

CHAPTER FIVE

Creativity, Children and the Classroom

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Introduction

Creativity entails the forming or making of novel things. Creativity is a problem-solving endeavour that gives birth to new concepts. It involves innovativeness, and inventiveness, in terms of material and procedure ingenuity in craftsmanship. The created item may be intangible such as an idea, a scientific theory, a musical composition, or a joke. Hornby (2015) sees creativity as having the skill and ability to produce something new, especially a work of art. It is commonly argued that the notion of “creativity” originated in Western Culture through Christianity. According to the historian, Daniel J. Boorstin, the early Western conception of creativity was the Biblical Story of creation given in Genesis.

However, this is not creativity in the modern sense, which did not arise until the renaissance. In the Christian transition, creativity was the sole province of God, humans were not considered to have, the ability to create something new except as an expression of God’s work. A concept similar to that of Christianity existed in Greek culture, for instance, muses were seen as mediating inspiration from the gods. Romans and Greeks invoked the concept of an external creative “daemon” Greek or

“genius” (Latin) linked to the sacred or the divine. However, none of these views is similar to the modern concept of creativity, and the individual was not seen as the cause until the renaissance. It was during the renaissance that creativity was first seen, not as a conduit for the divine but from the abilities of “great men”.

Creativity can be seen as the process of sensing problems or gaps in information, forming ideas of hypothesis, testing and modifying these hypotheses and communicating the result of this process. It is the awareness, observation, imagination, conceptualization, and re-arrangement of existing elements to generate new ideas. Creativity is the capacity to perform mental works that leads to an outcome both novel and applicable.

Summarily creativity is the skilful use of ideas to generate new creative products for one to be creative, it calls for a state of uninterrupted self-motivation and expression, and creativity can apply to works of arts, engineering, and almost every aspect of technology.

Types of Creativity

According to Robert Sternberg (2002), creativity is stated as follows;

- Technological creativity or innovation
- Entrepreneurial creativity or economic creativity
- Artistic and cultural creativity.

These aspects of creativity are interdependent as they re-enforce one another.

Components of Creativity

These are factors that contribute to creativity. A component of creativity implies all factors that contribute to creativity. Personality and environmental factors include; Expertise, Creative thinking, skills and Task motivation.

Personality factor

This aspect includes self-motivation, which is self-imitated behaviour, confidence in oneself (belief in yourself) that is being original, and inventiveness.

Environmental factors can influence the people around you, family background, school, external influences, skills, and task motivations.

Methods of Fostering Creativity in an Art Class

- Art aesthetic corner
- Gallery or exhibition corner
- Creation of art diary or art album for example; Nigerian Heritage, Art of Nok, Igbo Ukwu.
- Provision of Art materials, tools, and equipment.
- Conducive art studio or classroom, furnished with racks, shelves etc. and well-ventilated.
- Allowing students to work freely (learners should initiate topics)
- Field trips and excursions.

- Invite guest artists and artist entrepreneurs.
- Select proper teaching methods for example peer teacher method, project; discovery, and inductive method in teaching and learning.
- Computer-aided instructions.

Nature of Creativity

Creativity is the production of a novel, appropriate ideas in any realm of human activity, from science to the arts, to education, to business, to everyday life (Amabile, 1997:40). Creativity is broad; It is not limited to art and design fields only. It covers all fields and activities of human life. Creativity is adventurous and open thinking. It does not tolerate rigidity. It encourages freedom to do things. Creativity is a product and a process. Creativity is of three types individual creativity, group creativity and organisational creativity (Mehtaa, Chandanib and Neerajac, 2014: 804).

Feature/Characteristics of Creativity

- **Flexibility:** It has no rigidity to have the ability to turn ideas and materials into new ideas.
- **Fluency:** It helps in bringing our many ideas.
- **Sensitivity:** It senses problems.
- **Curiosity:** It creates room to puzzle, seek, inquire and discover.
- **Action:** It creates and ignites actions.
- **Originality:** It is original.

- **Interest:** It entails paying attention.
- **Commitment:** It makes one be involved.
- **Reflection:** It enables one to consider and reconsider ideas.
- **Motivation:** It performs good-oriented innovation of things, and strength to tackle difficult ideas.

Accordingly, Uka, Onwuekwe, and Asogwa, (2022: 222) developed what they named the "creativity quadrat diagram", using Getlein's (2008:12) explanation of the qualities of a creative person. He specifically mentioned traits such as sensitivity, flexibility, originality, playfulness, productivity, fluency, analytical and organizational skills. From there, they lifted the following; originality, sensitivity, flexibility and productivity and used the phrases to formulate the creativity quadrat, which was the basis of their research.

Although their paper was not specifically on art and creativity, they focused on how creativity can bring about sustainable development in Nigeria if the creativity quadrat is applied passionately in all the sectors of the state. They further argued that corruption and lack of creativity are the banes of Nigeria's development which had lingered for over fifty years. Explaining the quadrat, Uka, Et Al (2022: 223) opine thus;

In the quadrat, originality entails novelty, ingenuity, resourcefulness, or inventiveness. Ideas come to play here, and it is the starting point of creativity.

Sensitivity entails response to influences, changes in other people's feelings, the environment, or events

Below is the diagram of the creativity quadrat:

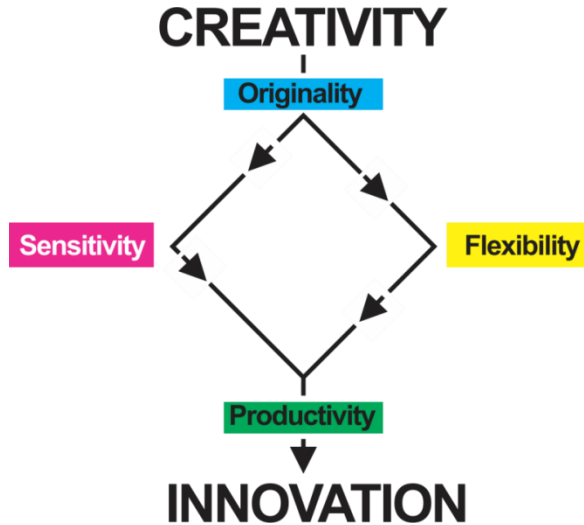


Fig 1: The Creativity Quadrat. Source: Uka, Et Al 2022

The Importance of Creativity

- It is brainstorming. It is a thought-provoking approach which generates an alternative solution to a specific problem and challenge.
- It expresses emotional feelings; it provides an avenue for sharing of thought by various individuals.
- It develops skills and stimulates the senses of thinking.

- It develops self-confidence and widens evaluation techniques.
- It fosters internalization.
- It is motivating.

Testing the Children's Creativity 1: Toy making

Toys are objects that children play with. A toy is a work that encompasses dolls, action figures, play sets, creative and artistic materials, collectables as miniatures of all kinds and a wide variety of other items, games and puzzles, balls and other sports equipment. They all appear in different sizes. Toy serves different purposes. Toy entertains children, it occupies them. It is used to arouse, and sustain inquisitiveness in children. It is used in many ways such as in educating and teaching children. Toys have an important influence on the emotional, mental, and physical development of children.

Materials for Toy Making

Materials for making toys may vary. Some materials for making toys include plastic, foam, scissors, fabric (velvet) or any other soft cloth, thread and needle, wood, paper, pencil, pen, measuring tape, buttons, beads, cowries, shells, and cotton wool.

Procedures for Making Toy

- Make a drawing of the intended figure of a toy on a surface of a paper

- Then cut out the shape from the drawn object on the paper
- Place paper properly on a fabric
- Then cut out the shape on the fabric
- Use needle and thread to sew the shapes together
- Stuff the sewn fabric with foam, pieces of fabric, or cotton wool
- Then apply accessories like eyes, beads, or shells to depict the eyes, ears, or nose, where necessary.

Making Models

Model is commonly used in all aspects of visual art in different ways, in architecture, sculpture and ceramics, a model simply refers to a copy of the buildings, structures, statues or wares, usually smaller than the original objects or the final product. It is called prototype Marquette or miniature respectively (Ngumah, 2013).

In graphic design, a model is a sample of a particular design or type of product. In textile or fashion design, a model is often referred to as a person whose job is to wear and pose with a new product style of clothes and be photographed wearing them. For example a fashion model. In drawing and painting, a model is a person employed to be painted, drawn, and photographed by an artist or a photographer.

For this learning making models with paper folding techniques, vital emphasis will be on construction, using geometrical or basic shapes. A model is a preliminary work

or construction made of paper examples are straw boards, clipboards, cardboard, and embossed cards to form different objects like a building (Ngumah, Ayoola, Dalhatu, and Samkay 2013). Paper folding techniques means shaping, and building prototype, and different geometric or basic shapes and sizes to form cuboids, pyramids, abstracts, sculpture figures etc.

Materials and Tools used in making Paper Models

Its basic materials are clip board, cardboard, strawboard, embossed card, drawing sheet, brown paper, adhesive, and pencil. Tools, therefore, are cutting instruments to cut the cards into various shapes/sizes such as razor blades, cutters, pairs of scissors, ruler compass, measuring tape, etc.



Plate 1: folding up cardboard paper to make a toy. Source: [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

Testing the Children's Creativity 2: Puppetry

Puppets are small figures/objects that can be held, carried about, or even tied to a rope. The art of using this puppet is called puppetry. Puppetry is a type of dramatization which can be used in pre-primary and lower-primary schools. It allows the learners to develop imaginary and creative ideas and to see how things can be transformed. Puppets attract and retain children's attention, thereby making a dull class quite interactive. Because it is a doing thing, it makes learning more permanent. It encourages children's participation in the class. It helps the children to develop the spirit of imagination and critical thinking. Puppets make dull children participate actively in learning activities. Again, it promotes confidence in children.

Problem-Solving Methods of Teaching and Learning

This is a method of teaching where learners are meant to look for and find out solutions to the existing problems by themselves. The problem-solving method helps the learner to identify problems and identify possible solutions with or without the direction of the teacher. A teacher may create a problem in an area of study and allow the learners to identify and look for solutions for such problems. This is therefore a form of inquiry method which helps the pupils to think for themselves and arrive at a deeper understanding of their problems. This helps the learner to develop the spirit of research and creative

thinking. There are various types of these methods which are quizzes, puzzles, cartoons work cards and sorting.

Quizzes

A quiz is a short assessment test in which learners are required to give specific information or answers. It is short and explicit. It did not require a long essay. A quiz may be in form of true or false, fill in the blank space, multiply choice, matching etc. A quiz may be oral or written. It may involve a whole class or some group.

Puzzles

Puzzles are the problem-solving method of teaching where learners are required to think critically and objectively before arriving at an answer. It is an educational game that requires a great amount of logical thinking before arriving at an answer. Puzzles may have solutions built inside them such as crosswords, etc.

F	O	O	D	N	O	K
E	Y	S	T	E	W	O
A	O	Y	A	M	C	O
T	B	G	I	R	L	B

Food, Eat, Boy, Girl, Yam, No, Stew, Book

Fig 1: Puzzle

Cartoons

Cartoons are specially made pictorial art that expresses the idea in mind. It is mainly drawn to elicit an idea or concept in mind. It requires a lot of critical thinking and analysis before the message or real idea could be interpreted.

Work Cards

These are specially made small cards in which problems/questions are written on one side while solutions to questions or problems are written on the other side. It can also be arranged in two groups. Questions will be written in one group while answers on the other group of cards.



Fig 2: Word card.

Sorting: It is a kind of problem-solving technique whereby learners are required to identify, arrange, classify, and match items according to the required standard. This technique permits the learner to think critically before organizing or categorizing ideas or issues on the ground.

Arousing, Sustaining and Encouraging Inquisitiveness in Children through Creativity

Creative expression in early childhood education requires attention. It explores the role of creative expression which includes visual arts, music and movement and creative drama. Creativity is the involvement and use of skills and imagination to produce something new or a work of art. It is to make something happen or exist which aims at producing a particular feeling or impression on people. Pre-school children between the ages of (0 to 6 years) and zero to six years, therefore, need to nurture with the aid of creativity to arouse, sustain and encourage their inquisitiveness in a learning environment for effective learning to take place. This can be achieved effectively through the following;

Drama

Drama is a play that involves imitating the actions of people by acting their roles. There are different techniques for creating these actions, which are as follows;

- **Playwriting** is a creative process of writing a play through imagination. The writing could be from the wealth of experience of the writer (who is known as the playwright) about the past events in his society. It could be real or fictitious happenings in his/her environment or comments on the social ills in

society. Children learn effectively through the sense of sight and involvement in the creative process.

- **Songs** are composed in drama to enhance their aesthetic value. In drama, songs can be used creatively to express emotion through voice or musical instruments or with a combination of both. Songs can be used creatively in portraying the characters to the audience and can also serve as music in the background during the action. Songs can be creatively used to enhance learning in preschool children.
- **Dance** is the movement of the body with rhythmical steps and gestures to music or sounds. It could be used as a technique of drama creation because; every human activity can be expressed through dance. It entails a lot of creative skills.
- **Mime** is an action without uttering speech. It entails changes in facial expressions and gestures. These creative gestures are very vital in mime because they convey a lot of information to the audience, especially the preschool children and the learners at large.
- **Improvisation** is making up a drama without a fixed speech as it is performed. Actors and actresses perform without written dialogues. They use their

imagination to say what is appropriate during the performance. Improvisation requires a lot of creative skills which could be used in sustaining and encouraging inquisitiveness in preschool children.

Functions of Drama

According to Ngumah, Et Al (2013) the functions of drama can be stated as follows;

- Educative functions
- Informative functions
- Entertainment functions
- Therapeutic functions.

Educative Functions of Drama

In educative functions of drama;

- It teaches tolerance among people, that is people learn to accept each other through drama.
- Drama teaches cooperation; people cultivate the habit of cooperation among themselves.
- Drama encourages personal relationships among people
- Drama inculcates in people the creative ability to express themselves.
- Again, drama serves as a guide against the future occurrence of bad behaviours in society and thereby encourages good character.

Informative Functions of Drama

- Drama is a means of self-expression.
- Drama is used in enlightening people on the social and moral values of society.
- Drama unveils important information about the society or group of people or sections of societies from the past to the present.
- Drama highlights the effects of social vices like drug abuse, cultism, examination malpractice, tribalism, corruption, fighting, stealing, raping, kidnapping, indecent dressing, impersonation, armed robbery, child abuse etc.

Entertainment Functions of Drama: Drama is a means of entertainment people derived pleasure in watching drama thereby arousing their interest.

- The personalities involved in the drama enhance the value of the entertainment.

Therapeutic Functions of Drama

- Drama is a source of relaxation for people that is people forget their ugly past experiences for the moment while watching drama; this, therefore, relaxes their nerves.
- Drama helps to build and develop confidence in people
- It encourages self-realization
- Drama creates employment opportunities.

Story Telling

Story Telling is an oral presentation of characters and their acts. The characters may be human beings or animals. Storytelling has titles which could be derived from the plot of the story. Storytelling could be seen as a distribution of accounts of what has happened in the past. A story is also imaginary thinking that is been narrated to someone.

Reasons for Story Telling

- We tell a story for entertainment
- Storytelling enhances experience
- Storytelling is used for teaching moral lessons to children.
- Storytelling is used to educate and nurture the mind of children.
- It makes one happy.
- It is also used to develop and sustain children's interest in learning.
- Storytelling arouses a child's interest in a learning environment.
- It is used to review history or events.

Evaluation

- Attempt to make a toy with some of the tools provided
- Briefly explain ways of encouraging inquisitiveness in children during learning.

- Carefully describe puppets.
- Carefully explain creativity.
- Describe in detail the features of creativity.
- Describe Puzzle.
- Describe Sorting.
- Describe the components of creativity.
- Describe ways of arousing children's interest in a learning environment.
- Discuss the creativity quadrat.
- Explain Cartoon.
- Explain Quizzes.
- Explain the nature of creativity.
- Explain ways of sustaining children's interest in learning.
- Make a model of a square using cardboard paper.
- Produce a learning toy for children.
- State the importance of creativity.
- State three types of creativity.
- State ways of solving problems.
- What are Puppets?
- What are the methods of fostering creativity in an art class?
- What is Work Card?

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