

TEACHING FOR

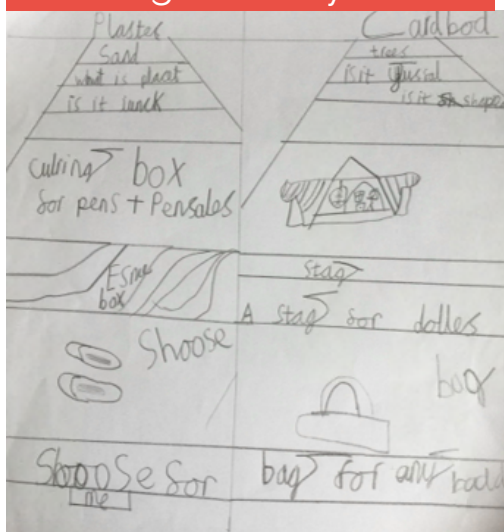
CREATIVITY

IN ART & DESIGN FOR YEAR 2 AND YEAR 3

UNIT OF WORK EXEMPLAR

Cheryl Burton

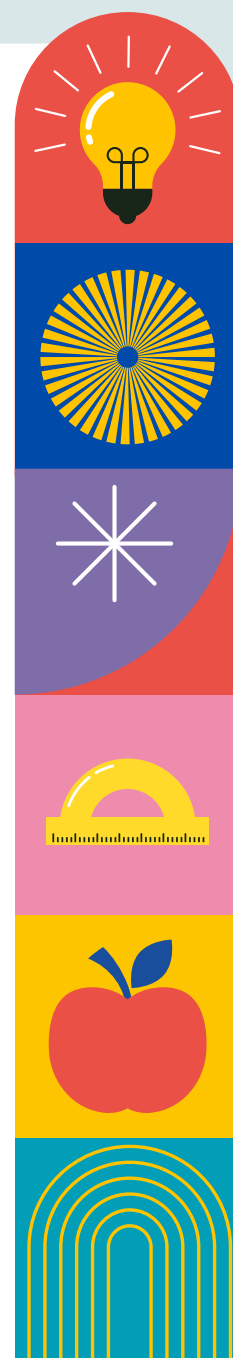
Awbridge Primary School



How to read this document

This document contains three main components

- A description of the Creativity Collaborative programme context and our framework of teaching for creativity
- The key unit information provides an overview next
- Finally, the full unit description gives detailed information



Context: UWinAT Creativity Collaborative

Creativity Collaboratives is an action research programme, funded by Arts Council England and the Freeland Foundation, that aims to build networks of schools to test a range of innovative practices in teaching for creativity, with the explicit intention that learning is shared to facilitate system-wide change. The University of Winchester, the University of Winchester Academy Trust, and a network of Hampshire Infant, Junior and Primary schools became one of the eight national funded collaboratives, coming together with the key ambition of fostering pupils' creativity in subjects drawn from across the curriculum. Overall, our collaborative aims to enrich children's life chances by developing them into confident and creative problem-solvers, engaging them through authentic, meaningful problems, embedded in their schools and lives.

The focus on creativity as a key skill in education is increasing (James et al.,

2019), reflecting its value within wider society. Indeed, according to the 2023 'Future of Jobs Report' (World Economic Forum, 2023) creative thinking is the skill showing the greatest increase in importance for employers (p. 38) and after analytical thinking, is the second most frequently cited skill that is 'core' for the workplace (p. 39). Our collaborative has focused on:

- Understanding and addressing the barriers and enablers of creative thinking
- Developing leadership for creativity in schools
- Developing new approaches to teaching for creativity across the curriculum
- Building children's and teachers' knowledge and understanding of creativity
- Developing children's and teachers' sense of themselves as creative and their ability to be creative in subjects across the school curriculum..

The Creativity Navigator: A Framework of Teaching for Creativity

To support our planning and implementation of teaching for creativity, we use a planning tool called the Creativity Navigator (see back cover). This was co-developed in our Creativity Collaborative and draws on a wide range of models, theories and frameworks of creativity. The Navigator emphasises that creativity can be a planned for process, that follows a typical sequence of explore – ideate – evaluate, but that this sequence can be varied and cycled around many times whilst working through a creative process. The process starts with the question 'where next?' emphasising the importance of metacognitive planning and monitoring throughout a creative process.

In a classroom context, a creative process can be operationalised through a set of learning behaviours. These behaviours can be grouped under creative 'habits' each of which can be used to support the creative

process. For instance, a think-pair-share learning behaviour could support children to collaborate on gathering relevant information as they explore at the beginning of a creative learning task. The same collaborative habit could later be used to support the evaluate stage of the creative process through getting constructive feedback from peers on each other's creative work and how it might be improved further.

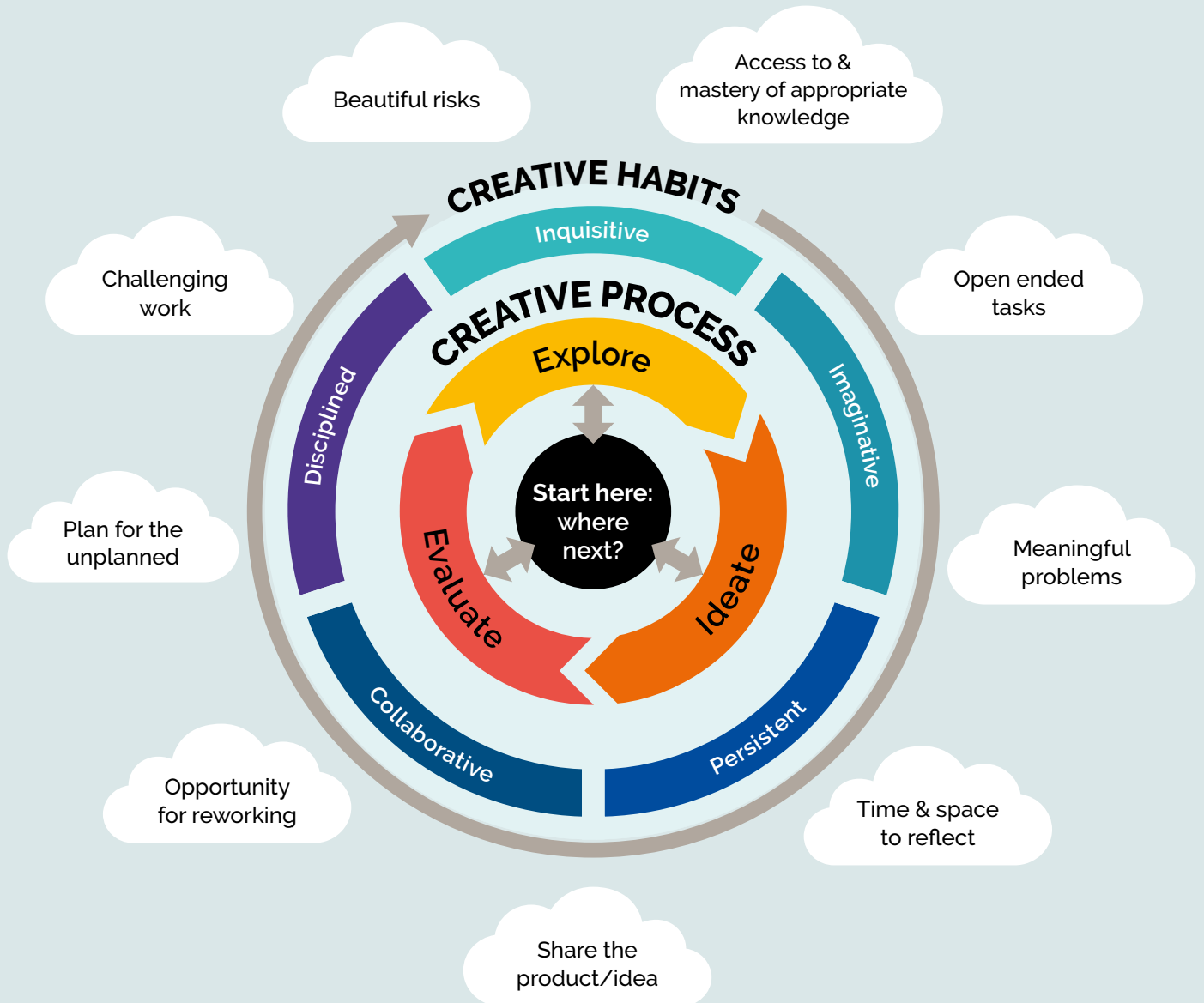
The final aspect of our Creativity Navigator focuses on the types of climate and task design that can support creativity to flourish in the classroom. For instance, tasks need to be personally meaningful, challenging, and open-ended, with children having some autonomy over aspect(s) of their learning. The classroom climate needs to provide psychological safety for children to take risks, make mistakes, learn from them and rework.



TO CITE THE CREATIVITY NAVIGATOR PLEASE USE:

Sowden, P.T., Warren, F., Seymour, M. Martin, C., Kauer, A. Spencer, E., Mansfield, S., Waite, J. (2025). A Creativity Navigator to Guide Teaching for Creativity: Implementation and Teacher Impacts in a Creativity Collaborative of Schools. *Journal of Creative Behavior*, 59(2), e70005. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jocb.70005>

CREATIVITY NAVIGATOR



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KEY UNIT INFORMATION

What is 'junk' and is it worthless?



INTENDED FOR:

Year 2 & Year 3,
including mixed
age classes



SUBJECT FOCUS:

Art & Design



UNIT DURATION & FORMAT:

Weekly for 1 hour
over 6 weeks



LEARNING OBJECTIVES/OUTCOMES:

1. National Curriculum Art & Design:

- a. To use a range of materials creatively to design and make products.
- b. To use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share the children's ideas, experiences and imagination.
- c. To develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space.
- d. To learn about the work of artists and to create sketch books to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas.

2. Creative Outcome:

- a. To apply creative thinking processes to enable them to design, make and evaluate a unique product in the style of a professional artist.
- b. To hold an auction of their sculptures and celebrate their value.

This unit implements teaching through the creative process and habits to enable children to generate their own novel ideas. Driven by the enquiry question, children collaborated to collect and sort materials, consider origins of plastic, and mind-map ideas for alternative usages. Children were stimulated by the work of the American artist, Eddie Martinez, comparing his sculptures with others including Phyllida Barlow. Children developed and built upon their skills in drawing, painting, and sculpture through experimentation and response. Facilitating the learning through the creative process and habits enabled children to develop their own ideas, refine their art and design techniques, and record their findings by producing a final sculpture outcome to be 'sold' at auction.

Levels of engagement were high from the start, driven by the inclusion of problem-solving approaches to developing creativity. Children were empowered to take risks by being imaginative and daring to be different. The final outcome of an auction encouraged the growth mindset that their ideas mattered, and all felt successful in their attainment as artists.



STEPS FOR SUCCESS:

1. Opportunities for collaboration and assessment throughout empowered children to be bolder in their choices and risk taking, encouraging them to have the confidence to revisit and refine their ideas.

2. Embedding challenges and problem-solving tasks, both planned and unplanned, within the unit will foster creative thinkers. Leaving space within lessons for the 'unplanned' will generate unexpected opportunities for learning.
3. Providing meaningful problems, real life contexts and freedom of choice throughout will ensure engagement levels and motivation remain high.

FULL UNIT DESCRIPTION

What is 'junk' and is it worthless?

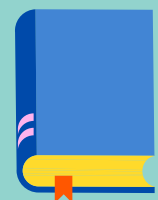
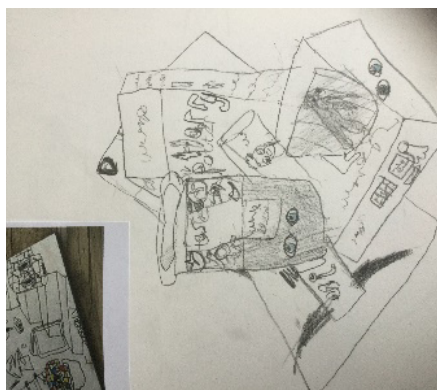
Content of the unit of work

This is primarily an Art & Design subject unit which includes cross-curricular opportunities. The length of unit time is six weeks with a half-day considered for the making of the final product. Key learning objectives and activities include:

- exploring different recycled materials and their origins, and playing with possibilities about their potential origins as well as what they could be repurposed to make
- looking at the artwork of Eddie Martinez; considering what they see in terms of visual elements and used images; wondering/questioning about the aesthetic and monetary value of art
- experimenting with sketching techniques focusing on the visual elements
- ideating through creating their own mixed media painting in the style of Martinez yet incorporating their own added objects
- planning, making and evaluating their final outcome of creating their own sculpture from recycled materials
- 'selling' their sculpture at auction

What did we change?

Adapting this previously taught unit, to weave in teaching for creativity, opened up opportunities for children to problem solve and critically consider tangible ideas. The exploration of materials at the start was an addition that gave rise to some unique designs and concepts about how such products could be used. Looking carefully at, and asking questions about, artists' designs is an integral part of teaching Art & Design. This was taken to a deeper level both through giving children permission to add their own chosen objects to their own responsive work, and through meaningful discussions about the value of artwork. The choice of materials to produce the final outcome was purposefully left to the children to choose in order that their ideas for design could evolve and they could have ownership. Holding an auction of the final outcomes was an addition that brought benefits to learning in many ways. For example, if an item was at a bid of £130, children had to identify an amount that was higher rather than lower and to this end it evolved into a mathematical lesson!



How did we use the creative process of **explore**, **ideate**, **evaluate**?

The elements of the cyclical nature of the creative process of explore, ideate and evaluate were woven throughout the lessons within this unit. This process lends itself to the development of children thinking through ideas and solutions for themselves. For example, exploring recycled materials at the start gave children the foundational knowledge, as well as permission, to come up with their own ideas about how those materials would best work for them within their designs. Giving opportunities to explore concepts or objects before stimulating their own ideas and allowing children the time and space to reflect and evaluate their outcome, supports children in becoming independent and engaged learners. Significantly, the process allows space for evaluation through choosing, drafting, reworking, and adapting.

How did we use the development of creative habits to support this process?

Developing collaboration was a key component to this unit, with opportunities woven in throughout the journey. Time was given to share products, work together, and give or receive feedback, especially at the exploration and evaluation stages. However, we found that the habits of being imaginative, inquisitive, persistent, and disciplined, organically evolved to becoming integrated within the process. The first lesson was very much focused on the habit of being inquisitive with children **exploring** and investigating materials, wondering and questioning, and challenging assumptions (for example, the origins of plastic. Children had to

be imaginative when **ideating** their designs, alongside ensuring they were persistent in that their designs should dare to be different. The disciplined habit came to the fore during the making of their models in that there were problem-solving issues that required them to craft and improve their product. Likewise, during the **evaluation** parts of their learning journey, the discipline habit supported this by enabling critical reflection.

Overcoming challenges

One of the many benefits of teaching for creativity is that children who may struggle to access aspects of learning often find the creative process a more inclusive way of learning. However, there may be challenges such as the child who may think they have little imagination who gets 'stuck' on ideas. For these children, the explore stages, particularly working as a collaborative pair, can prove to be supportive. Collaborating on a mind-map or the development of ideas before embarking on an individual design can help overcome this challenge. Another challenge that may arise is the issue of time. Teaching for creativity can mean an extra lesson or two over the unit of work to enable the time and space that is needed to reflect and rework ideas. However, it is critical to include these if children are to master appropriate knowledge and create novel ideas.



Planning frame

We developed a planning frame as a tool to be used at the start of a unit; a place to plot ideas and separate out the strands of the creative process and identify potential for creative habits and sub-habits to be explicit. It also ensures that the intention of learning is at the core by identifying the enquiry question and National Curriculum focus. This was important to ensure the required coverage of skills and knowledge would be at the heart of the learning from the outset and not lost in the creative process.



Enquiry Question: What is 'junk' and is it worthless?

National Curriculum focus: Art & Design – Use a range of materials creatively to design and make products (Y2); To develop their techniques with creativity and experimentation and an increasing awareness of different kinds of art, craft and design.

Creative processes:

Ask, Learn, Look, Play

Explore

Look at different types of materials we recycle, ask questions re whether it is reusable or not and consider what it might be useful for. Play with possibilities – sorting materials. Looking at drawings/paintings by Eddie Martinez and comparing them to other artists' work (eg. Jean Basquiat; Phyllida Barlow). Understand how sketching is an integral part of the sculpture process and experimenting with sketching techniques focussing on shape, line and tone. Listening to narratives of how Art is not only aesthetically valuable but can be valuable itself – can they put a value on a piece of art made from junk? Be inspired by Martinez's sculptures.

Think, Fuse, Make, Share Ideate

Sharing opinions and justifying about what constitutes 'junk' and its usefulness and value. Mind-mapping ideas for what they think recycled resources could be used for. Brainstorming in groups for idea of what they could produce with recycled materials to generate interest or money. Collaborating to design a sculpture including naming/labelling the recycled resources they could use. Making a prototype themselves using recycled materials. Sharing their ideas with others. Responding to others' opinions and making sense of what they have learned to make a final product.

Evaluate

Choose, Reflect, Improve, Relearn

Making choices and justifying them throughout. Relearning through addressing any flaws in their design choices and prototypes. Improving on their ideas by listening to the opinions of others. Reflecting on choices made. Self-assessing their learned knowledge as well as how creative they have been in their thinking and ideas.

Creative Habits:

	Imaginative	Persistent	Collaborative	Inquisitive	Disciplined
Pedagogic Approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making connections Playing with possibilities Using intuition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sticking with difficulty Daring to be different Tolerating uncertainty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cooperating appropriately Giving feedback Receiving feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wondering and questioning Challenging assumptions Exploring and investigating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crafting and improving Developing techniques Reflecting critically

Creative outcome:

Auction presentation of completed sculptures.

Impact: What and how to measure

Children to measure themselves against how creative they think they have been. Choose the Creative Habit they think matches their experience and state reasoning. Record on a bar chart as a visual.

What did the children learn?

Children were very much encouraged by the spirit of collaboration and how it can help grow and evolve ideas. They learned that by being inquisitive and exploring possibilities, they could develop their own style of drawing, painting, and sculpture. As we moved into focusing on the creative outcomes, children learned the importance of persistence and discipline as drivers of creativity. For example, they were motivated by the challenge of daring to be different in their designs, of sticking with difficulty when things did not always go to plan, and of reflecting critically on how they could improve upon an idea for a product by crafting and improving. They learned that evaluation, in giving and receiving feedback, is an integral part of moving forwards.

Was the children's work more creative and novel?

Definitely! No two outcomes were the same because all grew from unique designs that had

been built upon and adapted through exploration, ideation, and evaluation over the course of the unit. From the start of the unit to the finished outcome, children knew they had 'permission' to dare to be different in their ideas...to take 'beautiful risks' – something that can only lead to more novel outcomes.

How did the unit impact learning?

Together with the creative process and habits, the open-ended enquiry question gave children scope to solve what they perceived as a meaningful problem – how could they repurpose something that was destined for landfill? Simultaneously, through playing with possibilities and exploring/ investigating, children got to 'walk in the shoes' of an artist by becoming artists themselves – their work being displayed, curated and 'sold' at auction. Challenging children to dare to be different enabled them to feel freer in their designs and levels of

engagement were high throughout the learning journey.

Impact on specific groups of pupils

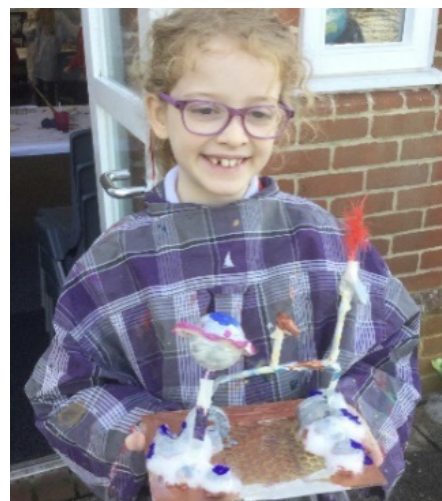
Teaching for creative thinking, without doubt, is an inclusive way of teaching. SEND children will, more often than not, become more independent learners. By building in the explore, ideate, and evaluate process, children can establish small building blocks that they can revisit and repurpose. The 'walking in their shoes' aspect of that – whether as an artist, author or scientist, really gives children ownership and insight into the purposefulness of that domain. Mind-mapping, generating questions, considering 'what if...!' and collaboration are all little steps that support SEND children in being confident and proud of their products. At the same time, those more able children, who may over-rely on following specific instructions, become more active learners who are not afraid of making mistakes or producing something novel – it becomes celebrated.

Supporting evidence of impact

Exploring and investigating materials outside the classroom leads to wondering and questioning about what recycled materials can be repurposed for. Activities to play with possibilities and make connections helps generate ideas for drawing and painting recycled pieces in the

style of the artist. Plans and designs are drafts for them to craft and improve upon as their novel products evolve.

Final outcomes: The children produced unique sculptures. They were proud to proclaim themselves as artists by bringing their novel art to auction, curating their pieces and enjoying the bidding!



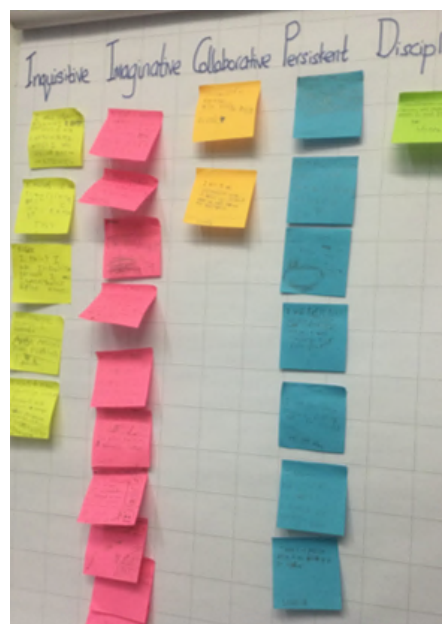
FINAL REFLECTIONS:

Invest time for exploring – learning through looking, questioning, and playing will give more active learning opportunities from which a strong foundation for stimulating, developing, and choosing ideas will grow.

When self-assessing how creative they have been, ask them to justify their choices (for example, 'I was persistent because I was sticking

with something I found difficult and learning through it'). This will support them in understanding how such habits are an integral part of creativity.

Allow time for the unplanned – you will be amazed at the different routes a unit of work can take when children state something profound and you permit time and space to develop those ideas!



CONTACT US:

✉ uwinatcreativitycollaborative@winchester.ac.uk
 🌐 <https://www.winchester.ac.uk/research/Our-impactful-research/Research-in-Humanities-and-Social-Sciences/Research-projects/creativity-collaborative/>

