

People like to be creative. It's fun to think up new ideas, use your imagination and be inventive. Creativity is not just involved in writing a story, painting a picture or playing an instrument. It's part of everything we do, from deciding what you want in a sandwich to working out how to fix something that's broken.

Being creative means doing things differently. You need to know when a creative approach is appropriate. Sometimes you need permission before you do things in a different way.

Thinking of new ideas is a skill that improves with practice. You should look around to find inspiration. These tables can help you decide whether your ideas might be useful. They can also help you to think of other ways to improve your creativity. The effort you make to find a solution is important. This means persevering if you don't succeed the first time. This requires confidence, which comes with practice. If you sometimes get stuck, you can use creative thinking to move on.

This table explains how to tell when you are getting better at being creative. You can use it to judge how well you're doing in different ways of thinking and working, and what you might need to improve.

**NOTE:** Don't worry if sometimes you can do things well and feel confident and at others you are confused and not sure what to do. That's to be expected. You won't be good at everything straight away. Instead, think about what you are doing well and where you might need to do things differently in order to improve.

	Novice	Apprentice	Practitioner	Expert
<p><b>Find new problems to solve. Consider whether you could improve your usual answers if you tried a different approach.</b></p> <p><b>Looking for new approaches, not using the same approach every time.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• look for new areas to explore and problems to solve;</li> <li>• don't do it the same way as it's always done.</li> </ul>	<p>With some help, you come up with your own idea or approach.</p> <p>You can follow suggestions to work towards finding your own way to do things.</p>	<p>You look ahead to see what you need to do.</p> <p>You can see where you might need to fix something or where you need to think of a new idea.</p>	<p>You regularly find new things that you want to try.</p> <p>You look for interesting questions and think of new ideas in response.</p> <p>You think around a problem, and try to find your own solution.</p>	<p>You often try a new or unfamiliar activity or a different approach by experimenting.</p> <p>You're always looking for opportunities to try new and interesting possibilities.</p> <p>You work out your own response, but compare it with others that might be better before deciding on an approach.</p>
<p><b>Play around with ideas, try mock-ups, role-play or another way to make your ideas clear.</b></p> <p><b>Try to make connections between what you think up and what you already know about.</b></p> <p><b>Explore different ways of thinking, having ideas and making connections.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• experiment with ideas and questions;</li> <li>• make ideas real by experimenting with different designs, actions, and outcomes.</li> </ul>	<p>With some help, you can put ideas together and think of your own combination.</p> <p>When you are shown or given ideas about a topic, you can use parts of the ideas to come up with your own.</p>	<p>You use a model, mock-up, prototype, draft or dry-run to try ideas that might work and find a way forwards.</p> <p>You try different versions of what you already know about the topic or issue, bringing ideas together in new ways and using your experiments to find new ideas.</p>	<p>You accept feedback from other people on a test version of your idea and use what you discover to make changes until you have something that works.</p> <p>You can see where to start, and decide what's worth exploring further. You mix up ideas to find your own version.</p>	<p>You're ready to try different versions to see what might work best in a particular situation. If one doesn't work, you try another until you're satisfied.</p> <p>You can change the way you think to suit the situation and use what you already know as a starting point for finding interesting ways forward.</p>

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<p><b>Trust your own feelings enough to take a chance on what you think might work. You like new experiences that spark ideas. You're ready to learn from mistakes and setbacks without becoming disheartened.</b></p> <p><b>Respect originality, be prepared to keep trying.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>take risks for learning;</li> <li>see opportunities in mistakes and failures.</li> </ul>	<p>With some encouragement, you're ready to try ideas to see what happens.</p> <p>With some encouragement, you'll try something new to find out how different approaches lead to fresh ideas.</p>	<p>When faced with a challenge, you think of your own ideas and try them out.</p> <p>You use setbacks or mistakes to discover what doesn't work, but keep going until you see a way forward.</p>	<p>You're inventive when faced with a new problem, and plan what to try to solve it. You use your previous experience to think of solutions that might work.</p> <p>Sometimes you take time to work through your ideas if you're not sure what's best. At other times you go straight to what you consider a good idea and try it. Even if your idea doesn't work, you don't get discouraged. You think up another approach to try.</p>	<p>You're ready to think of and try all sorts of original ideas to overcome a difficulty, and you're not afraid to try ideas, even if there's a big chance they won't work.</p> <p>You know that leaps of imagination sometimes come only after much trial and error. You're ready to cope with the frustration of your plans not succeeding and will either prove something doesn't work or find a breakthrough.</p>
<p><b>Decide which areas of your work or ideas were successful, and how successful.</b></p> <p><b>Express your opinions and say why you think your plan is a good idea.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>value the unexpected or surprising.</li> </ul>	<p>With some help, you'll take something you know about and try it in a new area to see if it still works.</p> <p>With some suggestions, you look at something new or unfamiliar and compare it with what you're used to.</p>	<p>You recognise when what you already know and can do isn't going to work and can suggest trying a different approach, asking help if you need it.</p> <p>You work out how and why a different approach works, or works better than what you did before.</p>	<p>You see the links between what you've managed to do and how you did it, spotting where the changes you tried made a difference.</p> <p>Even when the task is difficult or confusing, you keep going and look at alternatives so that you understand in the end.</p>	<p>When you encounter something unusual, you can suggest what might be happening and use it to better understand. You work out what happened and can explain to someone else why things turned out the way they did.</p> <p>You try to find out what's happening, even if you have to look for details, proof or a reason that you don't yet understand. When you find out, you can fit the new material together with what you already know and understand.</p>

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<p><b>Find a link between when you're creative doing other things, and being creative in your school work.</b></p> <p><b>See the big picture and how things fit together.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make new connections between creativity inside and outside of school;</li> <li>• find ideas from and see what's good about other people's ideas.</li> </ul>	<p>With some help, you can use ideas from other areas you know about or do, such as games, sport or music, and use them to help understand a new topic or issue.</p> <p>You're reasonably happy to try ways of working you've already used, but need help to try a completely new approach.</p>	<p>You can recognise if something new or unfamiliar is similar to something else and can say: it's similar to.</p> <p>You can recognise when you've seen something new that is similar to something you already know about, and can use that connection to inspire ideas.</p>	<p>You're used to thinking about connections and can see similarities that help you to understand a new idea.</p> <p>You see how something you're already used to doing – or have seen someone else do – can help you to make progress in a new area.</p>	<p>You look for inspiration by exploring a new topic or idea, finding examples of what's already been done and borrowing ideas to reach new conclusions.</p> <p>You use the connections you find to draw conclusions, understand what's happening, and see links between similar ideas, even when they are used for different purposes.</p>