

# **Generating Creativity in English class**

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## **Introduction**

Creativity is endangered species in the current model of education. But without creativity we would still be living in caves. Creativity is necessary for survival. It helps us to deal with everyday changes. Our modern world needs creative and active people. Everybody is talking about the 4 Cs these days. They are Critical thinking, Creativity, Communication and Collaboration. These sets of skills are known as “life skills” or “global skills”. And I think they can be and should be taught in a language classroom.

Creativity is one of the issues I’d like to talk about. Creativity is often described as thinking “out of the box” because it involves the opportunity to play with ideas freely. At the same time, it develops curiosity, disciplined thinking, and attention to detail and effort.

Creativity doesn’t happen in vacuum. There is always someone who stimulates original children’s thinking. In a language classroom, the first resource is a teacher, a person who encourages creative thinking and trains students to evaluate and critically reflect on their own ideas, actions and outcomes.

On my journey in life I’ve met different teachers: mediocre, good, superior, great. And I can confidently say that I’m happy to know great teachers who inspire and motivate their students using a number of techniques at their lessons for generating creativity. Developing students’ creativity has a lot of benefits not only for language learning but also for developing broader educational objectives, attitudes and values. Children who learn English as a foreign language at school may have limited language skills but they come to class full of creative potential. And through the integration of creative thinking in English lessons, they develop relevant cognitive skills that they need in all areas of their lives. So, why it’s important:

- increases children motivation in studying a foreign language
- makes language learning enjoyable
- promotes children’s ability to think

- provides a huge variety of challenging tasks which provoke children's thinking

By integrative creative activities in English classroom, teachers encourage their students to practice an important element which also lies behind personal growth and the development of culture and society: thinking creatively.

### **Description of the Activities**

Being a teacher I have observed that pupils are mostly taught with traditional methods. But it's important to give students a sense of confidence, self-esteem and self-awareness. That's why in this section I'd like to share some activities which allow students to express themselves creatively.

- **“Never Have I Ever ” Game (practicing grammar)**

What is rather boring and not really inspiring? Of course it is studying grammar. It takes a lot of drilling. Why not to do this drilling in a different way? It doesn't hurt to put on a little show sometimes. Let's take part in “Never Have I Ever Game” and practice the Present Perfect. This is how it works. You are going to ask you a series of questions and all you have to do is to demonstrate your answer with the help of the cards (“I have” or “I have never”).

So, this game is not only a great way to practice grammar in a natural way, but it's also a good opportunity to learn some facts about people you thought you knew well.

- **“Sorry seems to be the hardest word” (speaking activity)**

I'm sure among your friends there are people who are always late and they have to say sorry and make excuses all the time. I think it's a real life skill, don't you agree? For students who are always late my teacher has worked out a special activity which she named after a line from Elton John “Sorry seems to be the hardest word”. You are to complete dialogues explaining why you are late for (school, lesson, ect.) Remember you should be creative. Later you can act out the dialogues in artistic way. This activity is a great way to work in pairs practicing speaking and acting.

- **Ripple Activity (writing, speaking, summarizing the topic)**

Quite a lot of school children are shy and find it challenging to speak. And to stimulate students my teacher usually uses the following activity. Give your students a topic word and ask them to make up words with each letter. They can be nouns,

adjectives, verbs, articles and prepositions. It's really appreciated if they use vocabulary words.

You can do this a bit challenging and ask you students to make up sentences with each word.

- **Stripe story (reading/listening)**

This activity is aimed to develop reading habits and thinking skills. It can be done in pairs, groups or individually.

Procedure

- ✓ Make up the text from mixed sentences "stripes"
- ✓ Read the story
- ✓ (option) the others should guess what the text is about

- **Banana Dictation (writing/listening)**

One more necessary activity is writing a dictation. But I think your students will say that writing a test or a dictation is one of the way to discourage them to study English. So what if to suggest an alternative form of dictations which can be very effective in raising students motivation.

Procedure

- ✓ you remove a language item (e.g. preposition)
- ✓ instead of the word you should say : **banana** "code" word
- ✓ dictate the sentences. I got **banana** the airport a bit late.

! You can use your own "code" word instead of BANANA

After checking whether they guessed and wrote correctly you can discuss the text.

You can say this activity is simply a primitive gap filler but it doesn't hurt to put on a little show sometimes.

### **Conclusion**

Developing students' creativity is considered an essential part of teaching in modern society, this way I really hope that you will find all these activities useful and inspiring. The aim was to show the ideas which can be either used for developing

students creative thinking or using their natural creativity for increasing their productive motivation. By using creative strategies in the classroom teachers can make their classes more original and “out of the formal bounds” that will help future generation be ready to meet the challenges of the modern world.