adapted to allow learning to go deeper, and how we can allow time for more exploratory and problem-solving activities.

The pilot research: The journey of Teaching for Creativity



Year one

Year one

Exploration of inquisitiveness

At the outset of the project, Anglian Learning decided to focus on the creative habit of **'inquisitiveness'** because this has broad applicability across a range of subject disciplines and age groups.

In year one, our focus was to explore our understanding of where inquisitiveness sat within Teaching for Creativity and to explore classroom practices that could encourage the inquisitiveness of our pupils.

What is inquisitiveness?

We understood inquisitiveness to be a state of mind and a way of looking at the world.

What would evidence of inquisitiveness look like in a pupil?

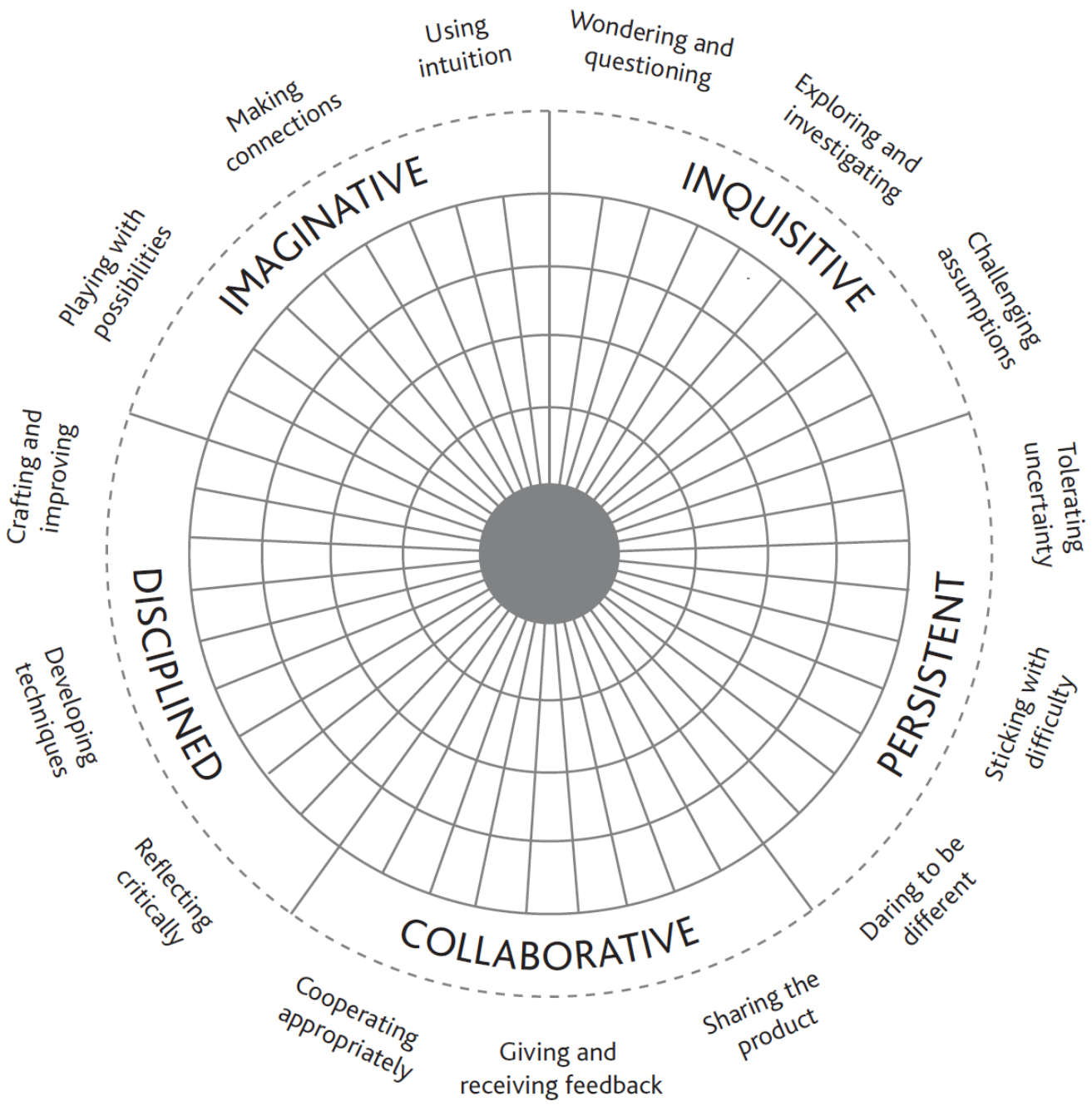
- Wanting to ask good questions.
- Wanting to find answers.
- Wanting to pursue a line of enquiry, for example a scientific method or experimenting with art techniques.

Our understanding of 'inquisitiveness' suggests that it largely stems from an interest in what is being learned or in learning more generally. Pupils need to be taught how to act on that interest to seek or create the answers they are inquisitive about.

Nine action research projects were conducted by individual teachers at primary and secondary schools across Anglian Learning.

The projects were based on **'wondering and questioning'** and **'exploring and investigating'** from Bill Lucas' **'Creative Habits of Mind'** wheel, as seen on the following page. Teachers across the Trust also took part in a national creativity survey administered by Durham University.

Exploration of inquisitiveness



Bill Lucas' **'Creative Habits of Mind'** wheel which was used as a starting point for the projects.

Research methodology

A mixed-methods approach was chosen. This began with baseline questionnaires using both Likert-like and open response questions. The questionnaire was intended to identify key areas of interest or tension that could be further explored through intensive focus groups with pupils and teachers. These methods were supported by the data gathered by each participating teacher. Post-intervention focus groups for both pupils and teachers were also conducted. Consensus workshops were also used to gather information on trends and overarching themes.

At the end of the first year of the project, teachers came together to reflect on what they had learned. This opportunity to discuss and collaborate across subjects, schools, and key stages emerged as one of the highlights for the teachers involved in the project.

What did we find?

- Inquisitiveness can be inherent but can also be stimulated, cultivated and nurtured by teachers.
- Inquisitiveness should be capitalised upon by providing opportunities to solve problems.
- Knowledge can stimulate inquisitiveness.
- For inquisitiveness to result in new learning, pupils need to be taught and apply knowledge, both 'know that' and 'know how'.
- Collaboration and oracy were emerging as key components in the manifestation and development of inquisitiveness at both primary and secondary level.

Year two

Year two

Testing pedagogies for inquisitiveness in the classroom

In the second year, the projects were tested on a larger scale, now being implemented in multiple classes, across subjects or whole key stages. The pedagogical approaches trialled included **'exploring and investigating'** through project-based learning, **'mantel of the expert'**, **'wicked questions'**, using oracy to aid inquisitiveness, and **'wondering and questioning'**.

The Anglian Learning research team conducted questionnaires and focus groups with pupils and teachers across the Trust. Teachers leading action research projects kept research journals and collated evidence on the impact of their pedagogical approaches.

Staff also joined national conferences and seminars to share and reflect on work across all Collaboratives and to participate in a national collection and evaluation of projects.

At the end of year two, the teachers and research team came together to share and reflect on their experiences.

> One success of the research projects was the joy they brought back to teaching by providing the space to think and explore pedagogies for creativity.

We recognise that an element of the enjoyment that teachers reported may also have come from the opportunity to exercise their own professional critical thinking, work collaboratively with like-minded peers across the Trust and the time set aside to explore their own teaching pedagogies.

The projects

Bassingbourn Village College
(Tori Turland)

'To what extent does investigating and exploring using 'mantle of the expert' affect the engagement of Year 9 pupils in the science classroom?'

Bottisham Village College
(Briony Davies)

'To what extent do wicked questions at the beginning of English lessons lead to inquisitiveness?'

Fen Ditton Community Primary School
(Marie Weaver-Smith)

'How far can standards in early years language and independent literacy skills be improved by curriculum opportunities designed to develop collaboration through exploration and investigation?'

Howard Community Academy
(Michelle Biggs)

'To explore the use in sentence stems in supporting early years children to wonder and be creative in their questioning.'

The Netherhall School
(Jackie Williams)

'How does 'wondering and questioning' stimulate the 'exploring and investigating' of the creative process?'

The Pines Primary School
(Louise Scott)

'To what extent does 'wondering and questioning' raise levels of engagement and sustained concentration during independent learning time?'

Sawston Village College
(Natalie Evans)

'What are the benefits and barriers of using driving questions to foster exploration and investigating in the classroom?'

Stapleford Community Primary School
(Katie Street)

'To what extent does an inquisitive ethos (developed through wondering and questioning) deepen children's understanding, their ability to make connections, and their motivation to learn in a primary classroom?'

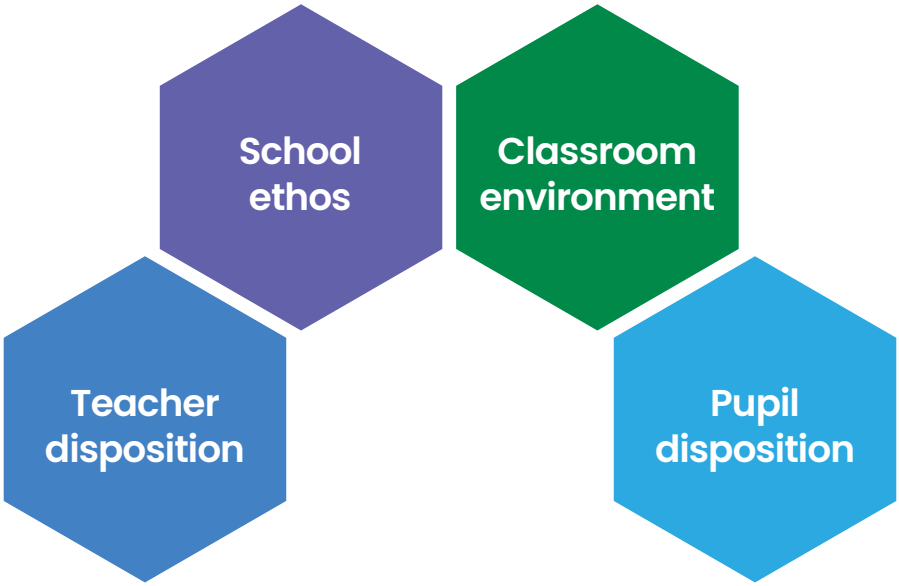
Year three

Year three

Enabling conditions for Teaching for Creativity

> Our findings showed that teaching for inquisitiveness was inextricably linked with other aspects of Teaching for Creativity, as well as many other good teaching practices.

It became apparent that other aspects of the **'Creative Habits of Mind' wheel** were important in teaching for inquisitiveness, such as making connections, playing with possibilities, collaboration, and giving and receiving feedback. Therefore, in the third year of the project, we expanded the scope of the creative pedagogies being trialled.



Our work at Anglian Learning looking into Teaching for Creativity has also demonstrated the importance of **school ethos**, **classroom environment**, **teacher dispositions**, and **pupil dispositions** to encourage and foster pupils' creative thinking.

Our focus groups and questionnaires with pupils at primary and secondary schools across the Trust revealed that pupils wanted more opportunities to work and think creatively. Pupils say that they appreciate moments when teachers were themselves creative and inquisitive, when the dynamics of the classroom allowed for creativity, and when they were given challenge and autonomy in tasks.

> Pupils perceive that inquisitiveness and creativity are attributes that can be developed and that collaboration in the classroom helps to do this.

What pupils told us is that there are many things that can be done to improve pupil creativity. These enabling conditions cannot be achieved by teachers working alone but require wider support beyond the classroom and a positive school ethos towards creativity.

> Our feedback from teachers demonstrated how valuable it is for teachers to be given the freedom, resources, time, and confidence to try out new things and develop creative approaches to teaching and learning.

In year three, the primary schools across Anglian Learning collaborated to expand pedagogies for creativity across more year groups and almost all our early years settings. Right from early years and into Key Stage 1 and 2 we researched pedagogies linked to the role of the child, the role of the adult, and learning experiences. We explored how this developed positive learning behaviours such as collaboration and critical thinking.

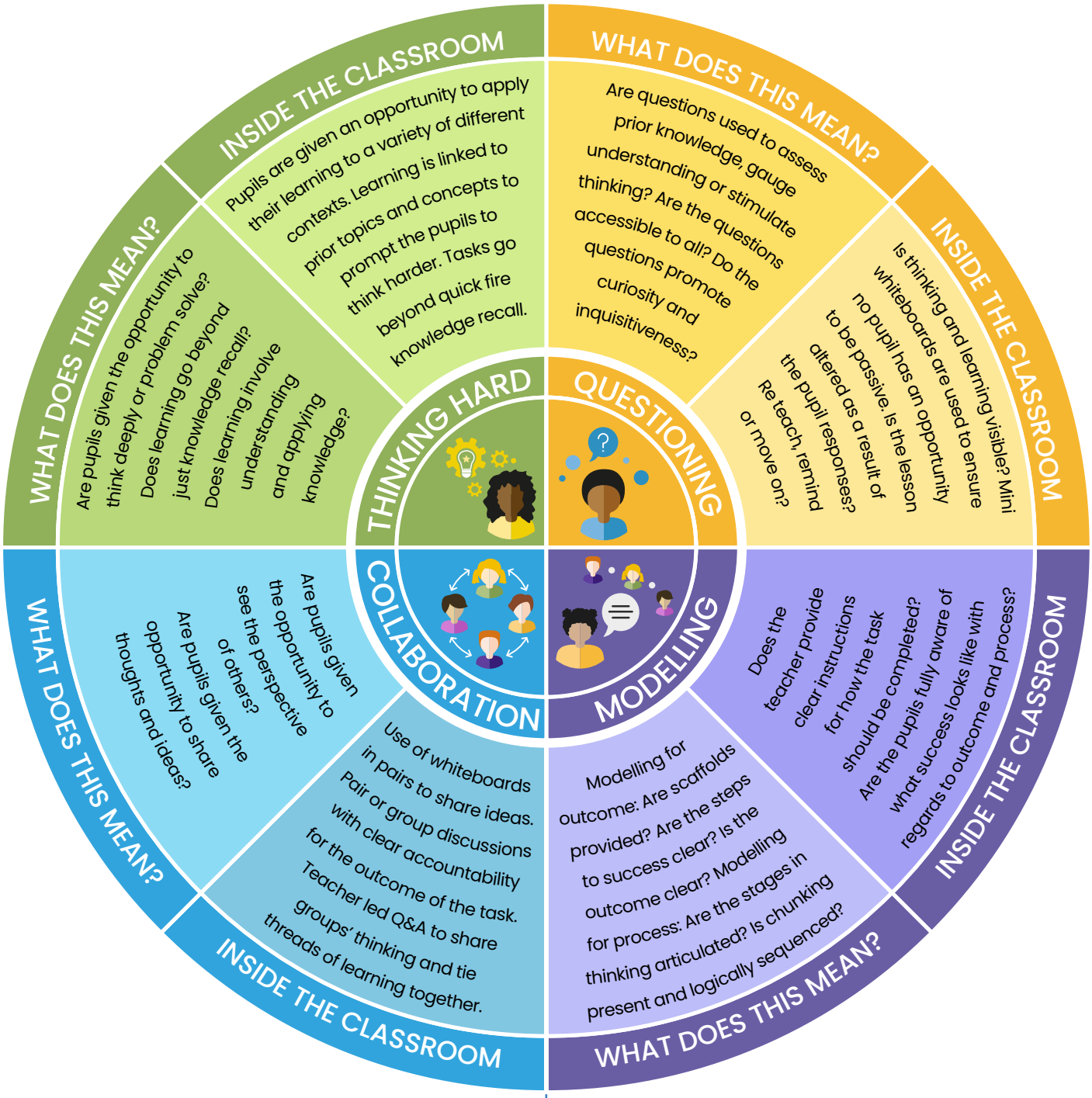
Secondary schools took the approach of trialling Teaching for Creativity pedagogies that were based on the **'Creative Habits of Mind'** wheel and which aligned with pre-existing priorities:

- **Thinking Hard**
- **Questioning**
- **Collaboration**
- **Modelling**

One of the secondary schools in the Collaborative re-arranged the school day into **three 100-minute lessons** to enable opportunities for creative thinking in the classroom.

Pupil voice was central to the project and pupil leadership teams enthusiastically joined the teaching and learning team at schools across the Collaborative.

Teaching for Creativity Wheel



Our Teaching for Creativity Wheel focuses on two themes:

What do we mean by Teaching for Creativity?

What does it look like inside the classroom?

Year three

Enabling conditions for Teaching for Creativity

Thinking Hard: autonomy and challenge

Having autonomy over their learning made pupils feel more successful and inquisitive.

Pupils told us that having autonomy over their learning enabled them to think creatively. This was one of the strongest themes from our focus groups. When our pupils were given autonomy over their learning, they felt the greatest sense of pride and accomplishment. In our secondary art project, pupils said they enjoyed having autonomy in their learning.

> One pupil said: ***"I'm free to make my decisions with my piece of art so that's cool."***

Importantly, *autonomy* is productive when the decisions that pupils make are informed and shaped by broad knowledge and technical skill, so that they are *discerning* in their choices and *successful* in the realisation of their intentions. The positive benefits of autonomy in learning were also seen in our primary schools. In our early years project, we identified many positive impacts from pupils being given autonomy over their learning. At the start, 70% of pupils in the research class said they get upset when they find something challenging, whereas at the end of the research project only 22% said this.

Creative thinking is closely related to challenge.

Secondary school pupils reported that being challenged helped them to learn and that this was closely related to the feeling of success. This sense of achievement was then linked to enjoying lessons more.

> ***"If we're not challenged then we're not learning anything, we're not progressing."***

> ***"I like being challenged. It helps you build up confidence... If you just stick with the easy route, you're not going to learn anything. If you solve it, it's really rewarding."***

For example, at Bassingbourn Village College, a 'mantel of the expert' approach was taken in a Key Stage 3 science lesson. Pupils were given clear parameters about conducting a science experiment and were given autonomy in selecting their own experiments. From pupil focus groups, it seemed to emerge that the challenge for pupils lay in combining different concepts that they had learnt, making connections, and working together for a shared common goal (presenting findings to a class).

What challenge looks like inevitably varies from subject to subject. The form of challenge that our research projects explored was asking pupils to think creatively through the application of prior learning to new contexts, which is intrinsically more challenging than, for example only recall, because it requires both recall *and* application.

Year three

Enabling conditions for Teaching for Creativity

Creative thinking builds from knowledge.

The action research projects in which pupils felt the most inquisitive were driven by pupil-led learning, emerging from and following new knowledge that stimulated and guided their inquisitiveness. Secondary pupils appreciated project-based learning that gave them knowledge they could apply to other settings.

> A pupil commented on the science project mentioned above: ***"It encouraged me to consider a career in STEM and to apply what we're learning to the real world."***

The pupils' interest in what they were learning seems to affect their interest elsewhere, building on their inquisitiveness.

Questioning: asking more questions

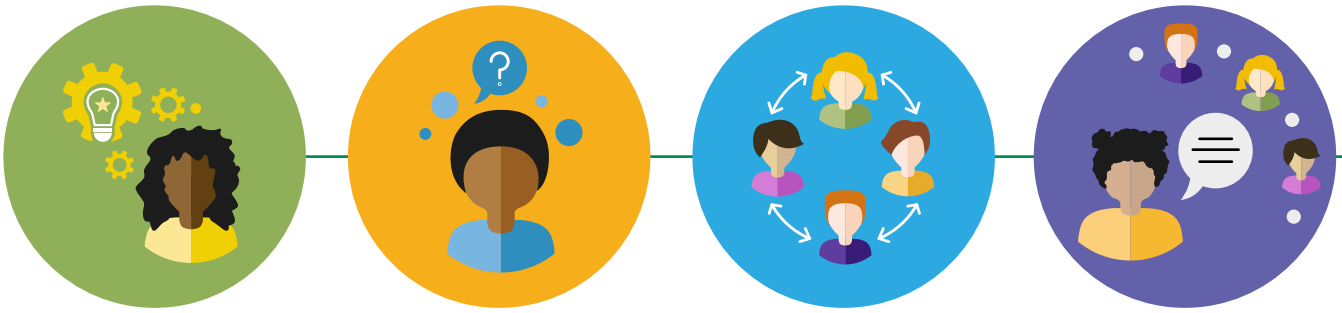
Creative thinking and inquisitiveness are skills which can be learned.

Throughout the project, pupils have demonstrated that they perceive inquisitiveness and creative thinking as skills and approaches that can be learned, and, further, that they are influenced by their learning environment. For example, pupils told us they ask more questions if others are doing so, hence why classroom culture is key.

Secondary pupils understood that being inquisitive meant that you asked more questions and were curious about a subject beyond the 'norm'. In a focus group, some pupils explained that they would become more 'progressive and proactive' individuals..

> ***"I asked loads of questions, it's a new thing for me."***

The above quotations from pupil focus groups were in response to the 'mantel of the expert' project in science at Bassingbourn Village College. When given the opportunity to explore and investigate in science, pupils perceived themselves as being more inquisitive. According to them, they demonstrated this by asking new questions, trying something new, and exploring.



Collaboration: working with peers and teachers

Collaboration helps pupils to be more inquisitive.

Both primary and secondary pupils reported that collaboration in the classroom – both with peers and with their teacher – helped them to be more inquisitive through wanting to find out more information about the subject.

Pupils also perceived that collaboration increased their resilience. In a secondary action research project where pupils worked in pre-allocated teacher groups to co-research and present their findings, they believed they were more invested in their work as a result. Pupils reported that they felt they had more autonomy, were more inquisitive about other pupils' learning and felt they were more able to remember key content for their exams.

Modelling: the importance of teacher creativity in the classroom

Pupils notice when teachers are inquisitive and think creatively.

It was a strong finding from our focus groups with secondary pupils that teachers who modelled inquisitiveness were seen as encouraging more open classroom discussion and as more authentic. Pupils reported they valued teachers who welcomed questions, especially if they themselves did not know the answer. Crucially though, it was seen as very important by pupils that any "I don't knows" where swiftly followed by "let's find out together."

> ***"If the teacher's just sat there you're just gonna be bored, you want the teacher to be interested."***

This comment from a pupil may seem to conflict with earlier comments about pupil-led learning and autonomy. However, we found that several factors are required to work together to enable the conditions required for teaching for creativity. This echoes one of our findings that classroom culture appears to be important in enabling teaching for creativity in the classroom.

There seems to be a more generalised inference that pupils reported to be more interested when the teacher demonstrated an interest. In this project, the way in which the teachers demonstrated that interest was showing a keenness themselves to learn and ask questions. In other contexts it might be that teachers can demonstrate their own interest by, for example, explaining something really well that they are passionate about.

Developing understanding of creativity and inquisitiveness

All of the Collaboratives in the national project found that an important part of the creativity journey was deepening staff and pupil understanding of what creativity is.

At Anglian Learning, we found that many pupils were able to give good definitions of creativity and examples when they felt they have been creative. There was a range of understanding, however.

Not all pupils focussed on creative thinking, and some had relatively limited thoughts about creativity as drawing or writing stories. Teachers experienced a shift in their perspective as a result of the project, developing a deeper understanding of creativity in the classroom.

Pupil perspectives

What is creativity?

"How you express yourself."

"To have your own ideas."

"Your own thoughts."

"Creativity means freedom, to be able to do whatever you want, to use your mind to design something that you think of, because your mind is probably the strongest mind. It's your mind, it's your idea."

When can you be most creative?

"In science and maths there's a thing that you have to follow, you can't just make up your own formula. 1+2 has to equal 3, it can't be 4 or 5 or something."

"Art is creative, you have to make a new thing so you have to ask a lot of questions to get your mind to make something."

"You can't really be creative with a maths problem can you?"

"Maths – it's a bit of a weird one but you kind of find different ways of solving things in your own way."

"Art and history."

"We get to draw posters and different drawings."

"English because I feel like if you get a piece of text you can interpret it how you think it is, different perspectives."

"With science practicals and stuff."

"Art is creative sometimes but sometimes you're just writing stuff."

Pupil perspectives

What is inquisitiveness?

"Ask questions."

"Sort of like curiosity, like you want to ask questions."

"Being curious."

"Maybe like kind of curious and kind of interested in what you're trying to do."

"I've got a lot of questions to answer, I always wanna know something, I've got a lot of questions about the work, I get drawn in, if a teacher says 'oh you're gonna enjoy this' I have a lot of questions."

Teacher perspectives

All of the Collaboratives in the national project found that an important part of the creativity journey was deepening staff and pupil understanding of what creativity is.

Within the very first year of the project, teachers were able to communicate a significant shift in their understanding of 'creativity' as a concept, towards an understanding better encapsulated by our term **'creative thinking'**.

Differences between these two concepts are shown in the graphic below. This shift in understanding was seen across teachers in all subjects and phases. It allowed teachers to think more deeply about their subjects and the opportunities for creative ***thinking*** afforded within it.

Creativity	Creative thinking
Associated with the traditional creative arts i.e.: dance, music, creative writing	Associated with problem-solving and original thought across the disciplines
Focused on the **product** of creative practice, such as a piece of artwork	Focused on the mental processess of creativity and associated skills

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Section 2
In practice

Early Years and Primary in practice

How the Early Years project began

The Pines Primary School joined the Creativity Collaboratives project in October 2021. At its outset, staff had already been developing their approach to creativity, drawing from the work of Guy Claxton and the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) characteristics of effective learning. This included creating 'real-life' scenarios to engage the children with developing creative thinking, for example, staging an alien crash landing and an archaeological dig.

Staff embraced the opportunity offered by the project to further develop creative thinking. The Early Years team changed the learning environment to enable more creative activities and opportunities for children across all areas of the school day. This was then extended in the second and third years of the project to re-orientate the science curriculum across the school towards child-led inquiry.

How could Teaching for Creativity in the Early Years impact levels of engagement?

When the project began in 2021, there was a particularly challenging cohort of pupils in Reception. Their levels of engagement were low, and they were unable to engage with the learning environment independently. This led to resources becoming broken, poor learning behaviour, and social difficulties. The Early Years Lead observed that this had been increasing each year, often affecting the most vulnerable pupils with the lowest levels of engagement. Therefore, there was an interest in Teaching for Creativity, particularly how wondering and questioning could address this.

As the project evolved, we learnt that it was more than just wondering and questioning that increased both levels of engagement and the pupils' ability to think creatively.

What did teachers and support staff do?

The initial intention of the Creativity Collaboratives project was to examine what teaching and learning really looked like in the early years setting. This evaluation included considering the role of all adults in the early years environment.

The EYFS Lead took time to reflect on everyday practices, at the same time as dipping into reading materials about developing creative thinking. A key part of this task was to be critical: aspects of the environment, such as resources left open for children to use, were not developing creativity as much as they could. It was a key learning point that even if adults believe and aspire to enable creativity, many activities remain more closed and adult-led than they need to be.

As a result of the project, the early years team conducted a full environmental audit to assess how engaged the children were with each of their areas and their resources, looking closely at how the areas were used and whether children were able to explore and develop their curiosity. Following this evaluation, the team introduced a curiosity table (inspired by **The Curiosity Approach**, where real life, open-ended resources are used to spark awe and wonder) and resources were adapted to enable more open-ended thinking.

For example, rather than providing the pupils with a 'kit' to build a castle, the team offered them plain blocks and natural loose parts, opening up limitless possibilities for what the children can create. This not only requires deeper thought and imagination, but also necessitates problem-solving, collaboration, and the innovation of new ideas.

Observations of the pupils' learning experiences were documented in the style of 'learning stories', where adults would record how the child developed their thoughts and creative characteristics within each learning experience. This also provided evidence of the specific ways adults supported and challenged children.

What changed as a result?

Identifying the elements of the early years environment that were working well and those that could be developed was just the beginning of transforming the setting and early years practices at the school.

It started a process in which every element of the early years curriculum was re-adjusted to enable children to develop their own thinking and explore ideas more deeply. This had a ripple effect on staff associated with early years teaching. It improved the teaching skills of staff and brought about an approach that was more deeply creative and a different way of approaching learning. As a result of the improvements that have taken place, there have been benefits for teacher wellbeing. Being more child-led means that it takes less time to prepare learning activities, ultimately leading to more engaging and enriching experiences for pupils.

Children know that their thoughts and ideas are valued, and the learning environment has become more deeply creative. Staff believe there has been an immensely positive impact on children, who showed increased confidence and better problem-solving skills. A handful of children, including children with special educational needs and summer-born children, were followed through the project. Their levels of engagement (measured on the Leuven scale and by the minutes engaged at a task) improved after the implementation of a more creative learning environment.

What helped to make this happen?

As a teacher, it is important that you know your curriculum well, with an understanding of what came before and what will follow. Understanding the child's needs will help you to facilitate learning effectively. It's also important to know the children you teach, including their demographics and prior experiences and skills.

Taking the time out to reflect on the structures of the learning environment requires a practitioner to step outside of their current practices and challenge themselves. To do this well, it can be helpful to consult reading materials to help think differently and reconsider what creative learning looks like.

Reading 'Teaching Creative Thinking' by Bill Lucas and Ellen Spencer is a great place to start, which gives you an informative background into what this means and how it can be used in the classroom.

At The Pines Primary School, staff were engaged and enthusiastic about this process, and it required a whole team effort. We developed these strategies with the whole team, including teachers and support staff, so that we were all able to facilitate creative thinking when engaged in a learning opportunity.

It is through the high levels of commitment from all that optimal impact was observed in practice overall and most importantly, the children's learning and development. As a team, one of the key things we developed was a set of support materials for all staff to use when engaging with the children, as well as whole team training on creative thinking. These will be covered in more detail later.

Year three: Early Years and Primary project

Following the research in Early Years at The Pines Primary School, Anglian Learning chose to expand this research further in the third year of the project by including all early years settings across the Trust. The aim of this was to share what had been learnt to date, and to further develop and evidence the findings.

In September 2023, Louise Scott, Primary Project Lead, held a launch event to demonstrate what had been implemented so far in the project and the impact it had had on both pupils and teachers. During this event, teachers learnt about the definitions for creative teaching and were provided with a copy of 'Teaching Creative Thinking' by Bill Lucas and Ellen Spencer. They also learnt about the pedagogical approaches used so far, along with some suggestions of what they could try in their own classrooms. Each project lead was given the time to consider the context of their school and plan their own research questions.

Each setting completed their own environmental audit to inform the learning environment and current practice. This informed their areas of focus and included aspects such as resources, adult interactions, oracy, and pupils' imaginations.

Following this, Louise Scott visited each setting to discuss their projects and provide bespoke support and coaching to start each project.

Reflection meetings

Each half term, all project leads would meet for a reflection meeting where they could discuss the following:

- Which pedagogical approach had been trialled?
- What adaptations had been made?
- What had been the impact of this on pupils and teachers?
- How did they know?
- Are there any barriers? Can we overcome them?
- What are your reflections on individual reading and research linked to Teaching for Creativity?

> These sessions were supportive and professional and had a direct impact on practice in the classroom. Through this opportunity we built a collaborative network of professionals working towards a shared vision of improving outcomes and creative thinking for pupils.

Training events

In addition to the reflection meetings, we ran in-person training events aimed at supporting professional development and understanding of Teaching for Creativity. These included:

- Learning environments – continuous provision in the early years.
- In-the-moment planning.
- The magic of play and learning.
- Sustained shared thinking.
- Metacognition in the classroom.

All of these were valuable in developing research based pedagogical approaches.

> Project leads across six schools successfully implemented change within their settings which positively impacted pupils and enabled creative thinking to develop.

Celebration day

At the end of our projects, we had a celebration day event where the collective findings of the research were shared. It was an exciting opportunity to demonstrate the impact Teaching for Creativity had across a range of early years settings. It gave each project lead the chance to present their individual project and its influence, both on the children they teach and their own professional development. As a group of professionals, we could reflect on how far we had come and what our next steps could be to ensure that the momentum from the project would not be lost.

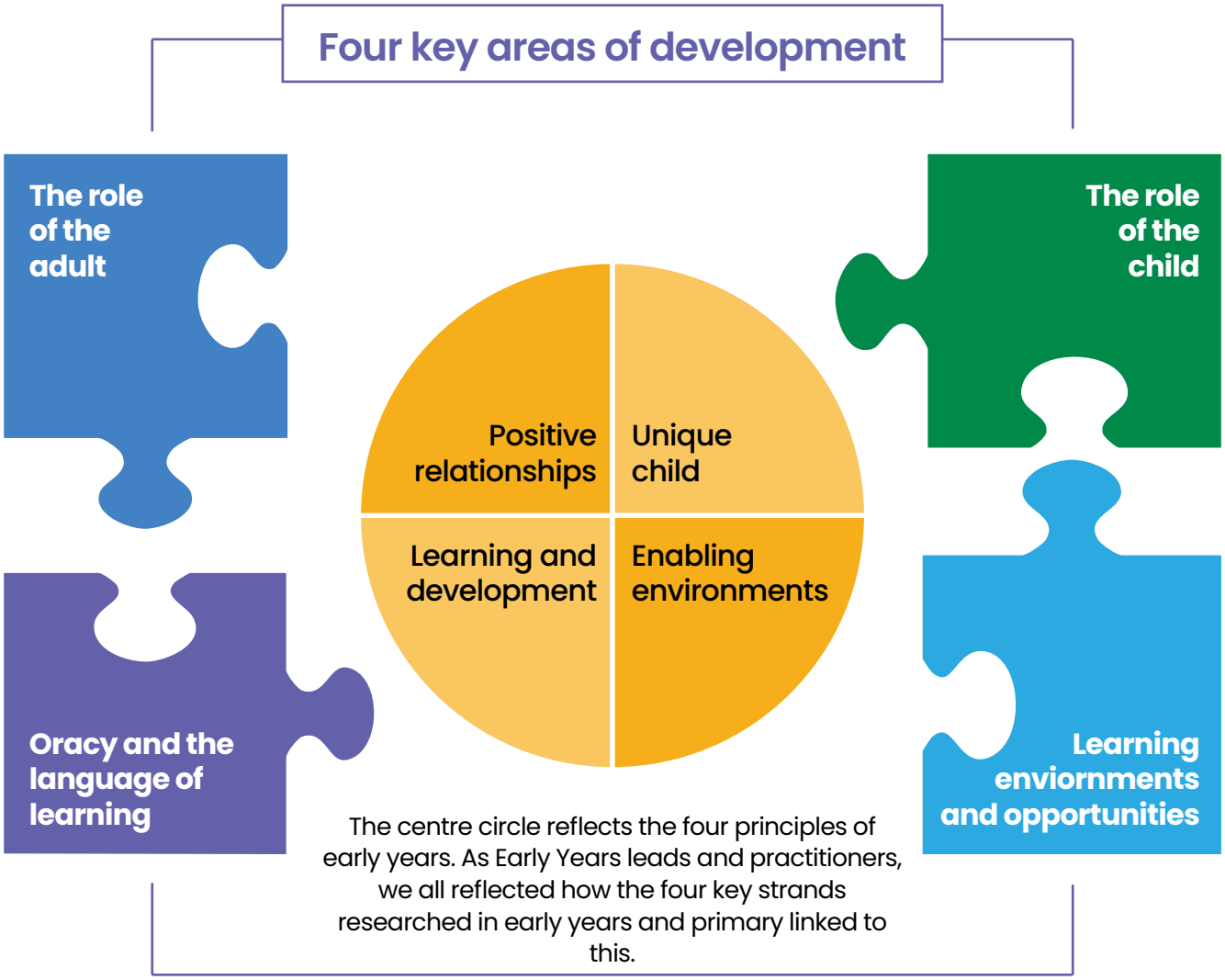
Findings of the Early Years projects

Through the action research project, we found evidence suggesting that when learning is purposeful and exploratory, engagement levels rise, and skills develop, including the ability to make links with learning and apply new knowledge and skills in a variety of contexts.

Providing opportunities for children to lead their investigations, learning, and questions has given both them and the teachers autonomy over the direction of learning.

One of the ways we evidenced levels of engagement throughout the project was by using the Leuven Scales. These were measured at the beginning of the project as a baseline and at the end as a way of measuring impact.

We found that four key areas of development were instrumental in this, shown in the diagram **overleaf**.



The centre circle reflects the four principles of early years. As Early Years leads and practitioners, we all reflected how the four key strands researched in early years and primary linked to this.

The role of the child

Throughout our projects, we found that allowing pupils to lead their learning as much as possible gave them a sense of ownership and intrinsic motivation.

We modelled questioning using sentence stems and provided the children with rich and meaningful experiences, which inspired curiosity and questioning.

During our reflection times for each learning session, the pupils could share what they had been exploring through play during the lesson, what they had found out, where it went wrong, and how they might do it better next time. This was powerful and gave pupils the confidence to talk about their learning experiences with their peers and they began to do this spontaneously throughout the day!

In early years, we maximised the children's opportunity to learn through play,giving them enough time to immerse themselves in their child-initiated activity and think hard to solve any problems they may come up against.

The role of the child

How did we do this?

There are a variety of approaches we developed throughout the project to give pupils more autonomy and lead on their learning. These were facilitated and powered by the adult interactions described in the following section. One of the strategies we have used in early years and across the school is starting a theme with some artefacts to spark curiosity and interest linked to the theme. This is used as a way of assessing what the pupils already know and if there are any misconceptions, before encouraging them to think about their own questions and interests. These are then woven into the theme. This is known as KWFL. See the example below:

Early Years Theme: I wonder what happens when I fall asleep?

What do I know?	What would I like to know?	How could we find it out?	What have we learnt?
'It gets dark.' 'The moon is bright.' 'I sleep at night.' 'I like to dream.' 'Hedgehogs come out at night.'	'How can I get to the moon?' 'Where does the sun go?' 'I want to learn about the stars.' 'Why do I dream?'	'We can look in books.' 'Go to the moon.' 'Find it on an ipad.' 'Build a rocket.' 'Work together.'	*This happens throughout the theme. We refer to the questions asked and share what we have discovered. This is sometimes led by the children themselves.*

See above examples of what the children share at the start of our theme. We facilitate lots of conversation about the theme to find out what they know and what they would like to find out. We transfer the skills of how they have learnt new things before in the 'How could we find out?' section. This is inspired by the curiosity chest and displayed on a theme board in the classroom by the children.

The KWFL grid contains 4 sections:

K = what pupils already know.

W = what pupils would like to know.

F = how pupils can find out the answer.

L = What pupils have learnt – to be completed at the end of the theme.

The role of the child

At the start of our learning theme, we gave pupils the opportunity to think about what they already know about the theme, and what they would like to know, prompting them to formulate their own questions. We then fed these ideas into our planning. One of the powerful elements of this is that you avoid teaching something the pupils are already know and you can identify misconceptions. Additionally, you can give them that chance to share which directions they would like their learning to go in. This builds trust, confidence, and motivation and encourages pupils to lead their learning and plan their own investigations.

We actively encouraged the pupils to try ideas knowing that they may fail. These were used as teaching and learning points. Never forget the power of making a mistake! Allow the pupils to fail and discuss as a class/group where it went wrong and what you have all learned from each other. This builds resilience and collaboration.

The role of the adult

Teachers facilitate the learning of the pupils. This is a subtle and dynamic role within teaching and learning. Teachers and practitioners use their knowledge of the curriculum and the pupils they are working with to adapt with each learning opportunity and move the pupils' skills, understanding, and knowledge forwards. High-quality interactions and modelling of metacognition play a vital role here.

We used the following pedagogical approaches when developing this:

High-quality interactions

Research findings from the SEED study consistently concluded that children made good progress with their learning and development when they were exposed to high-quality interactions on a regular basis. The most significant impact was noted between the ages of 0-5 years. Adults in early years would guide and enhance the pupils' play by commenting on what they were doing and using questions to prompt the pupils to think more deeply.

The role of the adult

Question starters

Using open-ended questions to provoke thinking has been a great success and one of the ways teachers and practitioners have supported children to develop inquisitiveness and increase levels of concentration. In early years, we used this to facilitate and develop learning during exploratory play.

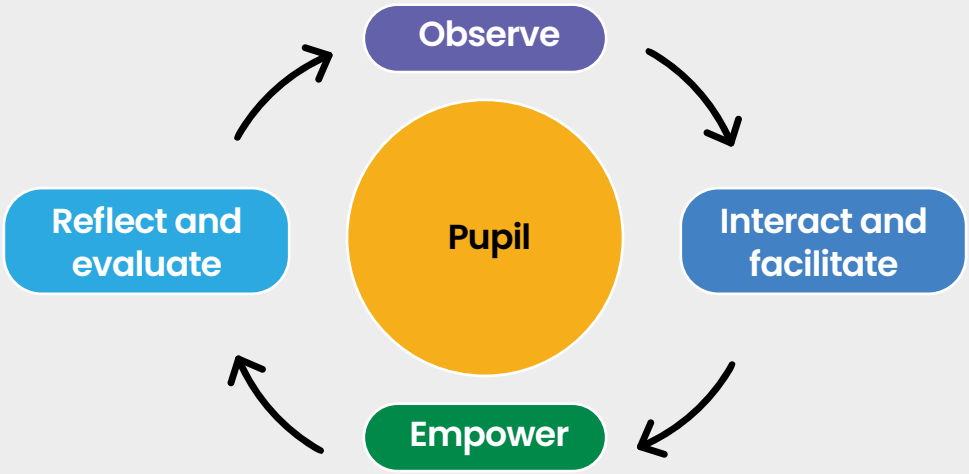
These questions support creative thinking at any age or stage of development:

- I wonder...?
- What do you think will happen if...?
- How could you/we....?
- Is there another way?
- Can you show me another way?
- What do you think would happen if...?
- How do you imagine it feels to...?
- How do you think we could...?
- What would it be like if...?
- What do you wonder about...?
- How do you think we can find out...?
- What do you think it would look like if...?
- How do you think it would change if...?
- What do you imagine it would be like to...?

In-the-moment planning

This is a pedagogical approach where practitioners and teachers facilitate learning and respond in that moment. This works well because it is most meaningful to the pupil when they are highly motivated by their current task. During these moments, the adult will skilfully facilitate learning to support development and levels of engagement.

This approach works in a cycle.



The role of the adult

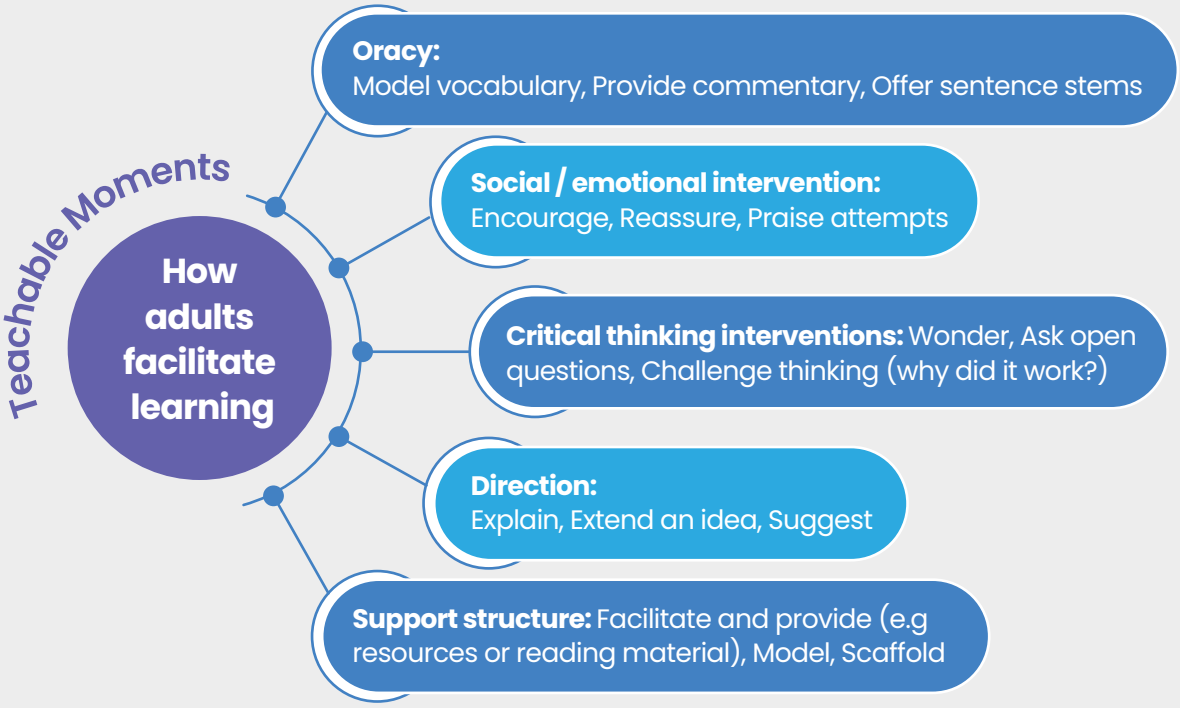
1) Observe – What is the pupil doing? Consider the following while observing. Is the pupil...

- working independently?
- working with support?
- investigating?
- concentrating?
- attempting?
- imitating?
- repeating?

... this will inform step two.

2) Interact and facilitate – This involves several approaches. The adult will model high-quality language and vocabulary. They may provide some commentary on what they can see, or they may ask an open question such as the ones detailed above. Alongside the pupil, they can decide where they can take their exploratory learning next.

The practitioner may need to support the pupil by sharing resources or helping them learn some new information through a book or the Internet. This is where the practitioner would teach in different ways, exercising their professional judgement through analysing what the child needs at this point in their learning and which pedagogical approach is most appropriate here. Some suggestions are shown in the graphic below:



The role of the adult

3) Empower – This is where you will allow the pupil the opportunity to complete or continue with their learning. Following the teaching, it is important for the pupil to continue with independence.

4) Reflect and evaluate – This can be done independently by pupils depending on their levels of confidence. However, teachers can use this as a valuable assessment opportunity by asking children questions that prompt thinking and develop metacognition. See some example questions below:

- Can you tell me about how you...?
- What went well and why?
- Have you used this before when learning about something else?
- How could you improve things?
- Can you show me how...?
- What did you learn when...?
- If you tried this again, what would you do differently?

At this point in the cycle, if time allows, you can repeat the cycle deepening the learning experience.

Sustained shared thinking

Sustained shared thinking occurs when two or more individuals work together in an intellectual way to solve a problem, clarify a concept, evaluate an activity, or extend a narrative. Both parties must contribute to the thinking, and it must develop and extend their understanding.

For young learners, this means adults providing them with prompts instead of the answers, allowing them to attempt and fail, building understanding and resilience. A crucial part of allowing children to fail is the opportunity for them to reflect on their experience with the guidance of an adult. Using explicit prompts and questioning helps to support the child to learn from their attempts. For instance, tell me about where it worked... Why? How? Which part went wrong? Why do you think that is? What else could we try? If you do it again, what will you do differently?

Sustained shared thinking is best described as those times when you are totally absorbed with a child, in conversation or in an activity with a genuine interest on both parts to find out more. Sustained shared thinking can happen anytime, anywhere, and only requires time and interest from the participants. It can be one-to-one or in a small group, especially when there is shared group interest.

The important aspect is the meeting of minds and subsequent learning that occurs on both sides. As a practitioner, you are likely to be aware of a connection and that you and the child/ren are fully engaged in the activity or conversation. These occasions present important opportunities for the practitioner to see a child's world through their eyes. They will reveal much about the child including their level of cognitive development, schemas, and self-esteem. The child may also be learning important skills such as social interaction, techniques, creative thinking, cause and effect, and acquiring knowledge.

The role of the adult

The theories about sustained shared thinking contributed to the Department for Education's 'Early Years Framework – Development matters materials and guidance', which explicitly stated that sustained shared thinking should be a part of a child's creativity and critical thinking (EYFS 4.3). It is also indirectly described in all of the areas of learning and development. This is because the longitudinal research project The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project (2004) clearly identified that the 'most effective settings encourage sustained shared thinking' and that it is a 'necessary pre-requisite for the most effective settings.'

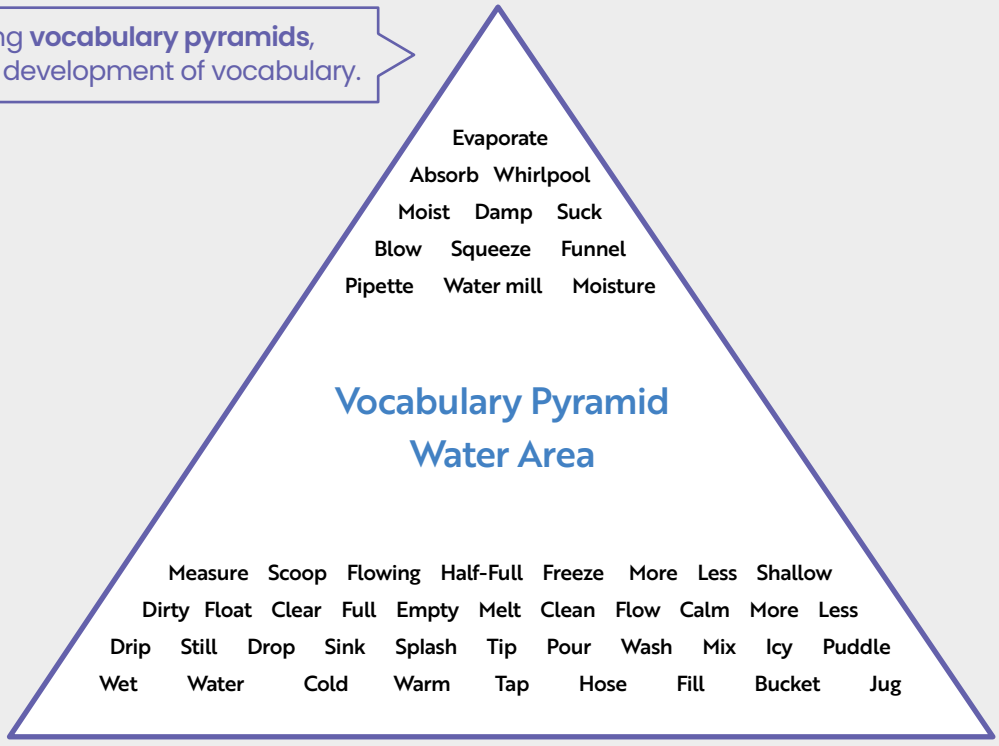
While engaging with sustained shared thinking, practitioners can:

- Model wondering and questioning.
- Make observations and plan next steps.

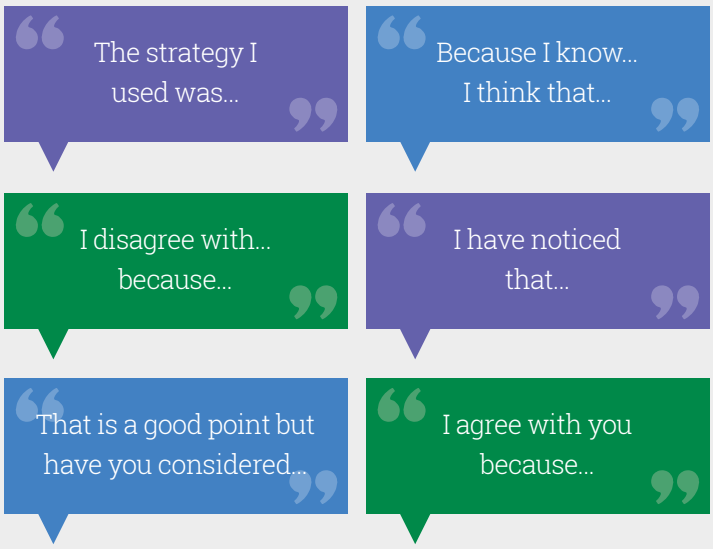
Oracy and the language of learning

Having rich vocabulary and an oracy curriculum is important in supporting children to become effective communicators. This is important for them to be able to express themselves and engage with learning in a creative way.

Strategies, such as using **vocabulary pyramids**, support the sequential development of vocabulary.



Oracy and the language of learning



Throughout the project, we found that using **sentence stems** and following an oracy curriculum enabled teachers to effectively teach the complex skills needed to be strong communicators. This encompassed physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social-emotional strands.

Language of learning

This involved talking about which learning attributes children were using during a learning experience. The learning attributes were explicitly referred to during conversations practitioners had with children. For instance, 'I can see that you used great perseverance there when you attempted to solve the problem.' Or 'I wonder, how collaborating can help with this challenge?' This enables pupils to become familiar with and articulate the skills they use when learning and gain a better understanding of their learning strengths.

Each setting decided on which learning attributes were more prominent within the context of their schools. Some of these included: collaboration, problem-solving/critical thinking, communication, resilience, curiosity, creativity, innovating, imitating, kindness, and patience. These were used throughout interactions with pupils.

Through this process, the children could articulate which attributes they had used, when, and how these helped them. This was evidenced through project leads' reflective journals and the 'learning stories' written for case study children.

Learning environments and opportunities

This is how practitioners create an environment that ignites curiosity and planned experiences that support the pupils' understanding of the world. This is through enhancements linked to the topic or theme the children are currently learning about. For example, some settings used a 'Curiosity Table/Cube' to display an artefact of interest such as owl pellets, an old camera, or a lightbulb. This would be used to stimulate conversation, ideas, questions, and inquisitiveness amongst the learners.

Learning opportunities could include planned experiments, visits, local walks or problem-solving activities like building a bug hotel for wildlife. Learners also need opportunities for imaginative play – to play at being scientists, historians, artists and beyond! By providing children with rich experiences and open-ended opportunities for exploration, you are providing fuel for creative thinking.

Mantle of the expert

Mantle of the expert works by the teacher planning a fictional context where the pupils take on the responsibilities of an expert team. As a team, they are commissioned by a client to work on an assignment, designed to generate tasks and activities that involve them in studying and developing wide areas of the curriculum.

Case studies
Primary schools

Case studies

Real life experiences and in-the-moment teaching

The Pines Primary School and Pine Cones Pre-School
Louise Scott, Deputy Headteacher

Research question:
"To what extent does wondering and questioning raise levels of engagement and sustained concentration during independent learning time?"

What changed?

Over the three years of progressing the project, a range of pedagogical approaches were developed to promote creative thinking with pupils and teachers. Both indoor and outdoor learning environments were evaluated and staff considered how creative pupils and teachers were able to be with the resources on offer. Throughout all learning areas, more open-ended resources were put in place such as natural loose parts in the small world area – including pinecones, pebbles, and conkers. Plain wooden blocks were constantly stocked in the construction zone, whilst junk modelling was always made available in the creative area. This meant that pupils had endless opportunities to explore within their play.

The setting introduced a Curiosity Cube which included items of interest to spark questions with the pupils. Some of the items included some owl pellets and treasure.

Mantle of the expert experiences opened opportunities for the pupils to explore being scientists, palaeontologists, and investigators. This meant that the pupils could work together to solve a problem within a make-believe context. The pupils could make links with prior learning and were engaged in a team-based activity.

How adults supported and interacted with the pupils played a vital role in developing creative thinking. The adults used the 'in-the-moment' approach and 'sustained shared thinking' to support the pupils' learning and development through play. This involved staff training and creating prompt cards for adults to use when working with the pupils.

Pupils were also given more autonomy over the learning themes, using **KWFL** at the start of each theme and throughout to encourage them to pose their own questions and consider how they may answer them.

Case study

The pupils were interested in learning more about palaeontology during a theme about fossils. The class had learnt how fossils were formed and already discovered dinosaurs and the types of food they ate. They understood that some were herbivores, omnivores, and carnivores. The teacher set up an imaginary scenario where the pupils in the class were to become palaeontologists.

They received a mock video call from a professor at the Natural History Museum asking them to uncover some fossils that had been accidentally dropped in their garden. They were tasked with finding and investigating the fossils to identify what they could be and to report back to the museum. The class teacher modelled how paleontologists carefully uncover fossils using specialised tools. The pupils then enthusiastically searched for and examined the fossils.

The whole class were fully engaged with the experience. Following the discovery of the fossils, they wrote about their findings. They saw themselves as real paleontologists and meaningfully applied writing and math skills—not because they were told to, but because they wanted to. Some pupils presented their findings to peers, made videos, and wrote letters.

This was immersive and memorable. Through opportunities like these, the pupils are developing creative attributes such as collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and perseverance. This gave them motivation to apply the knowledge they had learnt about dinosaurs, their mathematic skills and phonic knowledge in a way that resonates with them.

What we noticed

We noticed lots of positive change due to the many adaptations put into place throughout the project. This included the professional development of the early years team and the improvements in practice. Staff commented on greater confidence with supporting pupils in their play as well as noting that they knew the pupils better and therefore felt more able to meet their needs.

The pupils had improved levels of engagement and concentration as evidenced through the Leuven Scales assessments. They demonstrated raised confidence and openness to asking their own questions and sharing their ideas. They had more resilience and were more likely to stick at a problem despite setbacks. In addition to this, they communicated with one another and collaborated learning from one another.

Although much of the evidence is qualitative and challenging to measure, there was more visible evidence that the pupils had improved behaviour for learning, and progress for some of the more vulnerable children had accelerated.

Real life experiences and in-the-moment teaching
(continued)

Points to consider

What do you need to do:

- Learn about your pupils' interests, as well as their needs.
- Find out about mantle of the expert.
- Implement simple enhancements using objects of interest to spark curiosity.
- Plan occasional imaginary experiences to bring learning to life.
- Allow for some autonomy.
- Allow enough time for the pupils to become immersed in their learning.

What to avoid:

- Not giving pupils time to finish or rushing them.
- Giving pupils the answers before they have had a chance to try for themselves.

Wondering and questioning in Primary science

The Pines Primary School (Year 2)

Hayley Stopps, Year 2 Teacher

> "I like to do experiments like a real scientist."
> – The Pines Primary School Pupil

What did teachers and support staff do?

Following on from the success of developing the learning environment in the early years, the leadership team at the Pines Primary School decided to provide children in the higher years with more opportunities to think creatively in science, beginning in Key Stage 1. Units of work in the science curriculum were re-written to prioritise investigation, discovery, and inquisitiveness. Children were supported to ask their own questions and instigate their own investigations. Staff began by re-organising the units for materials and plants. One unit began by discussing as a class what the children already knew about plants and seeds. The children looked at the cress seeds and thought about how to make it a fair test and wondered what might happen.

What changed as a result?

As a result of the project, the school has a different approach to its science curriculum. There are raised levels of engagement in lessons and more hands-on experience in science. The children have demonstrated improved oracy skills, and both practitioners and children are more confident asking questions.

Staff believe that this is a better approach to teaching and learning and are continuing to develop opportunities for creative thinking across the school.

What helped to make this happen?

The staff at the school carefully considered which curriculum area to implement a more creative approach. Science was chosen because it was more developed than other subject areas but had limited opportunities for creativity. It was important to focus on one area to make the project manageable. The Science Lead at the Pines was enthusiastic and visionary about taking on this challenge.

Wondering and questioning in Primary science
(continued)

The initial plan was to let children entirely lead their own learning in science. However, a combination of content delivery and opportunities for wondering and questioning proved more effective. Using materials as stimuli was crucial for the science units.

It helped that the school had first evaluated the early years learning environment and was able to build on that experience. For example, staff had been working with a model of child-adult interactions in which the adult models questioning for the children.

The role of the adult and learning environments

Bottisham Community Primary School (Nursery and Reception)
Jackie Claydon, Nursery Teacher
Hannah Lawrence, Reception Teacher
Joy Morrison, Reception Teacher

Research question:
"To what extent does planning creative opportunities allow children to develop sustained independent investigation skills?"

What changed?

Following a learning environment audit, there was a focus on developing resources so that there were more opportunities for open-ended exploratory play. For example, train tracks and garages were swapped for blocks and natural loose parts. This created endless opportunities of what the children were able to create with the materials.

In addition to this, the children were provided with open-ended experiences and problems to solve. The adults used the skills of facilitation to develop the children's concentration and independent investigation skills.

In Reception, teachers introduced homework linked to the current theme of learning. The children and parents were set the task of finding out about an area the child wanted to learn about connected to the theme. This developed the children's knowledge about the theme whilst raising parental engagement.

Nursery Case Study

We removed 'closed' resources from the classroom and presented the children with the problem of how to overcome not having a garage for the cars, which was usually the focus of their play. They gathered different resources, and created a roadway instead, complete with tunnels, grass, slopes, bumpy tracks, bridges and ponds, all of which the cars and trucks had to navigate.

This activity led to a wealth of ideas, extensive conversation and negotiation, as well as strong teamwork and collaboration. In addition, there were discussions around which vehicles would manage better over the difficult terrains. What would happen to the smaller cars crossing the pond? Which vehicles negotiated the narrow track more successfully?

Following on from this activity, on the same day, one of our focus children decided he wanted to design and build his own car using various resources, rather than returning to playing with the cars.

The role of the adult and learning environments
(continued)

Reception case study

"The curious incident of the dinosaur in the classroom". Alongside enhancing the resources within the learning environment to provide more open-ended learning opportunities, teachers provided the children with imaginary experiences to ignite curiosity and investigative skills.

During a learning theme about dinosaurs, teachers set up a scene where 'someone had visited their classroom and created a mess. Several clues were left for the children to explore, including an egg, some footprints, and poo! The children were set with the task of investigating what could have happened. This created awe and wonder in the classroom and the children worked collaboratively to explore and investigate. The adults used the skills of interaction and facilitation to ensure that pupils could sustain their thinking and investigation.

Following this, the children collectively decided that a dinosaur had visited their classroom. They spent time exploring the egg, discussing what could be inside and how they could help it hatch, wrote about dinosaurs, and dissected the poo. This gave the children opportunities to develop their knowledge about dinosaurs, while applying skills in writing, measure for mathematics, and the cause and change effects of water.

What we noticed

In both settings, over the course of the project, it was observed that the children engaged for longer periods with their environment and had more confidence to try new things. The children worked more collaboratively with one another using the open-ended resources to construct creations to enhance their play. They listened to one another and adapted their creations and their play developed and celebrated achieving a shared goal. The children would make connections with their learning and orally recall previous learning and use this to support them when trying something new.

Points to consider

What do you need to do:

- Review the resources and enhancements available to children. Are they open-ended? Do they create awe and wonder to spark curiosity and investigation?
- Plan experiences that make learning purposeful and motivating.
  - Link experiences to what the children know and are interested in so that it can build upon their knowledge.
  - Support the interactions through in-the-moment/teachable moments cycle of facilitation.

What to avoid:

- Only using closed resources, such as building sets designed to be one thing, e.g. a ready-made pirate ship.
- Teaching children something that is factually incorrect. So, in the above example, although they believed a dinosaur had visited their classroom, the children also needed to know that dinosaurs are extinct. This may arise incidentally through the learning experience if a child raises it but would ideally be reflected upon following the learning experience so that the engaging and immersive nature of the opportunity is not spoilt. After all learning can be magical!

Curiosity and questioning

The Meadow Primary School
Faye Facer, Assistant Head

Research question:
"How can the development of high-quality interactions between pupils and practitioners be improved to facilitate the development of exploratory talk to enhance children's engagement and learning outcomes?"

What changed?

Throughout the project, teachers developed and enhanced learning spaces such as the home corner and the builders' yard to incorporate the Curiosity Approach. This involved reviewing and changing the resources so that they were natural and open-ended, the plastic food was removed, and this was replaced with items such as wooden balls, pine cones, and silver spoons. Alongside this, all practitioners embraced child-led exploratory play. The Early Years Lead implemented the use of open questions to support exploratory talk and metacognition. There was a focus on play and how adults can enhance this through interactions and questioning.

Case study

The role of the adult and the learning environments were developed over the course of the project to enable creative thinking. This was linked specifically to exploratory play.

Following an environmental audit, the Early Years Lead planned how the environment needed to be adapted to allow for more creative thinking and exploratory play. Resources in the home corner, builders' yard and sand area were enhanced with natural and open-ended resources to stimulate exploratory play. Alongside these, enhancements were made such as a large car transporter for the children to explore in 'Imagination Island' (small world area).

Weekly base meetings with all practitioners working with the children meant that the team could reflect upon the impact these resources and enhancements had on the children.

There was development of practice linked to interactions and questioning and how this enhanced and supported the children in their play. With the use of question prompts, such as those included in the **'role of the adult' section,** supported adults to interact with the children during play. This meant that the play could be more child-led rather than adult-led, increasing the children's thinking skills and independence.

Open-ended question starters designed to spark inquisitiveness and wonder in early years children:

1. What do you think would happen if...?
2. How do you imagine it feels to...?
3. Why do you think...?
4. What might be the reason for...?
5. How do you think we could...?
6. What would it be like if...?
7. How do you suppose...?
8. What do you think is inside...?
9. Why do you think some...?
10. How do you think it happens that...?
11. What do you wonder about...?
12. How do you think we can find out...?
13. What do you think it would look like if...?
14. How do you think it would change if...?
15. What do you think makes...?
16. How do you think it works when...?
17. What do you imagine it would be like to...?
18. How do you think people/animals/objects...?
19. Why do you think it is that...?
20. What do you think would be different if...?

These starters are meant to ignite curiosity and encourage young children to think, explore, and discuss a wide range of topics.

Curiosity and questioning
(continued)

One of the focus children demonstrated a significant change in their exploratory play and creative thinking as a result of the project.

This child had neurodivergent behaviours and autistic tendencies. At the start of the year, they found it difficult to sustain concentration on any type of play. They engaged in repetitive behaviours and showed little interest in what others were playing.

The Leuven Scales were used as a way of measuring levels of engagement. This was initially on average a 2 out of 5. By the end of the project this had increased to 4.5 out of 5.

Points to consider

What do you need to do:

- Carry out an environmental audit.
- Plan time to discuss the children and how the adults and environment can support their development.
- Incorporate open-ended recourses and enhancements to encourage exploratory talk and play.
- Develop questioning in practice and create a list of accessible questions for adults to use during play.
- Allow for extended period of play by looking at your timetable so that children have enough time to become immersed in play.

What to avoid:

- Rushing play experiences – where possible.
- Asking closed questions, such as 'How many are there? What colour is it?'

Additional projects

In our Collaborative, we developed practice across many of the early years settings within Anglian Learning. The following settings also carried out their research projects which involved the pedagogical approaches described above. It was a collaborative experience where we built an early years support network and brought early years into the spotlight for Teaching for Creativity.

Howard Community Academy

Michelle Briggs, Reception Teacher

"To what extent do high-quality interactions with practitioners develop children's vocabulary, supporting them to creatively imagine and extend learning opportunities during independent learning time?"

Fen Ditton Community Primary School

Nikki Cole, Reception Teacher

"To what extent does planning curiosity in the learning environment through adult interaction and modelling enable the pupils to be more imaginative in their play?"

Stapleford Community Primary School

Lauren Davis, Nursery Teacher

Jayne Hore, Deputy Headteacher

"To what extent does high-quality provision and experiences, supported by effective adult interactions, support children to develop curiosity and follow their own lines of enquiry?"

Secondary in practice

Case studies

The secondary schools conducted a variety of action research projects which trialled pedagogies for Teaching for Creativity. The project titles can be found on **page 15** and they varied from individual classes to whole school approaches. Best practice from these projects has been collated into the secondary toolkit which begins on **page 58**.

Re-thinking curriculum design

Bottisham Village College

To what extent does Teaching for Creativity impact on school improvement?

What were we observing?

- Pupils were passive: in a post-Covid context, pupils were reluctant to being challenged.
- Pupils say learning was confined to the classroom where the lesson took place.
- Pupils struggled to use their knowledge in a variety of contexts.
- Pupils wanted more collaboration to practise answers and develop thought processes with others.
- Classroom environments and some uses of seating arrangements were not conducive to creative thinking, as they did not create a learning environment where pupils had opportunities for collaboration.

STAGE 1

What do we want our classrooms to look like?

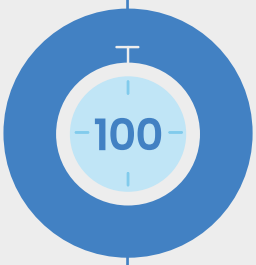
Viewpoints collected from pupil focus groups, staff surveys, parent forums, teacher communities of practice, Trust blueprints, senior leadership groups and business partners showed common themes in what respondents wanted to see and experience:

- Pupils 'thinking hard' during the lesson and applying their learning.
- Collaboration, peer learning and group work to support this.
- Responsive teaching with feedback that can be acted upon.
- Self-regulation and resilience.
- Diversity of delivery, e.g. time for trips, visits, outside speakers, and workshops.

STAGE 2

Enabling conditions to allow for Teaching for Creativity in ALL classrooms?

- Senior leadership teams re-writing curriculum intents.
- Heads of Faculty (HoF) writing age-related expectations and focusing on threshold concepts. What are the key topics, themes and skills that pupils need in each subject?
- 'Strategic Abandonment' – stripping the content to allow for more opportunities for collaboration and thinking hard in the classroom (giving HoFs freedom to do this and take risks).



Why the 100 minute lesson?

- Allows time for teachers to explore teaching for creative pedagogies such as collaboration.
- Allows for Thinking Hard as pupils can use the acquired learning there and then to problem solve and take learning deeper.
- Closes the feedback loop and develops self-regulated learners.
- Allows teaching to be truly responsive and misconceptions highlighted and addressed in the moment.
- Allows for learning to be truly enriched by project-based work with presentations making learning more work related, giving pupils more opportunities to apply learning to different contexts.

Links to homework

Homework timetables will follow the daily lesson timetable. The goals of this are to:

- build learning habits;
- consolidate learning to allow for Thinking Hard activities in lessons; and
- allow time for pupils to participate in enrichment activities.

All homework tasks should have the aim to either use knowledge consolidation from previous lessons or flip learning activities that will support new learning in the next lesson.

Thinking creatively is more than just making things

The Netherhall School

Jackie Williams, Head of Art

Year 8 Digital Pop Art Research and Outcome

2022

2023

Another powerful case study comes from the work of Jackie Williams, Head of Art at The Netherhall School. Jackie observed that for many pupils, their enjoyment of the subject came from the physical act of making something each lesson. Whilst she did not wish to diminish this, she became concerned that pupils' focus was on the simple act of producing and less so on the mental work of coming up with an idea, planning, and developing.

She developed a scheme of work using gel printing plates that greatly reduced the time needed for pupils to reproduce their work. This allowed pupils to spend far more time and effort on the process of researching, planning, and thinking about their artwork beforehand.

Jackie gave pupils choice in their learning and modelled her own thinking process. The project has been hugely successful, and Jackie is currently working on implementing her learning across the department.

Thinking creatively is more than just making things
The Netherhall School (continued)

Teachers become more creative and more satisfied when Teaching for Creativity.

Jackie's experience demonstrates that when developing curriculum for creativity, teachers themselves become more creative. The impact on teachers has been widespread: a shift in their perspective on creativity; an increase in inquisitiveness and curiosity about their own practice; and an increased level of joy and satisfaction in teaching.

When speaking to the teachers involved in the project, they reported that they felt better able to "let go" and take creative risks in their teaching. Furthermore, they felt more confident in taking the learning from their projects and applying it more widely to their practice. Teachers described a renewed sense of their own inquisitiveness about their own practice.

Teachers felt empowered by the feeling of autonomy over their professional development that they had gained through participation. Many described the excitement they felt at "rediscovering" aspects of pupil learning that they felt had been previously neglected. For some of the teachers, their work on this project brought them closer to their own idealised versions of themselves as teachers, with their work better able to inspire the kind of enthusiasm and creative flourishing that they aspired for.

Whilst teachers described their work on the project as challenging, this feeling of greater identification with their work improved their wellbeing and overall satisfaction with their own teaching, as well as increased satisfaction in seeing progress from their pupils.

Allowing for pupil autonomy in thinking creatively

Bassingbourn Village College
Tori Turland, Teacher of Science

Research question:
"To what extent does investigating and exploring using the Mantle of the Expert affect the engagement of Year 9 pupils in the science classroom?"

The Mantle of the Expert approach

The Mantle of the Expert is a teaching technique where the teacher and pupils take on a role in order to serve a common goal – developed by Dorothy Heathcote (1985). This is based on the premise that treating pupils as responsible experts increases their engagement and confidence. They can perceive a real purpose for learning and discovering together in an interactive and proactive way – gathering skills and knowledge they can apply to their everyday lives. While the focus is on the enquiry process, it can often lead to real outcomes such as writing letters, printing leaflets, or designing products.

The project process

The project was based on how Mantle of the Expert can be used to give pupils roles to investigate a science research question.

Multiple classes in Year 9 were presented with scientific artefacts to influence, intrigue, and inspire their science projects. Artefacts ranged from worm farms to bath bombs; in the initial planning lesson, the classroom was buzzing with excitement as groups began to formulate their ideas.

Once the research questions were solidified, pupils decided on the real-life scientific role they would be taking on in the following lessons. Some pupils became cosmetologists, looking at the best formula for bath bombs, others became volcanologists, exploring volcanic eruptions and their aftermath. Pupils were able to make career connections to their science projects to give them a sense of reality.

Over the next sequence of lessons, pupils carried out their experiments. They then presented their projects and results to the class and held a science fair to neighboring classes also taking part in the project. Pupils left their peers postcards with comments about each other's projects filled with praise.

The impact

Throughout the project, the Project Lead observed an increase in pupil engagement in science as well as more of an independent learning approach.

Pupil voice

"I found the Creativity Collaborative experience to be an amazing project that provided us with options for jobs. I enjoyed the process as it gave me better social skills with people who I would not normally be with. This also made me plan and think on what to do and research and learn without being told or guided in any way and we got to do what is exciting in science."

"I thought that the Creativity Collaborative project allowed us to express our creativity through science. It gave us the opportunity to develop our independence. We had the responsibility of running our own projects and the fact we got to choose what to do motivated us throughout the project."

"I really enjoyed the project. It was nice to have control over what we were doing instead of being told what to do. It was also a great opportunity to work with other people we would not normally work with. It enabled me to develop my communication and teamwork skills. If I had the opportunity to do it again I definitely would. It made me think outside the box and enabled me to plan my ideas and question science."

Pupils' views about inquisitiveness

During the focus group, pupils stated that they believe that being inquisitive is an important aspect of being successful in and out of school. They relayed the correlation between being more inquisitive in lessons that they enjoyed and were 'fun' – explaining that 'fun' meant lessons where a teacher was not just reading information that was on a PowerPoint, but instead where the teacher showed the skill of being inquisitive as well.

They defined teachers as inquisitive due to them being passionate about their subject, having strong subject knowledge and teaching pupils beyond the knowledge needed for exams/ curriculum and exploring subjects and becoming experts on subjects that they knew little about. Pupils found that they were more able to be inquisitive in lessons where the teachers also showcased this skill. Pupils understood that being inquisitive meant that you asked more questions and were curious about a subject beyond the 'norm'. They also agreed that being more inquisitive made them feel that they would perform better academically and give them more of an overall understanding that could be applied to their life; they would become more progressive and proactive people rather than regressive and reactive.

Secondary toolkit

This section outlines the practical Teaching for Creativity pedagogies that were trialled in the secondary schools involved in the project.

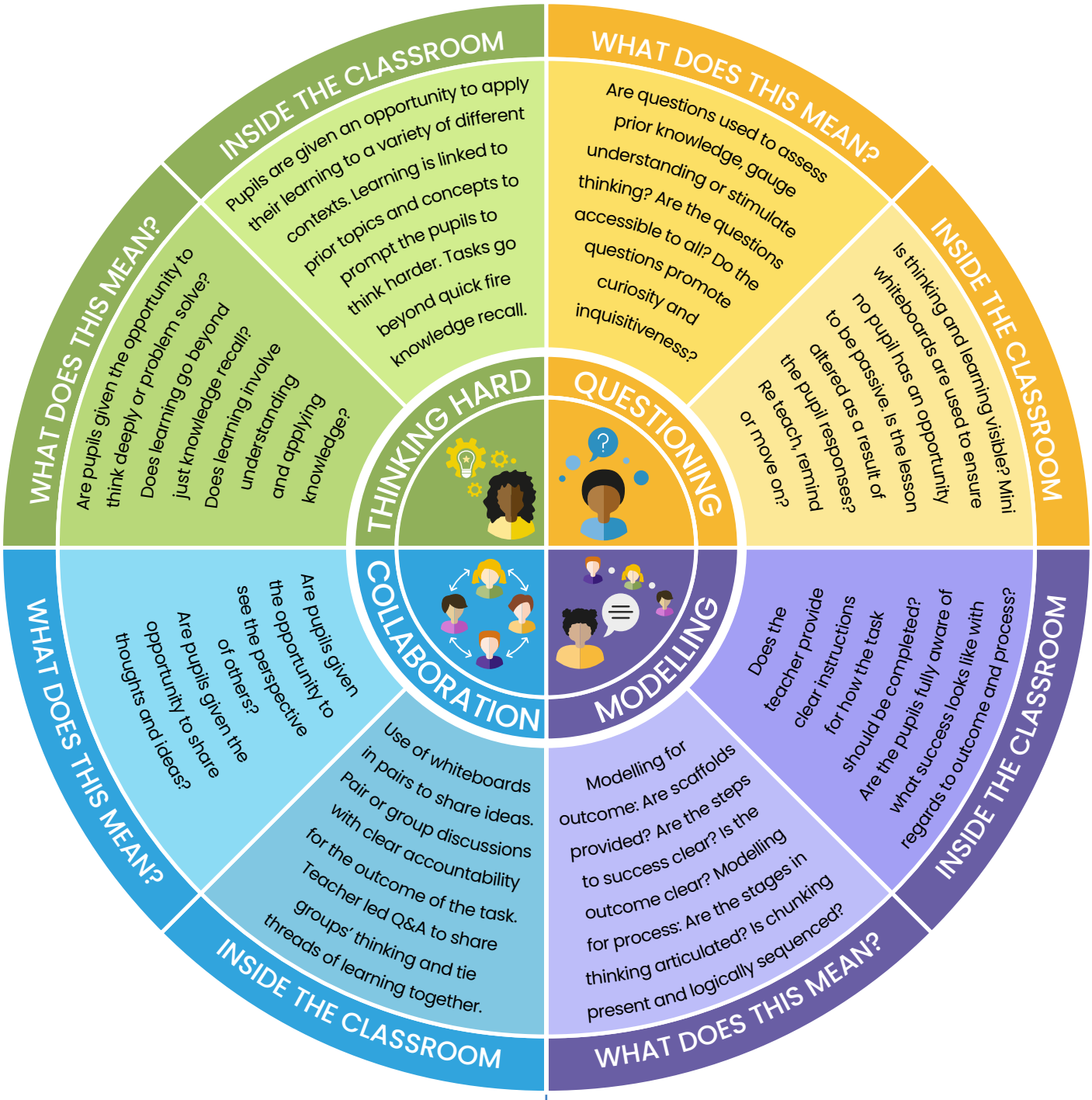
The purpose of this section of the playbook is for teachers to find some practical examples to apply into their own setting. These examples may not be from the same subject, but all examples are transferable as they focus on how to allow pupils to learn rather than what they are learning.

These examples come from four different schools across Anglian Learning and have been tried and tested within the classroom setting.

We focused our Teaching for Creativity pedagogies around the four pillars of:

- **Questioning :** To create curiosity and inquisitiveness.
- **Modelling :** Scaffolds to support both the outcome and the thinking process.
- **Thinking Hard :** The application of learning and problem-solving.
- **Collaboration :** Seeing learning from another perspective.

Teaching for Creativity Wheel



Our Teaching for Creativity Wheel focuses on two themes:

What do we mean by Teaching for Creativity?

What does it look like inside the classroom?

Questioning

What are the different styles of questions, and why might we use them?

When Teaching for Creativity, questioning is a core tool in our arsenal. There are many reasons to ask pupils questions: to check or retrieve prior knowledge, to promote deeper thinking, and to develop enthusiasm and inquisitiveness.

So called 'Wicked Questions' are challenging, often deliberately provocative questions designed to initiate hard thinking and promote engagement. Commonly used in the humanities are driving questions, which provide an overall thrust to a unit of work, as different aspects of the question are considered in turn: 'What is responsible for the outbreak of WWI?' is a classic example.

Through the use of well-chosen and structured closed questions, we can check that pupils have the fundamental knowledge they need to think critically and creatively. Hinge questions can be used at key points in a learning sequence, to identify whether pupils understand an idea that is essential to further study. For example, before teaching electrolysis, a chemistry teacher may need to diagnose pupil understanding of ionic bonding. When well-designed, multiple-choice questions can be used to diagnose common misconceptions, allowing the teacher to dispel these with greater precision.

Finally, we can use Socratic questioning to encourage pupils to interrogate their own thinking processes, remember forgotten facts, and identify flaws in their reasoning.

Where can it go wrong?

Questioning can go wrong when questions are unclear, too easy or too difficult, or are not provoking thinking that is relevant to the subject matter being taught. It matters who the questions are asked to and how they are asked – how many pupils are thinking about the question you have asked? Try to keep questions short, well-structured, and logically sequenced, and think about how you can ensure that as many pupils as possible are thinking about your question.

Consider the types of thinking that your question may elicit and whether pupils are prepared for it, e.g. is your question moving learning forward, stimulating new ideas, and generating new understanding, or will they be stuck trying to guess what is in your head?

How can it be done well?

There are many effective ways to question pupils. Mini whiteboards are a versatile tool for rendering pupils' ideas visible and ensuring no pupils are left behind. All-hands-up or cold-calling are effective techniques for helping to build engagement and establish a culture of high expectations. Collaborative strategies, such as think-pair-share, can be very effective.

It is essential to consider how you will gather responses from pupils, how you will ensure the maximum number are actively engaging in thinking, and how pupils will be held accountable for thinking when given time to do so. Invest in good routines for asking and answering questions, and the rewards will be rich.

Wicked questions

Preplanned questions to get pupils thinking about wider ideas in texts.

What you could do:

- Add starter slide that links to wider ideas presented in the extract. Each starter is a different open-ended question asking for pupils' opinion. Examples of these questions are: What creates fear? What makes some things scary?
- These questions are given before pupils are given a main lesson objective – for example, 'Is scientific progress always positive?' was the question given before pupils were then introduced to Frankenstein.
- Reiterate expectations regarding independent pupil work first and collaboration after. The aim is for pupils to not parrot the teacher's answers during analytical writing.

What pupils need to do:

- Settle into the lesson by writing their ideas down on a mini whiteboard (MWB).
- Discuss the information with their partner, when instructed by the teacher.

When to try it:

- At the start of a lesson as a settler task.
- When introducing a new topic to the class.

What to avoid:

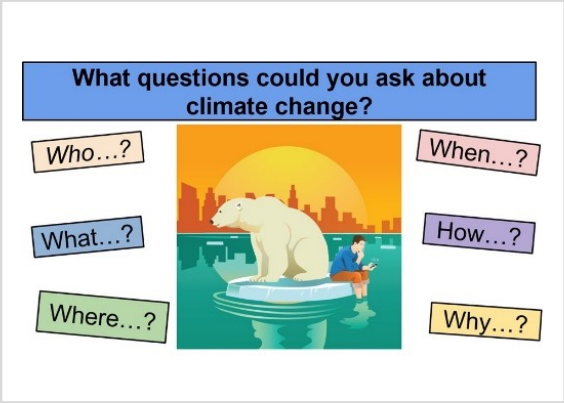
- Pupils starting to discuss ideas together before thinking for themselves.
- Pupils trying to guess what the teacher is asking them to think about.
- Pupils trying to mimic the teacher.
- Questions that are either not broad or not provocative enough for pupils to develop their thinking.

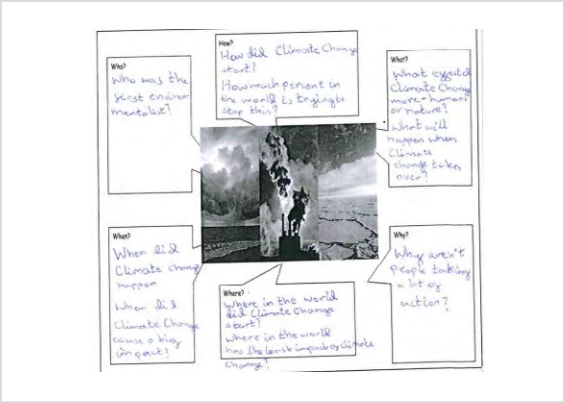
How do I know that it has worked?

- All pupils will have their own opinion, e.g. written down on their mini white board.
- All pupils will use their answers, from the start questions, in their own analysis.

Exploratory questioning

Driving exploratory questions are used at the start of a new topic to encourage more curiosity and inquisitiveness within pupils, linking to wider knowledge of topics.





What you could do:

- Prepopulate a sheet with open ended questions. This sheet could include an image of the topic being studied with questions around it, such as an image of a polar bear standing on melting ice. The questions can be as simple as 'what does this make you think? How does it make you feel? What is happening here? Why might this be happening? What topic could this link to? What questions do you have about this image/topic?'
- Adapt the scheme of work accordingly to the questions that pupils created regarding that topic. All these questions were then revisited at the end of the topic. This can be done through a driving learning journey. A learning journey is a planned and structured pathway pupils follow as they progress through the topic of learning. It can outline key knowledge and skills that pupils are expected to acquire over the term which links with the curriculum and school ethos.
- Model good questions. Provide examples, stems and structures to help pupils to devise their own. It may be helpful to provide pupils a curated list of questions, which they can choose, improve or add to.

What pupils need to do:

- Write down questions regarding a topic, on the sheet.
- Create questions for each subheading.

When to try it:

- At the start of a lesson, when introducing a new concept or topic.
- Use the questions produced as the scheme of work progresses.

What to avoid:

- When pupils have no knowledge regarding a subject. For example, pupils need to understand what climate change is to be able to formulate questions regarding it.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils can successfully generate pertinent, informed questions regarding a topic.
- Pupils can answer their own questions, as the scheme of work progresses.

Recall questions

Eliciting answers from pupils. At the start of lessons, pupils are presented with a series of questions which build on prior learning and help them activate the subject-specific knowledge they will need for that lesson.

Silent Starter – example Y7 French

1. Warm-up:
Translate into English

A) sept
B) quinze
c) dix

1 point

2. Parallel text recall:
Translate into French

I have a brother, but I don't have a sister

There are six people in my family

2 points

3. Revision:
Translate into French

A) I have
B) You have
C) He has
D) She has
E) We have

3 points

4. Thinking hard:
Answer this question for you in French

Est-ce que tu as des frères et soeurs?

4 points

What you could do:

- The Frayer model - a visual organiser used to help pupils understand the meaning of vocabulary - is adaptable for individual subject settings but is most successful when each section presents pupils with an incremental challenge. The starter slide has four different sections which pupils use as a settler at the start of the lesson. The structure of this includes one question which asks pupils to show their understanding of the previous work they have completed – teachers can use this as an assessment for learning tool and respond to the needs of the class as a result. The next sections include: a link to homework; a skill that will be used in that lesson; a challenge/thinking hard question to stretch higher attaining pupils.
- Sections should be used to recall prior learning and to slowly introduce skills, knowledge or concepts required for the lesson.
- Including a Thinking Hard question in the final section can be useful for stimulating wider discussion or springboarding into deeper themes from that lesson or unit content.
- Assess the pupils' learning while they are completing the starter and feed back. Teachers will need to adapt the lesson, if needed, according to the understanding presented by the pupils.

What pupils need to do:

- Pupils settle into the lesson and complete this on mini-whiteboards or in their class book. They will feed their answers back either as a whole class or to their partner.

When to try it:

- At the start of any lesson for recall and connection to new learning. This could also be used in the middle of the lesson, as a form of assessment for learning.

What to avoid:

- Pupils having no prior knowledge of the previous learning.
- Pupils trying to copy work from others.
- Pupils not being given clear instructions to complete the work in silence.
- Teachers not responding to the needs of pupils, who are unable to complete at least some of the questions set.
- Some pupils being able to answer all the questions quickly while other pupils have not started the work. Teachers need to be aware of setting appropriately challenging questions for all pupils.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils can answer or try to engage with the questions set.
- When pupils can feedback effectively.
- When pupils then use this learning to help with the rest of the lesson.

Hinge questions

Use hinge questions to assess the learning and progress of the pupils. This allows for teachers to change the course of learning, if need be.

Mini whiteboard (MWB):
What will happen when lithium reacts with fluoride?

Explain on your boards in as much detail as possible.

This example is from science.

What you could do:

- Ask pupils to answer the question, on mini whiteboards, in silence.
- Teacher circulates the room and assists individual pupils, if lacking in understanding.

What you could do (continued):

- Using all this information, teachers can use responsive teaching and re-teach important aspects of the topic (ionic bonding) as needed.
- If all pupils have a good understanding of the topic, the teacher can then move onto how it applies to new learning.
- It is imperative that teachers use this as a tool to assess if the learning has been successful with all pupils in the class.

What pupils need to do:

- Pupils can respond with various levels of depth and conceptual fluency/confidence.

When to try it:

- When the next stage of learning involves moving onto new content that builds on previous learning.

What to avoid:

- Teachers being unprepared for the range of responses from different ability pupils – teachers need to have planned the next steps, if all pupils do not understand the concept.
- Lack of teacher subject knowledge and understanding of how to address misconceptions.
- Pupils not being able to solidify their understanding of the topic, through their MWB.

How do I know that it has worked?

- All pupils can correctly answer the question, in some form of detail.
- Pupils can apply this learning to their new learning.

Thinking Hard

What is Thinking Hard?

Thinking critically and creatively is more challenging than rote learning. If we want to teach pupils to think creatively, we need to teach them to think hard.

We use the term Thinking Hard to describe activities that require pupils to think deeply, apply their learning to new contexts and solve problems. Thinking Hard tasks are those that push pupils to reach beyond what we have taught them, to think for themselves, but also to think intelligently and rigorously.

Thinking Hard might involve analysing a challenging poem, conducting a sustained investigation around a scientific artefact, or evaluating the wider impact of a historical event.

Where can it go wrong?

Thinking Hard can go wrong when pupils are not properly equipped or supported to do it. Think about the knowledge and understanding that children need to engage in the task and whether your pupils have mastered it yet. Thinking Hard is hard work, and some pupils might not want to do it straight off the bat. Think about how you can teach your class to think hard, such that they become less dependent on you providing all the answers. If you are not explicit that this a Thinking Hard activity, to which they are not expected to know the answer, pupils may become demoralised and struggle to engage.

How can it be done well?

Thinking Hard tasks must be well structured, supporting pupils in Thinking Hard and linking to prior learning that has been well understood. Thinking Hard tasks should hold pupils accountable for their learning and effort. Tasks should be engaging and stimulating, granting pupils appropriate autonomy to support their motivation through sustained hard thinking.

Investigating an artefact

Pupils are presented with an artefact and investigate a research question through a practical experiment.

What you could do:

- Structure a sequence of lessons around a research project based on an artefact.
- Encourage scientific enquiry by allowing pupils to have autonomy over which artefact they pick to investigate.
- The teacher begins by allowing pupils time to explore each artefact before they decide which artefact they will create a science project on.
- Allow for an environment where pupils can explore and investigate in small groups – this may involve selecting the groups.
- Create a success criteria for each learning episode so that pupils still follow the expectations of work set. The key skill within this learning is that pupils understand the research process and how to verbalise, and in turn, write their thoughts down; therefore developing research skills and promoting inquisitive thought.

What pupils need to do:

- Decide which artefact to explore and create a research question based on this.
- Take on specific roles to solve a problem in their investigation.
- Pupils then create a poster and presentation to share with others.
- Pupils peer assess each presentation using a success criteria.

When to try it:

- At the start of a learning journey or scheme of work.
- When pupils do not have any misconceptions about a new topic of learning.

What to avoid:

- Pupils not being given clear success criteria.
- The outcome not being modelled.
- Group roles not being distributed out evenly and pupils not following the expectations of their roles.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils successfully follow the roles of the groups.
- Pupils successfully adhere to all the success criteria.
- Pupils can produce a presentation based on their research question.

Evaluating outcomes and wider ideas

Summarising learning before evaluating the outcomes and their effect on the bigger picture and wider learning.

What you could do:

- Create a starter worksheet where pupils are asked to recall key information before then evaluating in terms of importance. Pupils should then justify why they have made those decisions.
- Explore what "importance" means in this context and how it can be assessed, revisiting and refining this meaning periodically.
- Circulate the room. If all pupils cannot recall an event/key piece of information, then the teacher will need to respond to this and reteach.
- Carefully select questions that will allow pupils to recall and evaluate.

What pupils need to do:

- Ask pupils to recall each event by creating an event summary.
- Then, pupils are asked to evaluate each event, using question for each summary, to highlight the consequences of them.
- Pupils are then asked to evaluate their effect on society and justify their reasoning.

When to try it:

- When asking pupils to not only apply their learning but evaluate already learnt key concepts.

What to avoid:

- Pupils lacking prior knowledge and clear understanding of all the events to be able to then evaluate their effectiveness.
- Pupils not understanding what effectiveness in society means.
- The task becoming too prescriptive, so pupils do not have the freedom to think about it creatively.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils can successfully recall all events.
- Pupils can evaluate the importance of the event and be able to confidently justify their reasoning behind their evaluation.
- Pupils can justify why they have ordered the information in the way they have.

Goal-free tasks

Pupils are exploring based on a question with no agenda.

What you could do:

- Pre-plan a question linked to the topics that pupils have been learning.
- Do not push in any direction in terms of answer. This is to keep the task exploratory.
- After pupils answer the question, ask pupils to link this to the sorts of questions they feel could be asked in an exam.
- Circulate the room and share good examples.

What pupils need to do:

- In a maths classroom, pupils should suggest an idea inspired by the diagram.
- Be working in silence for an explicit amount of time.
- Pupils can develop their thinking further, with their partner, after a certain time.

When to try it:

- Towards the end of a topic when pupils have gained prior knowledge of the task.

What to avoid:

- Pupils struggling to know how to get started.
- Pupils finding it hard to make explicit links if unfamiliar with exam questions.
- Not exploring the problem first – the subject knowledge is key here.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils show more confidence with answering problems over time.
- Pupils can answer 'prove that' or 'show that' questions.
- Valuable conversations take place with pupils about the topic.

Modelling

What is modelling?

For pupils to be successful, we need to show them what success looks like. If pupils are to access their creativity, they must master the skills that will form the building blocks of the creative process.

Modelling is a teaching strategy through which pupils are shown how to do or think about something. It might be how to manipulate an equation, throw a javelin, structure a paragraph, or even how to think analytically about a historical source.

Teachers might also model to pupils the habits of mind we want to cultivate – do you model creativity and inquisitiveness to your pupils? What matters is that the modelling is clear and effective in showing pupils how to succeed.

Where can it go wrong?

Modelling can be ineffective when it is unclear, when pupil attention is not effectively managed, or when the steps to success are not clearly articulated. Note that there is a difference between providing a model and actively modelling; if you provide a model, it is important to explicitly draw attention to key features and how they can be replicated, doing so either for or with pupils.

To best support Teaching for Creativity, modelling should not be too prescriptive but should instead provide a scaffold that can be slowly withdrawn. The teacher should describe one path to success – not the path to success.

How can it be done well?

Effective modelling should keep it tight. Think about how you can split up the process so that pupils are only using a handful of pieces of information at a time. Support pupils in practising the process one or two steps at a time. Try to show pupils not just the steps they need to follow but the reasoning behind each step, empowering them to move away from the model when they are ready. Draw particular attention to areas where you know pupils might make errors or have misconceptions, pre-empting these problems so that they do not practise an inferior approach.

Ensure that the classroom environment is free of distractions and use regular checks for understanding to make sure pupils can follow your model. More creative approaches to modelling might involve pupil-led modelling, or approaches that show only the desired outcome, asking pupils to use their understanding to develop their own process.

Modelling the outcome

Flipped learning to pre-teach the modelled outcome.

What you could do:

- Find videos and produce work sheets that are instructional visuals on the activity that the pupils will complete. This is then set as homework, prior to the lesson.
- Structure questioning for them to think harder, during the lesson, based on the material set.
- Use the material as a supportive tool, in lessons where pupils can refer to it, scaffold their responses, and generate group discussions around it.

What pupils need to do:

- Pupils create a success criteria, based on the pre-learning model.
- Pupils are asked to try and reproduce the best model through their own work in the classroom.
- Once reproduced, pupils evaluate how each person compares to the success criteria and are give an achieved and next steps accordingly.

When to try it:

- When providing pupils with advanced introduction of key terms and concepts before those terms or concepts are introduced in the general curriculum.
- This provides a framework on which a pupil can build new knowledge during subsequent learning experiences.

What to avoid:

- Pupils not engaging with the pre-learning effectively.
- Pupils not comparing their work to the model given and therefore not making use of the success criteria when assessing each other's work.
- Teachers giving explicit instruction, rather than allowing pupils to be inquisitive.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils can clearly articulate a success criteria based on prior learning.
- Pupils can assess their own and others' work.
- Reduced instruction from the teacher.

Outcomes through writing

Using models that are not fully completed to allow for pupils to explore in their own creative writing.

What you could do:

- Teacher to create a model answer of a written piece of work. This model is not fully finished but the structure and rationale for the structure is made explicit. In this English example, the teacher adds the foundations of the writing for all the different paragraphs – some of these paragraphs are completely written to show best practice while others other have a few sentences. The pupils are asked to then build upon the model given.

What pupils need to do:

- Pupils complete the rest of the model, based on the successful model given and the different structured paragraphs.

When to try it:

- When pupils are aware of the style of writing. For this example, pupils were aware of the structure and language of a non-fiction article and therefore could use this model as revision.
- As homework to consolidate the learning of non-fiction writing.

What to avoid:

- Pupils not including other skills needed from the success criteria.
- Pupils finding it difficult to create ideas fitting to the set brief.
- Not allowing flexibility or evolution of the structure to allow for legitimate or more sophisticated alternatives, once the core principles have been embedded and habituated.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils are able to create ideas fitting to the set brief.
- Pupils are able to use unfinished structures to create space for their own creative thinking.
- Pupils can use their unfinished structure as a springboard for their own independent writing.
- Pupils are able to move beyond the modelled structure to produce something superior.

My turn, your turn

Using a visualiser to allow for exploration after pre-learning has taken place.

What you could do:

- Create, or print, revision questions for pupils to complete. For this example, a GCSE past maths paper was used.
- Circulate the room, while the pupils are completing their independent and silent work and make note of any pupil who is using a different method to answer the question. Also, this is a good assessment for learning tool to analyse any pupils who are not accessing the learning.
- Once completed, the teacher asks for the pupils to verbally talk through their process method for a question. As the pupil is giving the feedback, the teacher is using a visualiser and noting down the way the pupil approaches a question, with each step, on the exam paper.
- The teacher then gets a new fresh sheet with the same question on. They then use the visualiser to talk through the process of how they would have approached the same question and why. While they are doing this, they are comparing the similarities and differences in the approach from the pupil's response.
- The teacher then uses the mark scheme to live mark the pupil's exam and their own – they are talking through the reasoning throughout. Afterwards, pupils are asked to use the mark scheme to mark their work.

What pupils need to do:

- Pupils are given past questions to answer.
- A pupil will explain the process for how they answered each question.
- While the teacher is explaining their own process, the pupils are asked to write this process in red pen, on their own response.
- Pupils are then asked to mark their peer's process and answer.

When to try it:

- Once all the pre-learning has occurred. This technique is best used as a revision tool for a certain topic; therefore, it could be used as the end of learning for that topic or as a revision tool.

What to avoid:

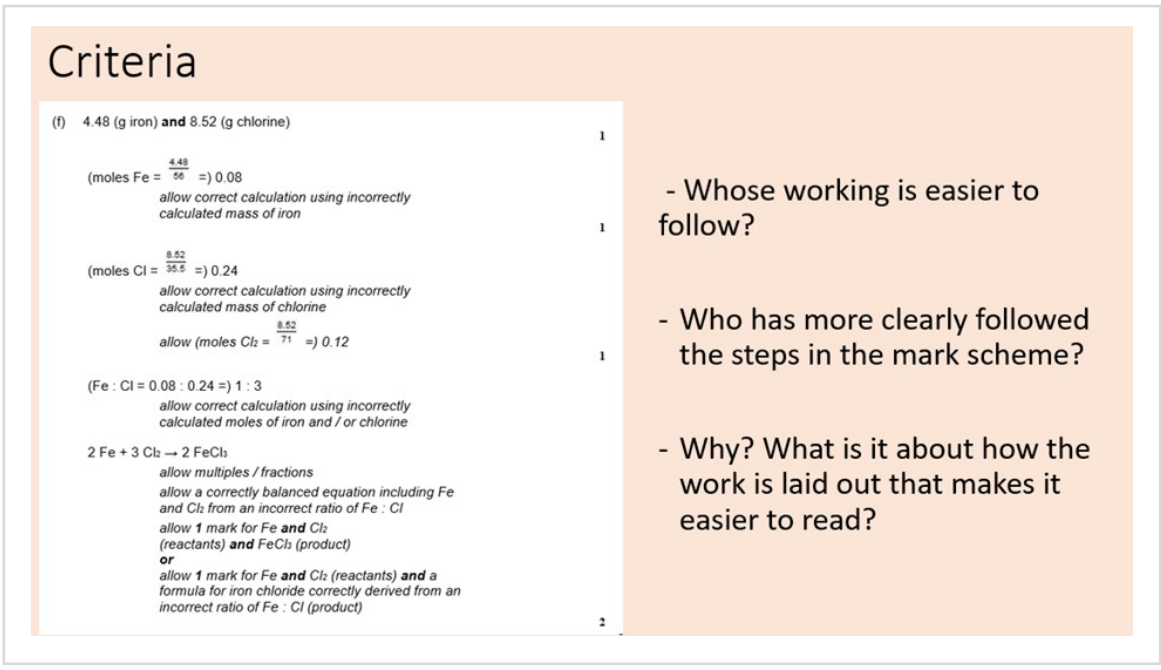
- Pupils feeling unable to access the question given, because the knowledge has not been solidified.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils are actively engaging in preset questions.
- Pupils are adapting their work based on the teacher model.
- Pupils can effectively use the mark scheme correctly and adapt work accordingly. This will clearly show progress in their learning.

Modelling the thought process

Modelling how to use information flexibly, rather than memorising information for an exam.



What you could do:

- Scaffold a lesson to focus on a skill rather than a specific example. The lesson needs to build different practices of the specific skill. For this business lesson example, the skill of how to identify, apply and analyse different factors is taught before asking pupils to applying this new skill to different contexts.

What pupils need to do:

- The first task requires pupils to list everything that goes into making a product, putting them into four different groups and categorising these groups with a heading. Pupils are then asked to rank these groups in order of importance.
- Pupils are then modelled the different ways in which they can segregate the factors of production.
- This is then broken down into the ways that they should be categorising any factors through 1. Identification and categorisation, 2. Connecting ideas, arranging accordingly and ranking, 3. Pupils then explain their judgements.
- Pupils are asked to apply this new 3-step process to a variety of different contextual examples before then being asked to write an 8-mark response to this question.

When to try it:

- When teaching pupils a new approach to a certain skill or question. This approach could be applied to a variety of different learning habits.

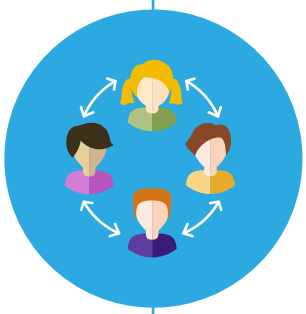
What to avoid:

- Pupils not fully understanding the process, with misconceptions that have not been addressed. As a result, they will find it challenging to apply their learning to different contexts.
- This approach must be revisited frequently. Not doing so will mean it is less likely to move into long-term memory and pupils will not be able to access all the requirements.
- Pupils not being given time to apply this approach to different contexts.
- Not explicitly sharing the success criteria of this skill-based approach with pupils.
- Teachers not using this as an assessment for learning tool to address misconceptions.

How do I know that it has worked?

- When pupils can answer all questions, to some extent.

Collaboration



What is collaboration?

Nobody ever did anything alone. If our pupils are to be able to think creatively, and live fulfilling lives as democratic citizens, they must learn to receive the ideas of others and share their own.

Collaborative learning approaches are as much about developing the core skills of collaboration as they are about developing understanding of subject matter. As such, our concept of collaboration focuses on pupils experiencing the perspectives of others, not just on "group work."

Where can it go wrong?

Without the proper routines, classroom culture and accountability, collaborative learning can be ineffective. Group discussions can descend into idle chatter. For collaboration to be effective, pupils must be individually and collectively accountable for their efforts.

Additionally, pupils should have the opportunity to develop their own thoughts properly, before discussing them with others. This ensures that pupils head into paired discussions with something to say. If group tasks are being done, consider carefully the composition of groups. Use your knowledge of the relationships between pupils to make the right choice for your class.

How can it be done well?

Mini whiteboards are versatile tools for facilitating collaboration between pupils and for rendering their thinking visible, providing accountability. When reviewing the discussion as a class, a skilled teacher can weave the ideas of pupils together or contrast them, using effective questioning to deepen the level of discussion.

Various forms of whole-class collaboration can also be effective, including using technology through media such as Google Docs or Jamboards. Effective collaboration should empower pupils to learn from others, and others to learn from them.

Revolving whiteboards

Whiteboards moving around the room so that pupils are collaboratively working together on the same skill.

What you could do:

- Pre-plan groups of four to include a mixture of abilities.
- To create headings of recall tasks – this example demonstrates knowledge recall of reactions.

What pupils need to do:

- Pupils are given one mini whiteboard (MWB) each with one of the four headings on (therefore there will be 4 MWB per group). They are given a specific amount of time to 'brain dump' all the knowledge that they have on that subheading, in silence.
- After the timer has finished, pupils pass their MWB to the left. The new pupil can now add to the knowledge already written or change any misconceptions. All pupils will be working on one of the boards. The boards will move around until a pupil has added to each of the 4 MWB.

When to try it:

- Using as a recall task for learnt material.
- For building inquisitive thought through already acquired knowledge of a task.
- For an assessment for learning tool to be able to address any learning gaps of either specific pupils or as a whole class.

What to avoid:

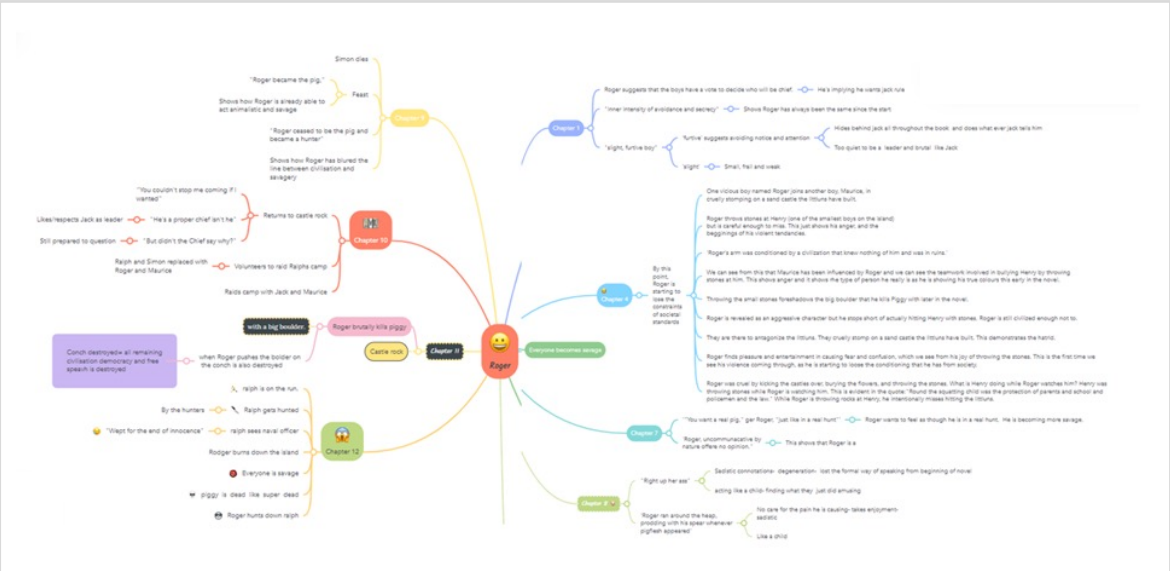
- Pupils not working in silence and focusing on their own MWB.
- Pupils not having a correct understanding of the concept and writing down wrong information. This can then be taken as fact by other peers and lead to misconceptions.

How do I know that it has worked?

- All pupils are able to write answers on the MWB, to some extent.
- Pupils can actively build on others' work.

Group mind maps

Using whole group mindmaps to recall key knowledge.



What you could do:

- Plan mixed groupings, prior to the lesson, with key quotations from a text allocated to them.
- Set up an online, interactive mindmap, such as on Mindmeister, for pupils to be able to use in the lesson. This can also be completed on A3 paper, with headings already written to guide pupils, if they do not have access to technology such as iPads.
- If needed, give pupils a success criteria of what the expectations are for their strand.
- As the pupils are completing their work, the teacher should develop pupils' thinking through questioning.

What pupils need to do:

- Once put into each group, for this English example, pupils focused on a chapter and a character's presentation within that chapter. They were asked to then add their ideas to an online version of a mind-map.
- Pupils must build ideas from each other by either adapting, developing or creating a new strand.

When to try it:

- As a recap or revision tool.

What to avoid:

- Pupils not being given a clear guideline, through success criteria – this could mean they give very little information and do not build on each other's work.
- Pupils not having prior understanding of the focus of the mindmap, meaning they are unable to add detail to the mindmap. Teachers can plan scaffolded questions to help the recall of key information to allow for this misconception to be addressed.

How do I know that it has worked?

- Pupils have created an in-detail mindmap.
- All pupils are participating in the task – this can be tracked online, while they are completing the work.

Rules and accountability – silent debate

Using rules and accountability for pupils to be able to collaborate as a class effectively and efficiently.

SILENT DEBATE!

The aim:

To have a debate in groups of four in complete SILENCE.

The task:

1. You will be given a statement.
2. Write whether you agree or disagree.
3. Explain your reasons.
4. Respond to other people's comments by asking questions, responding to questions.

THE RULES

NO TALKING.

You must write your ideas down.

No doodling/silly comments. Your responses must be relevant and structured.

Five minutes per statement.

You must write your initials, for each idea that you write.

What you could do:

- Pre-plan open ended questions that are linked to the learning. Write these questions on different A3 sheets/MWB. In this example, pupils were studying the Hunger Games – the questions were: 'Do you agree or disagree that reality TV is an exciting form for entertainment? Explain your views.' 'Do you agree or disagree that if the government is wrong, people in that country need to do something about it? Explain your views.' and 'Do you agree or disagree that having children is always a good decision? Explain your views.'
- Establish the rules of a silent debate with the class – this includes not talking for this activity and pupils being asked to add or develop a comment for each question.
- Teachers can also model an example of an effective silent debate so that pupils have expectations of outcome also modelled to them.
- This can also be set up on 'Kialo', if pupils have access to online platforms.

What pupils need to do:

- Pupils circulate the room, silently, and answer the questions given. Pupils must either build on another's point, argue against it by adding their own point of view, or create their own strand of argument.

When to try it:

- When getting pupils to think hard about their learning by linking to wider context or past knowledge.
- At the start of a lesson, when pupils are exploring and investigating.

What to avoid:

- Expectations for pupils not being explicitly established, including expectations for behaviour or expectations for output of learning.
- Pupils not building on other work and only giving basic answers – using a model to show the pupils should combat this.

How do I know that it has worked?

- All pupils are following the rules of the silent debate.
- All pupils are adding or developing ideas (different coloured pens or asking pupils to write their initials will allow for accountability).
- Pupils are able to use their learning in the next independent task. This may be a written piece of work, and the teacher will be assessing if pupils are linking their analysis to wider perspectives that are linked in the silent debate. The teacher can ask pupils to highlight where they have included this work, once they have finished, for a clear visual.

Differentiation in group work

Group work that allows for pupils to problem solve by using different scaffolded questions.

What you could do:

- Pre-plan different scaffolding questions that are developing in skill level as they go. The question needs to be differentiated to the class accordingly.
- In this example, there will be five different equations, which will then develop to five different whiteboards that are placed around the room. The whiteboard questions will increase in challenge and pupils are explicitly told this.

What pupils need to do:

- Select a whiteboard, placed around the room, that corresponds to the skill level suited to the question. Pupils have the opportunity to challenge themselves by picking the whiteboard they want to use.
- Pupils are given a certain amount of time to complete the equation as a group. All pupils must write on the whiteboard with reasoning and workings out.
- Pupils feedback to the rest of the class on their working out and findings. The teacher then holds a discussion with the class for each question to allow for any misconceptions to be addressed.

When to try it:

- When solidifying pupils' knowledge through recall.
- Through exploration of a different level of equation.

What to avoid:

- Pupils not being accountable for their learning or being placed in too large a group. Different coloured whiteboard pens allow for accountability and the teacher will need to interject if the group numbers need decreasing.
- Pupils selecting a harder whiteboard to try and challenge themselves but then finding the equation too hard so they cannot access their learning.

How do I know that it has worked?

- When all pupils are actively engaged within the learning, using the whiteboards.
- When pupils can give feedback to the rest of the class.

What have we learned along the way?

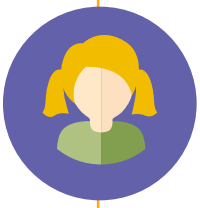
What have we learned along the way?

Teaching for Creativity encourages pupils to approach problems from multiple angles and develop innovative solutions. This skill is not only vital in academic settings but also in everyday life and the workplace, where complex problems often require out-of-the-box solutions.

Our project taught us that Teaching for Creativity can:

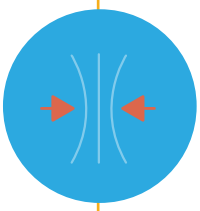
Promote engagement and motivation

When pupils see the relevance and significance of their knowledge in various contexts, they are more likely to be motivated and invested in their education. This engagement can lead to a deeper understanding of the material and a greater enthusiasm for lifelong learning.



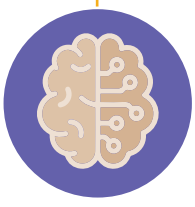
Encourage individuality and expression

Pupils can express their unique perspectives and ideas. It values diversity in thought and encourages individuality, helping pupils develop a strong sense of self and confidence in their abilities. This personal growth is essential for building self-esteem and fostering a positive school environment.



Build resilience

Creativity involves experimentation, risk-taking, and learning from failure, while teaching pupils to apply their knowledge and skills.



Challenge misconceptions and false dichotomies regarding knowledge and skills

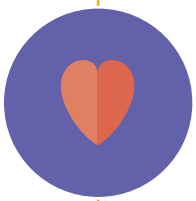
Creative thinking depends upon declarative and procedural knowledge (know that and know how), being both the application of prior knowledge and the generation of new knowledge (whether in the mind of the learner and/or more widely). Skills, whether technical, physical or in the form of disciplinary intellectual processes, are the means by which pupils can apply prior learning in a creative process.

Unlock the power of questions

Questioning to check for core understanding is essential, but insufficient; developmental, probing, provocative questioning is a vital stimulus for creative thought. Further, it provides models for pupils to ask their own questions: we found that no-one wants to be asked questions all the time if the answer is always known. We found that when the teacher modelled asking more questions, it empowered pupils to ask more themselves. Questioning allowed the teacher to be more responsive to pupils' needs and changed the course of the learning journey.

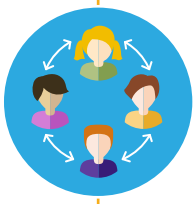
Increase pupil engagement through autonomy and challenge

Having autonomy and agency over their learning made pupils feel successful and inquisitive. Creative thinking is closely related to challenge, with challenge an essential stimulus for generating new ideas and understanding, and the project found that levels of engagement increased as a result.



Restore the joy of teaching

Teachers involved in this project became more creative and more satisfied when Teaching for Creativity. Many teachers said that they loved being in a classroom again. It was no longer 'teaching by numbers!'



Benefit from and stimulate collaboration

Collaboration opportunities among staff were a real success story. It could be staff using the planning tool in a faculty or working on a key set of questions to drive a topic. Collaboration moved away from creating a series of PowerPoints to deep pedagogical conversations about how the lesson was designed using the Teaching for Creativity principles. Pupils also felt the importance of accountability and investment when in a group.

Build a sense of community

Knowing exactly what was expected at the end of a silent MWB debate, or a small group discussion, enabled pupils to take ownership and feel a real sense of community.

Depend upon teacher modelling

Pupils noticed when teachers were inquisitive and were thinking creatively and felt this gave them licence to do the same. By modelling the process and the steps in thinking, far more pupils shared their own examples and responses, where they previously might have just repeated what the teacher had shared in the lesson.

Thinking creatively is more than just making things. Maths and MFL saw an incredible shift in pedagogy with problem-solving and questioning enriching pupils' learning at all levels of education. For example, pupils created a new Duckworth Lewis scoring system for cricket in maths, and pupils in MFL went beyond ordering in a restaurant.

What have we learned along the way?

We observed significant shifts in behaviour, understanding, and mindsets throughout the project, including the following:

Pupils

- Pupils are more open to taking risks and making mistakes, leading to greater resilience, growth, and progress.
- Pupil behaviour and engagement have improved, driven by increased enjoyment.
- Pupils think more deeply about subject content beyond routine procedures and knowledge recall.
- 'Shortcuts' are eliminated, reinforcing deeper subject knowledge.
- Pupils can better articulate their learning journey.
- There is a growing awareness of the 'why' in learning for all pupils.
- Pupils with behavioural issues benefit from strategies such as breaking learning into smaller chunks and providing more frequent feedback, which supports those with ADHD.
- Teacher-pupil relationships have improved, helping pupils feel more comfortable and confident.
- There is a greater sense of wellbeing for both learners and teachers.

Teachers

- A focus on pedagogy upskills teachers, increasing job satisfaction and confidence in their practice.
- Teaching for Creativity has rekindled the joy of teaching and learning.
- Staff have high aspirations for all pupils, encouraging and enabling them to unlock their potential at school and beyond.
- Increased opportunities for staff leadership and collaboration across primary and secondary education.
- Misconceptions are addressed more readily.
- Teachers recognise the importance of sharing best practices and embedding them into learning.
- Teachers feel empowered to take risks with their practice.
- Pedagogies support trainee teacher development, with strategies such as questioning and modeling incorporated into the framework for Early Career Teachers.

We observed significant shifts in behaviour, understanding, and mindsets throughout the project, including the following:

Whole school communities

- Increased sharing of practice, across the curriculum.
- Creativity becoming an embedded part of the school's ethos, rather than a bolt-on.
- Stronger evidence of and commitment to pupil voice and co-creation.
- Changes to the psychological and physical environment.
- More time allocated for planning, reflection, and research.
- Creativity becoming integrated into curriculum design and delivery.
- Positive developments in teacher professional growth and CPD focus.
- Teaching for Creativity being incorporated into school development and improvement plans.
- A shift in attitude and commitment toward Teaching for Creativity.
- A stronger sense of community.
- More leadership opportunities available.
- A growing culture of risk-taking.
- Strengthened links with the local school community.
- Increased parental support and engagement through opportunities to share their knowledge and careers with pupils.

Reflections for leaders

When considering implementing Teaching for Creativity in your setting, consider the following:

For your pupils

- [ ] Have pupils got the knowledge and skills to access creative thinking?
- [ ] Have pupils got the learning habits to be able to perform deep or critical thinking?
- [ ] What do pupils need to be taught first to be successful in creative thinking?

For your teachers

- [ ] Do all staff understand Teaching for Creativity pedagogies?
- [ ] Do staff have access to professional learning resources to develop Teaching for Creativity pedagogies?
- [ ] Are staff planning Thinking Hard and 'application' activities or just a series of tasks?

For your school

- [ ] Do the values of the school allow for opportunities for pupils to use creative thinking skills?
- [ ] Does the Curriculum Intent allow for these skills to be used?
- [ ] Do enrichment, extended learning and homework support such approaches?
- [ ] Does your professional learning offer allow Teaching for Creativity pedagogies to develop?

Legacy Phase of Creativity Collaboratives

We are continuing our work with Arts Council England through the Legacy Phase of Creativity Collaboratives.

The Legacy Phase will consolidate learning, strengthen evidence of its impact on pupils, enhance the focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion, and develop a well-tested resource bank to support long-term sustainability. The purpose of the Legacy Phase is to deepen our understanding of the conditions and pedagogies that are effective in Teaching for Creativity.

At Anglian Learning, we are focusing our research on the impact of Teaching for Creativity on the outcomes for SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and PP (pupil premium) pupils, teaching satisfaction, and sense of belonging.

To achieve this, we have appointed twelve Teaching for Creativity Champions from across Anglian Learning. These teachers will be trialling Teaching for Creativity in their classrooms and evaluating its impact.

The projects for 2025 are as follows:

Primary school projects

The primary school projects build on those from CPD and the pilot phase. Notably, three primary schools are working together to further explore the impact of purposeful play on talk and collaboration.

Wimbish Primary Academy
How can purposeful play be designed to extend exploratory talk and collaboration with early years pupils?

The Meadow Primary School
How can purposeful play be designed and deepened to extend exploratory talk and collaboration among young learners?

Bottisham Community Primary School
Does using play projects improve children's ability to problem-solve and persevere with challenges?

The Pines Primary School
How can cross-curricular strategies that foster choice, independence, and inquiry support pupils' transition from guided exploration in Year 3 to child-led learning in Year 6?

Secondary school projects

Bottisham Village College
How can collaboration increase participation and agency for revision in Year 11 in English?

To what extent do independently constructed gestures help Year 7 pupils to embed the structure of analytical writing in English?

How can we empower pupils to develop the confidence to speak in front of others about their passions, ensuring they understand that their ideas are valuable and worthy of being heard in English?

Linton Village College
How can collaborative strategies be used to empower creative thinking in written response in GCSE drama?

Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport
To what extent can collaboration and exploring be used to increase confidence and resilience in Key Stage 3 drama?

Sawston Village College
How can oracy, collaboration, and debating develop pupil confidence with discussion and developing ideas in GCSE REP?

How can inter-textual approaches be used to encourage pupils to develop and extend their ideas across multiple texts, fostering critical, thoughtful, and exploratory thinking in GCSE English?

The Netherhall School
To what extent does inquisitive, playful experimentation in the classroom affect the level of creative risk taking and resilience in a Year 10 3D design pupils?

Have you implemented Teaching for Creativity?

If you have used any of the pedagogies outlined in this playbook, we would love to hear from you! Please contact us on **communications@anglianlearning.org** or tag **@anglianlearning** in your social media posts with the hashtag **#TeachingforCreativity**

Further reading

If you have been inspired by what you have read in this playbook and would like to develop your knowledge of Teaching for Creativity further, we would recommend the following texts:

- **'Creative Leadership to Develop Creativity and Creative Thinking in English Schools: A review of the evidence'** by Bill Lucas, Ellen Spencer and Louise Stoll
- **'Teaching Creative Thinking: Developing learners who generate ideas and can think critically (Pedagogy for a Changing World series)'** by Bill Lucas and Ellen Spencer
- **'Creative Thinking in Schools: A Leadership Playbook'** by Bill Lucas, Ellen Spencer, Louise Stoll and Di Fisher-Naylor
- **'Why students don't like school'** by Daniel Willingham
- **'The Reception Year in Action'** by Anna Ephgrave
- **'The Sustained Shared Thinking and Emotional Well-being (SSTEW) Scale. Supporting Process Quality in Early Childhood'** by Iram Siraj, Denise Kingston and Edward Melhuish
- **'School and the magic of children'** by Greg Bottrill

Anglian Learning is an ambitious, forward looking multi-academy trust in East Anglia. Our members share the firm belief that all young people deserve access to an excellent education and exciting opportunities which in turn will help prepare pupils to thrive in their local, national and global communities.

By collaborating with like-minded schools, our colleagues are prepared to share responsibility, through support and challenge, to ensure that all our schools can offer a vibrant and enriching learning experience for all pupils, regardless of their background and starting point. This is reflected in our Core Purpose of ***'Transforming Together*** to enable inclusive and aspirational learning in every classroom, empower leaders across every academy, and ensure inspiring opportunities and educational success for our learners, people and communities.'

Creativity Collaboratives is a pilot action research programme which aims to build networks of schools to test a range of innovative practices in Teaching for Creativity. The explicit intention is that learning is shared to facilitate system-wide change.

Working within existing school structures, teachers and educators have co-developed creative strategies and pedagogy, tested various approaches to teaching and learning and evaluated their impact on pupils, schools and communities.

Eight multi academy trusts and schools are participating in the programme, each with a lead school that collaborates with its own network of local schools to cascade learning. The networks have tested varied approaches to developing and delivering the curriculum to support children and young people to develop their creative capabilities. Each of the lead schools has measured the individual impact on their setting, with Durham University conducting the overarching evaluation. Learning from the pilot will be shared and applied more widely throughout the education sector.

The programme responds to one of the recommendations of the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education, which sought to investigate the role of creativity in the education system and find ways to make creativity a bigger part of young people's lives in education and beyond. The programme launched in October 2021. Arts Council England has invested £2,780,000 into the programme which has been generously supported by Freelands Foundation.

Learn more about Anglian Learning
www.anglianlearning.org

With thanks to Arts Council England, Freelands Foundation, and all staff involved at Anglian Learning and Creativity Collaboratives, including:

- **Project Leads:**
  Jenny Rankine and Phil Burgess
- **Pilot Phase Research Lead:**
  Heather Wayman
- **Primary Pedagogies Lead and Research Team:**
  Louise Scott
- **Secondaries Pedagogies Lead and Research Team:**
  Emma Matthews-King
- **Research Team:**
  Jack McLean
- **Academic Critical Friends:**
  Sally Riordan and Nicola Walshe, University College London
- **Trust Oversight:**
  James Woodcock
- **Action Research Project Leads:**
  Tori Turland, Briony Davies, Marie Weaver-Smith, Michelle Biggs, Jackie Williams, Louise Scott, Natalie Evans, Katie Street, Nikki Cole, Lauren Davis, Jayne Hore, Faye Facer, Jackie Claydon, Joy Morrison and Hannah Lawrence

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