Skill Workbook

CREATIVITY

Name:

Introduction to the Skills Builder Partnership

The Skills Builder Partnership brings together educators, employers, organisations and learners around a common mission:

One day, everyone will build the essential skills to succeed.

We focus on building eight essential skills which have been shown to most effectively prepare learners for education and employment.

Listening
The receiving, retaining and processing of information or ideas

Speaking
The oral transmission of information or ideas

Problem Solving
The ability to find a solution to a situation or challenge

Creativity
The use of imagination and the generation of new ideas

Staying Positive
The ability to use tactics and strategies to overcome setbacks and achieve goals

Aiming High
The ability to set clear, tangible goals and devise a robust route to achieving them

Leadership
Supporting, encouraging and developing others to achieve a shared goal

Teamwork
Working cooperatively with others towards achieving a shared goal

The Skills Builder Universal Framework

The Skills Builder Universal Framework shows how to build essential skills at every stage of life. It breaks each skill down into sixteen teachable and measurable Steps. Developed over four years, the Framework is used by 500+ schools and colleges, 120+ employer partners and 90+ impact organisations – all building the skills of 200,000+ individuals.

Creativity

The use of imagination and the generation of new ideas

- **Creativity is the complement to Problem Solving, and is about generating innovations or ideas which can then be honed through the problem-solving process.**

- **The first few steps focus on the individual's confidence in imagining different situations and sharing their ideas. The focus is then on generating ideas - using a clear brief, making improvements to something that already exists and combining concepts.**

- **Individuals then apply creativity in the context of their work and their wider life. They can build off this to develop ideas using tools like mind mapping, questioning, and considering different perspectives.**

- **The most advanced steps focus on building effective innovation in group settings and by seeking out varied experiences and stimuli. Finally, individuals support others to innovate, by sharing tools, identifying the right tools for the situation and through coaching.**

Why is Creativity an important skill?

Further Education

In Further Education, Creativity is important beyond the arts-focused subjects and qualifications. In most subject areas you will need to come up with unique or complex ideas perhaps for an assignment or presentation, as well as find practical solutions to everyday problems and effective Creativity can equip you with strategies to do this.

Higher Education

In Higher Education, you may have more freedom to develop your own ideas or consider a wide range of perspectives and effective Creativity will enable you to do this. Alongside this, learners who have higher levels of Creativity can achieve better academic grades which is very important at the Higher Education level.

Apprenticeships

Creativity is important in both the workplace and when studying. At work, you might develop new concepts or ideas by yourself or in a wider team. When studying, you might create designs or consider the perspectives of different groups of people for an assignment.

Employment

There are a number of industries that centre around the skill of Creativity such as design, architecture and theatre. However, the ability to innovate and evaluate is a skill required across a myriad of careers. Employers are increasingly driven by innovations – both the development of incremental improvements and also new thinking that draws together ideas in new ways to create value.

Workbook overview

Purpose of the Workbook

The aim of this workbook is to support your development in the skill of **Creativity**. As you progress, you will reflect, learn new strategies and tools and gather examples and evidence of when you have demonstrated a step of a skill.

Progression can take time. To fully understand, demonstrate and reflect on two or more steps with a year is considered quick progress. Try not to race through and complete the workbook but take your time to build your understanding and master each step in turn.


Expectations

In order to get the most from this workbook, it is useful to consider the Skills Builder principles.

Keep it simple

Make sure you use the Framework when talking about the essential skills. This ensures that others have the same understanding of the skills as you do. Use the language and vocabulary of the steps whenever referencing or discussing a skill.
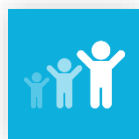
Start early, keep going

Mastering the essential skills isn't simple and takes considerable time and effort. The skills are not just about employability, but about succeeding in all parts of life.

Measure it

It is important to think about and reflect on your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to the essential skills. By fully understanding this you are able to highlight your progress and work out what your next steps are.
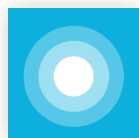
Focus tightly

You will most probably have some experience in the essential skills already. It is important to think about what you already know and understand and build up from that point. Ensure you have committed time to specifically building the focus skill.

Keep practising

To speed up progress in the essential skills, you should try to use them as often as possible and in different situations. Alongside this, you should make time to reflect on how you have used them as well.

Bring it to life

When building your essential skills, consider how they could be used in the different parts of your life. For example, you might think about how a particular step might support you in the workplace, in your personal life as well as in education.

Workbook overview

Why should I use this workbook?

This workbook will support you to develop the essential skills which we need to succeed. It focuses on the skills which almost everyone needs to do almost any job.

Focusing on one skill and taking each step of the Framework, this workbook breaks down the steps into it's parts. It encourages you to go out and apply what you have learnt and then record and reflect on the experience. By doing this you will learn how to use the step in different contexts, supporting you to develop positive habits. By collecting these examples, you will build up a bank of evidence for each skill which can be used to support applications or interviews and demonstrate your strengths.

How it's structured

This workbook focuses on one skill. The skill is broken down into steps and each step teaches you an important part of the skill. In this workbook, we begin at Step 0 and build up to Step 10.

1. **Choose the step you want to start with**. This might be Step 0 to recap and build up your learning or you may feel confident to start on a higher step.
2. **Read** the step descriptor, overview and the building blocks that form each part of the step.
3. **Complete the self-reflection** based on your current experience and understanding. Don't worry if you aren't confident yet – it helps to know where you started.
4. The next few pages provide the **details of the step**. These should be read carefully and may need to be revisited multiple times.
5. The end of this section provides ideas on how to **practice the skill step**. Plan when you are going to do this on a few occasions. You can take the ideas directly from the list or use it as inspiration.
6. Once you have practiced the step a few times, there is space to **record your reflections**. The first two questions focus on the knowledge of the skill - try to answer these from memory. Then share your honest thoughts on how you applied the step.
7. Finally, there is space for a tutor, coach, teacher or manager to **sign** to show you have successfully worked on the step.

Example completed Step pages

SPEAKING

Step 0
I speak clearly to someone I know.

To achieve Step 0, you will be able to speak clearly to someone that you know – perhaps to ask a question, to talk about something you are familiar with, or give an answer to a question.

This is the first step of speaking in the Skills Builder Universal Framework, and starts with a focus on speaking clearly so that others can understand the words that are being said. This is the starting point for eve

Building blo

The building blocks of this s

- What speaking means
- How to speak clearly

Step self-ref

1. In one sentence, share

This step is all about
through having a con
a problem.

2. When required, how oft

- ○ Never
- ○ Rarely
- ☒ Sometimes
- ○ Often
- ○ Always

What you need to know

What is speaking?

Speaking is how we communicate using speech, and is also called talking. We form words using our mouths and add sound to them using our lungs.
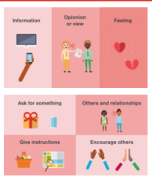
There are other forms of communication, including through writing, performance, sign language, song, and electronic methods of communicating. Some of the principles of speaking can m
forms of communicating too.

Why do we speak?

We speak for several reasons:

- To share information
- To share an opinion or view
- To express our feelings
- To ask for something that we
- To learn about others
- To build relationships
- To give instructions
- To encourage others

Quick quest

Over a typical week, write

- Speaking to a frien
- Talking to my spo
- Telling my family

Which reason for speakin

I speak most often to

Reflection questions

1. What is speaking?

Speaking is how we share our ideas, using words. It can also be called talking.

2. What can you do to make sure you speak clearly?

We can speak slowly, make sure the person listening is paying attention, think carefully about what we want to say and look at the person we're speaking to.

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

I made a list of all the people I spoke to in one day from start to finish. The total number was 14 which was much higher than I expected. I then reflected on the list I'd made and noted that 10/14 were people I knew well. I asked my friend to share some feedback on how clearly I spoke and she said she was able to understand everything I said.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

I have to speak to people everyday so this step helps me not only in education but in my wider life. If I can talk to people and they understand me, I'll be happier as I am able to express how I feel. It will also help people support me with what I need.

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ○ 1 – Not at all confident
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ☒ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.
- Speaking with others in my class
- Discussing my weekend with friends and family
- Speaking to my music tutor about an upcoming show

Step signed off by:

Universal Framework: Creativity

This workbook will cover Steps 0-10 of the Skills Builder Universal Framework.

Step 0

I imagine different situations.

To achieve Step 0, you will have to be able to imagine different situations.

This is the first step in Creativity – the ability to imagine things that do not currently exist. It provides the foundation for everything that follows.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- What is imagination
- How do we use imagination

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ◯ Never
- ◯ Rarely
- ◯ Sometimes
- ◯ Often
- ◯ Always

What you need to know

What is imagination?

Using your imagination is about being able to think about something and being able to see it in your head. You might imagine an event that hasn't happened, something that is impossible, or a place that doesn't exist.

When might we use imagination?

Sometimes we use imagination by ourselves, and what we imagine is only in our heads. At other times, we use our imagination with other people – for example, we talk or act things out together.

As you get better at using your imagination, you might be able to explain what you imagine in a way that someone else can understand. You might also be able to act out or draw what you are imagining. For now, just focus on whether you can imagine things in your head.

In our heads

Acting out together
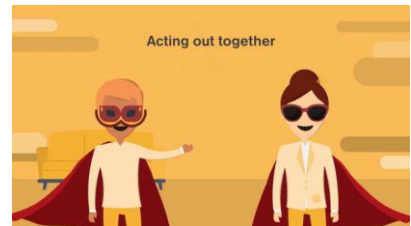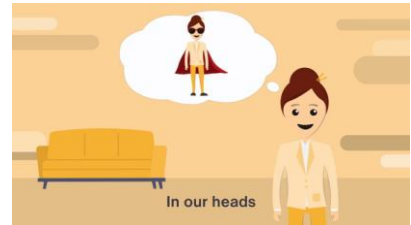
How do we use imagination?

Our imagination is crucial because it allows us to think about new ideas and to go beyond what exists today.

Everything in the world started in somebody's imagination – it didn't exist yet, but someone thought that it might be a good idea, and they used what they imagined to make it.

When might our imagination be most active?

We might use our imagination at lots of different times, but normally our mind has to be relaxed and not trying to think about other things.

Some of us find that we use our imagination best when we're with other people, and some of us find it easiest to use our imaginations alone.

Alone

With other people
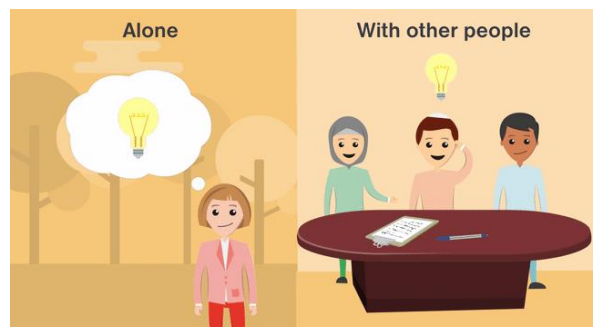
What you need to know

Quick questions

Over a typical week, write down different examples of when you might imagine something.

Do you use your imagination best when you are alone or when you are with others?

Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Imagine yourself to be in the situation of someone you have heard about in the news or a character from a film, series or book. How would they feel? What might they do next?

- Think of an important event you have coming up, this could be an exam, match, performance or interview. Imagine you are getting ready on the day. How do you feel? What do you need to prepare? What do you see? What might you say or do? After you have imagined this scenario, is there anything you could do differently now to help you prepare?

- Imagine yourself in 6 months' time, what are you doing? Now picture yourself in 2 years' time, what has changed? Finally, imagine yourself 5 years from now, what do you see?

- When you see a picture of a new place or activity, imagine yourself in that situation. What might you feel, hear or smell there? Would you like to go there? Why/why not?

- Using an image, word or piece of music as a prompt, close your eyes and let your mind wander. What are you imagining?

? Reflection questions

1. When do you use your imagination?

2. Why do you think imagination is useful?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○   1 – Not at all confident
○   2
○   3
○   4
○   5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 1

I imagine different situations and can say what I imagine.

To achieve Step 1, you will be able to imagine different situations and be able to say what it is that you are imagining.

In the previous step, the focus was on being able to imagine different situations. This step builds on this by adding the ability for you to be able to say what it is that you are imagining.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

* Why it is helpful to explain what we imagine
* How to talk about what you have imagined

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

○ Never

○ Rarely

○ Sometimes

○ Often

○ Always

What you need to know

When might we use imagination?

Imagination is about being able to think about something and being able to see it in your head. There are lots of different times that we might use our imagination:

- When thinking about what we might do in the future.
- Thinking about somewhere we haven't been but might like to.
- When thinking up new ideas or ways of doing something better.
- When acting out situations that haven't happened yet.

Why might we explain what we imagine?

If you imagine something, it starts in your head. However, everything in the world has started in someone's imagination. If it had only stayed in that person's imagination, then it would never have turned into something real in the world.

One of the best ways of sharing what we imagine is through talking about it.

Sharing what is in your head

When we use our imaginations, we have to remember that no one else knows what is in your head until you tell them.

Therefore, you have to use lots of detail to help bring what is in your head to life for them – they will not know anything that you don't tell them. If there are gaps in what you describe, they will use their own imaginations to fill in the other details, and so they might end up thinking about something entirely different to you.

What you need to know

How to talk about what you imagine

When describing what you imagine, it is helpful to give *context* – start by telling them what situation or thing you were broadly imagining. For example,

- I imagined that I was making a trip to the moon.
- I imagined that we got a new puppy.
- I imagined what to do at the weekend.

You can then start to give some of the detail of what you were imagining. For example,

- I would have to travel in a huge rocket, and to wear an astronaut suit. When I left the earth, it would feel like there was no gravity so I would have to learn how to travel around without being stuck to the floor.
- I would like a small one, with brown fur and bright ideas. I would take it for walks every day, and teach it how to chase a ball.
- I would go to my favourite coffee shop and get a croissant and an orange juice, then read a magazine. I make sure to get a seat by the window, so it is nice and bright, and so I can watch other people walking by.

Without giving the *context* first, none of these second examples make any sense.

- You might also want to explain how you *feel* – these can help people you are talking to be more interested in what you are sharing.
- Finally, you have to decide how much detail you want to give – you cannot describe everything, so you have to choose what is essential.
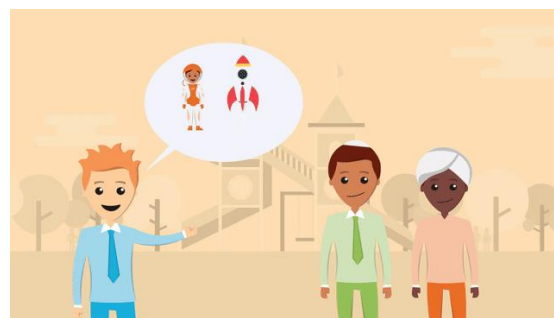
Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Think of a place, person or object (you could use a picture to help you) and describe it to someone. Include as much detail as possible to help them guess what you are imagining. They can guess by asking questions or by sketching what you describe. Were they imaging the same thing as you? How did you use language to help them?
- Consider an event you have coming up or think about the next day/week. Ask yourself "What if...?" to imagine different possibilities, or you could ask someone else to pose the questions. For example, "What if you arrive early?", "What if you bump into someone you know?", "What if you achieve my goal?". Say or write down what you imagine.

? Reflection questions

1. Why is it helpful to be able to explain what we imagine?

2. How can we talk about what we imagine?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○ 1 – Not at all confident

○ 2

○ 3

○ 4

○ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 2

I imagine different situations and can bring them to life in different ways.

To achieve Step 2, you will show that you can bring what you imagine to life in different ways, including through role play or acting out your ideas, and through pictures or diagrams.

In the previous step, you focused on how to say what you could imagine. This step builds on this by exploring other ways of communicating ideas to others.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to share what is imagined through acting it out
- How to share what is imagined through drawing pictures or diagrams

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ○ Never
- ○ Rarely
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Often
- ○ Always

What you need to know

Sharing imagination through acting it out

When we imagine something, it is in our heads. Imagining things in our heads can help think about new ideas or what we might want to do in the future. However, some of the things we imagine are useful to share with the world.

One method of doing this is through acting it out or by using role-play. Acting or role play is helpful when you are trying to share a conversation or behaviour with someone else and for them to join you in being part of an imaginary world.
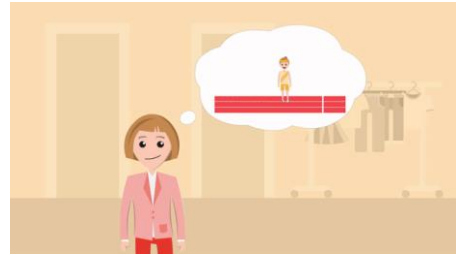
Examples: drama and role play

For example, all drama – whether in films, in theatres or on video clips – comes from imagination and then it is made real by being acted out to you. If this done well, it can be so convincing that you feel that you are part of the action and understand very clearly what is in someone's imagination.

Another example is the use of role-play – when someone, or multiple people, play different roles. This can help build an understanding of what someone is thinking or for playing out different scenarios. For this reason, role play is often used in creative play and also in learning – so that you have to think about what someone else was thinking and feeling at a certain point. It can be good for building *empathy* and understanding how someone else is feeling and why they make certain decisions.

Sharing imagination by creating art

Alongside talking about ideas or acting them out, the other big way that people share what they imagine is through pictures or diagrams.

Most artists use their imagination to create their works of art – they imagine a situation, or how they feel about it and bring that to life through their artwork. That might use materials like paint, pencil, metal, stone or many others. In every case, they have taken something that was in their mind and turned it into something physical to share what was in their imaginations. However, we don't need to be brilliant artists to get across our ideas – sometimes a quick sketch can be enough.
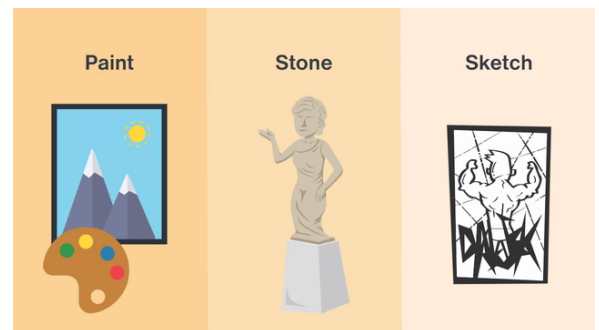
What you need to know

Sharing imagination by drawing diagrams

Alternatively, lots of things people imagine turn into diagrams. Diagrams are designed to be a way of getting crucial technical information to other people. They can be simple – for example, showing where in a room a picture should be put up, or more complicate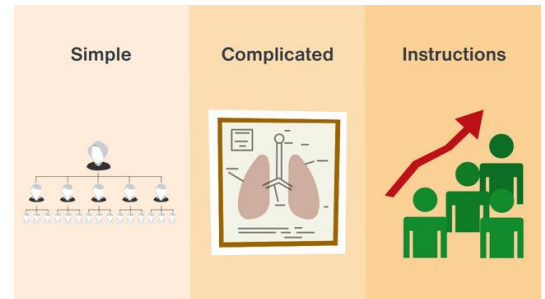d like a set of architectural plans. Diagrams can also show instructions for other people to follow to build something or make something happen. Diagrams do not have to be perfect to be useful.

Quick questions

Which way/s do you like to use to share your imagination? Select all that apply.

○ Acting it out/role-play
○ Creating art
○ Talking
○ Drawing diagrams

Note down which one you most prefer and explain why.

Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Think of a conversation you have had recently where you had hoped for a different outcome or reaction. Re-enact the conversation with a peer, or independently, taking into account both perspectives and how you might act differently to achieve the outcome you wanted.

- Take a complex idea, technique or subject you are learning and choose to recreate it as a diagram, picture or demonstration. How has this helped you to understand the subject matter? How did you choose which tool to use to bring your imagination to life?

- Sitting back-to-back with a partner, take turns describing an image or imagined situation. Without looking, your partner will draw what you describe. For example, you could choose to describe a room layout you want to rearrange, an outfit or a meal you are planning to make.

? Reflection questions

1. What are the advantages of sharing what you imagine through drawing pictures or diagrams?

2. What are the advantages of sharing what you imagine through acting it out?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○   1 – Not at all confident

○   2

○   3

○   4

○   5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 3

I generate ideas when I've been given a clear brief.

To achieve Step 3, you will show that you can generate ideas when given a clear brief.

In earlier steps, the focus was on the use of imagination, and how to share what you imagine through speaking, role play, and drawing pictures or diagrams. This step shifts now to think about idea generation rather than just imagining.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

• What is a creative brief
• How to generate ideas for a brief

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

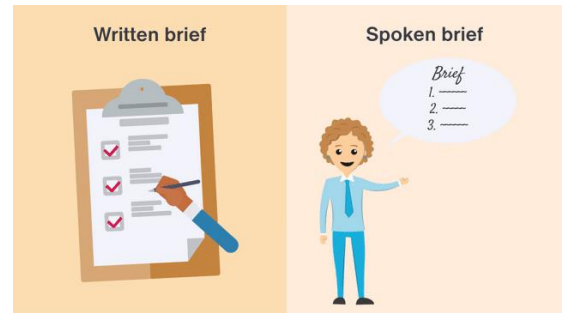**2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?**

○ Never

○ Rarely

○ Sometimes

○ Often

○ Always

What you need to know

What is a brief?

A *brief* is a problem or challenge that we have to come up with ideas to solve. The brief might be short or long; it might be in a written form, or it might be spoken.

Success criteria

A brief will normally have *success criteria* attached to it. The success criteria will tell you what your idea needs to be able to do or answer to be judged successful.

- For example, the success criteria for a lunch box might be that it needs to big enough to hold a sandwich, waterproof, and not too heavy to carry.

- As another example, the success criteria for a school trip might be that learners can learn something that links to their school work, that it is not too far away, and that the whole class go together.

If it is not clear what the success criteria are, you should either ask the person who is setting you the brief, or think about what you think they should be if they cannot tell you.

Success criteria are critical because knowing what we are working towards and what needs to be included, means we can focus our imagination rather than creating ideas that will not work for the brief. There is also good evidence that people come up with better ideas when they are constrained or limited.

Quick question

List some examples of when you have been given some success criteria.

What you need to know

How to generate ideas to a brief

When you are creating ideas, the most important thing is to try to create as many as possible at the beginning. If you only come up with one idea, then it is unlikely to be your best idea.

You can then think about which of those ideas fulfil the success criteria that you have been set. This might get rid of quite a few of the ideas.

There might also be other things that mean an idea becomes unrealistic – for example; it depends on events, materials, or inventions that do not exist. Again, at this stage, these ideas should be removed from your list.

Of the ideas that are left, you might combine different elements of those ideas to create the best plan that you can to fulfil the brief that you have been set.

Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Set yourself a clear brief for cooking a meal. Success criteria might include the number of ingredients, the budget or cuisine. Generate at least 3 ideas and select the best option to make.

- Make a checklist for a task you have been set with a clear brief. Tick off the success criteria as you go and generate as many ideas as you can to meet them.

- Using an upcoming celebration, generate ideas to plan a celebratory event. How can you use a clear brief to help you focus your ideas and make the event a success?

- Set yourself some different criteria for writing a short story. Perhaps it could only include 10 words or it might need to include a word beginning with each letter of the alphabet.

? Reflection questions

1. What is meant by a brief and how can it be helpful?

2. How can you create ideas to fulfil a brief?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○　1 – Not at all confident

○　2

○　3

○　4

○　5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 4

I generate ideas to improve something.

To achieve Step 4, you will show that you can generate ideas to make something better.

In the previous step, you focused on how to generate ideas when given a clear brief and success criteria. This step continues to focus on creating ideas but without the brief and success criteria being given. Instead, to improve something, you have to be able to identify what the success criteria are yourself.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- Understanding the success criteria
- Making something better, using those success criteria

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ○ Never
- ○ Rarely
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Often
- ○ Always

The importance of success criteria

In the last step, we looked at success criteria, which we said were what will tell you what your idea needs to be able to do or answer to be judged successful.

If you don't have success criteria, it is impossible to come up with great ideas because you have no way of knowing whether an idea is a good one or not. This means that if we are not given success criteria, then we need to work some out for ourselves.
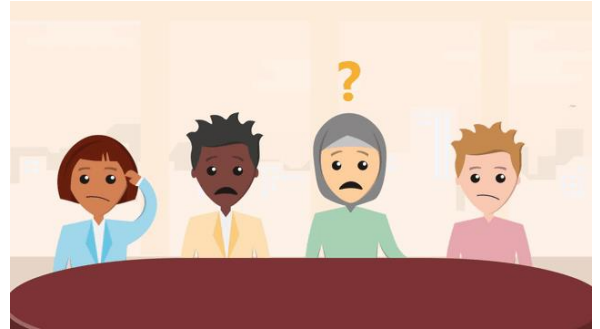
Understanding success criteria

Some questions that we might ask ourselves to develop those success criteria are:

- *What is this thing trying to do?* It might be that the thing is a physical product like a car, or it might be a service like repairing a car.

- *What does the thing do well?* For example, the car might be good at not using too much fuel when it is driven. It might also be reliable and not break down often.

- *What could it do better?* For example, it might be that the car could be made bigger, or a better colour, or have bigger windows so people can see out better.

- *Which of the improvements matter?* In the end, we have to think about which of those potential improvements really matter. For example, if it a sports car then perhaps it is not worth making it bigger because the success criteria are that it is as light as possible and can seat two people. On the other hand, if it is a car that is used as a taxi, then being bigger might be helpful.

We can use this thought process to work out what are the success criteria of the product or service – what is it trying to achieve and for whom? Once we know the success criteria, we can work out how to make something better.
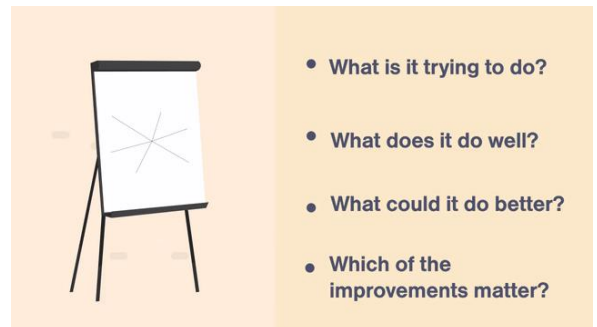
What you need to know

Start with the problem you are solving

When thinking about improving something, you might start from a problem that you have experienced in using the product or service:

- Perhaps it took a long time to do your shopping, or you couldn't find what you were looking for.

- Perhaps a machine broke or cost more money than you thought it should have done.

This gives you a success criteria to work towards – you will be successful in improving something if it can do it better.

Something takes a long time   Something is broken

Improving one problem but creating another

However, it is really important that we think about whether your idea might solve a problem but accidentally make something else worse.

To take our car example from earlier, adding some overhead storage on a sports car might mean that it can carry more luggage. However, the downside of that might be that it would ruin the aerodynamics of the vehicle, and also make it heavier so it would be slower – which might be an important success criteria.
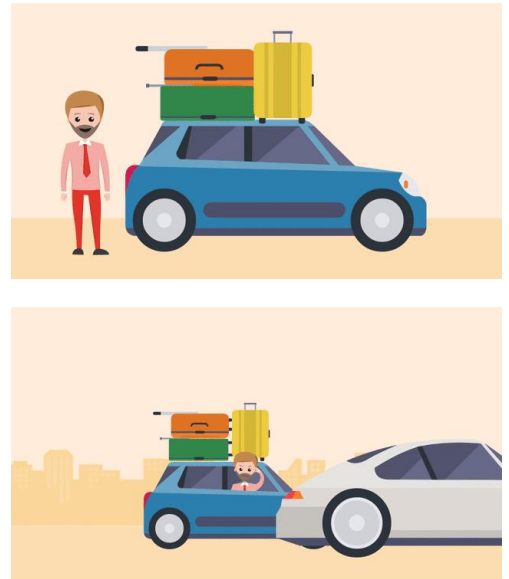
Making sure your ideas are feasible

The other important test for improvements is that they should be feasible. We looked at what it meant to be feasible before, but essentially it means that something is achievable in terms of cost and being real. These should also be success criteria but can easily be overlooked.
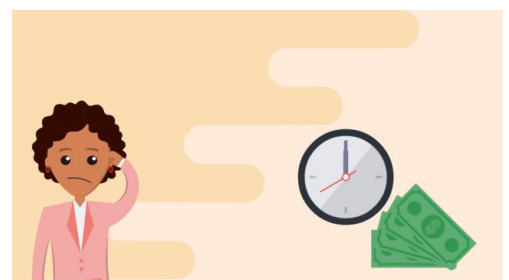
What you need to know

Quick question

Take an object that you can see around you. Note down what it does, consider if it does this well and whether you can think of any improvements for it.

Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Reflect on an object, space or process which has caused a problem or which you would like to improve. You could also ask a peer, mentor or family member to suggest something. For example, you don't have enough floor space to separate your rubbish and recycling. Consider the problem(s) you need to address, what it already does well, how it could be improved and which of those elements are most important. Use these answers to form success criteria to support your ideas for a new design.

- Find an item of clothing or furniture which you no longer use and generate ideas to improve it.

- Choose an invention you use in your everyday life. Research how this design has improved over time? What changes were made and why do think that is? How could you continue to improve its design, based on your experience and needs?

? Reflection questions

1. How can we come up with lots of ideas?

2. How do we know if an idea will make something better or not?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ○ 1 – Not at all confident
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 5

I generate ideas by combining different concepts.

To achieve Step 5, you will show that you can generate ideas by combining different concepts.

In earlier steps, you thought about creating ideas when given a clear brief and success criteria, and then when you had to create your own success criteria to improve something. In this step, you build on this by exploring how you can combine different concepts to generate new ideas.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

• How to identify the components of ideas and concepts
• How to combine these components to create something new

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

○ Never
○ Rarely
○ Sometimes
○ Often
○ Always

What you need to know
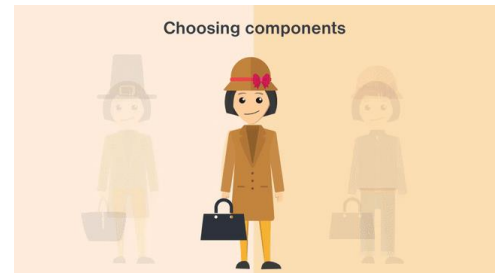
Components of ideas and concepts

A *concept* is a type of idea that is usually quite general or big. For example, if we were decorating a classroom, we might say that the concept was 'bright and colourful'. This gives a vague direction, but there is a lot more detail that would need to go into this to make it helpful.

A *component* is a part of a whole thing or idea. For example, components of a bright and colourful classroom concept would include the positioning of the furniture, the colours on the walls, and the size of the windows.

Concept *(bright and colourful)*
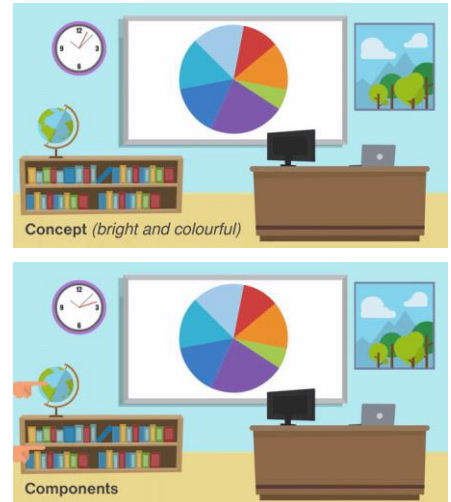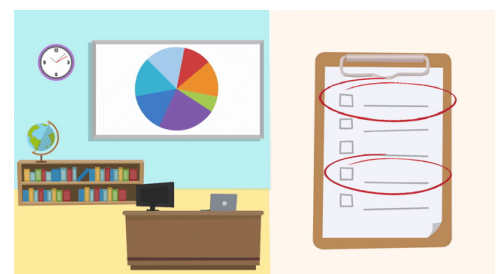
Components

Choosing components from different concepts

When we respond to a brief (as in Step 3) or try to improve something (as in Step 4) we might come up with a complete concept or set of ideas to try to answer that brief or make an improvement. However, we might have more than one concept or lots of different ideas. Sometimes we will want to choose between them, but at other times we might be able to pick the best bits of each and put them all together.

Choosing components

How to combine components of ideas

When we combine ideas, it is helpful to think of the components of those ideas and the success criteria that each of those components helps to fulfil.

- For example, continuing our classroom decorating example, we might have two different concepts which look quite different: One has a circular classroom, with the furniture arranged around in a semi-circle with bright orange walls and windows set in the ceiling. The second has a rectangular classroom, with the furniture arranged in rows and big glass doors along two sides of it, and sky blue walls. Both of these ideas fulfil the same broad criteria that they are 'bright and colourful', but in very different ways.

- Rather than picking one of these, we might break down both concepts into their component parts. Both concepts include room shape, furniture layout, wall colour and window positioning. We can then pick our preference for each of these component parts.

- In this way, we might end up with a circular classroom, with furniture arranged in a semi-circle but with blue walls and big glass doors all the way around.

Concept 1	Concept 2
circular classroom	rectangular classroom
furniture in semi-circle	furniture in rows
bright orange walls	big glass doors
windows in ceiling	sky blue walls

Component Parts

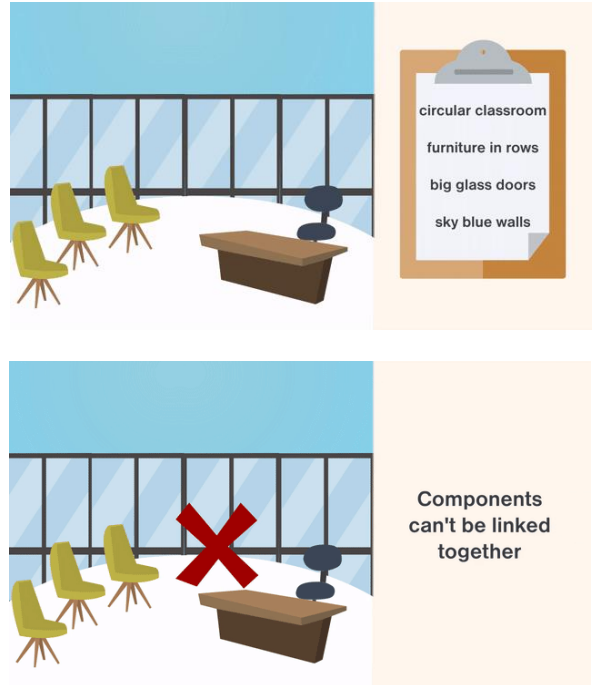|	
circular classroom	rectangular classroom
furniture in semi-circle	furniture in rows
bright orange walls	big glass doors
windows in ceiling	sky blue walls

What you need to know

The risk of combining components

If we get it right when we combine ideas, we can end up with the best of both worlds. It can give us the chance to see different ideas for each of the components of the concept and then pick the best one for each of those.

However, it is important to be aware of the risk here too. We could end up spoiling the idea if the component parts need to be linked together, or can't be separated.

- In our example, it might not be possible to build big glass doors into a circular wall. In the same way, you might not be able to combine a circular room with furniture arranged in rows.

Therefore, it is always important to review whether the combination of components really is better, or whether some components can't be separated from one another.

circular classroom
furniture in rows
big glass doors
sky blue walls

Components can't be linked together

Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Think of a common space in your community. What is it used for? Choose another concept and generate ideas which combine them. For example, you may create a group for learning a foreign language while cooking or gardening.
- Take an object you like and one you dislike. Identify their components and combine them together to create a new invention.
- With a group of peers, choose something you would all like to improve. Individually, each write down one idea on a piece of scrap paper starting with "I wish this could...". Come together as a group and work together to combine elements of all your ideas.

? Reflection questions

1. How can we combine the components of ideas to create new ones?

2. What are the advantages and risks of doing this?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ○ 1 – Not at all confident
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 6

I use creativity in the context of work.

To achieve Step 6, you will understand what creativity is and see how you can use it in the context of doing your work.

In earlier steps, the focus was first on imagination and how to share those imaginings, and then on how to generate ideas against a brief, to improve something or by combining different concepts. This step shifts into thinking about creativity more broadly and its relevance across various aspects of your work.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

*   What is creativity, and why it is valuable
*   How creativity can be used across work

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

○   Never

○   Rarely

○   Sometimes

○   Often

○   Always

What you need to know

Different aspects of creativity

Creativity is made up of three different aspects:

- *Using imagination* – this is all about thinking of something that does not exist, and to be able to capture and share it in some way. This was explored in Step 0, Step 1 and Step 2.

- *Generating new ideas* – this is about being able to harness imagination to create something new, or to improve it.

- *Turning those ideas into something* – this final step is about enacting those ideas and turning them into something – whether an action or a product.

Using imagination · Generating new ideas · Turning ideas into something

The value of creativity

Importantly, creativity is not just about art or performance. We can find it in all different areas of work – anything from engineering to medicine.

Creativity is important because we need it every time that we want to do something new, or to make something better, or to imagine something that someone is telling you that you cannot directly see for yourself.

Teaching · Cooking · Art · Engineering

Quick question

What careers or jobs can you think of that require the skill of Creativity? Explain your answers.

What you need to know

Using creativity in your work

We all need creativity in different parts of our work. For example, when we are:

- Trying to develop new ideas to solve a problem.
- Trying to combine different ideas to create new things.
- Responding to a brief that we have been given.
- Imagining an experience that we have not yet had.

Without the skills of creativity, we would not be able to plan ahead for what might happen in the future because we have no way of knowing beyond what we learn and then imagine.
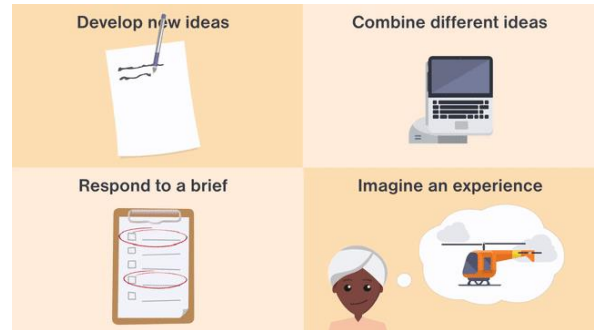
Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Identify success criteria for a task you have been set. Generate ideas for how you could improve.
- When learning something new, try to imagine and visualise what is being described. You may want to sketch something to support your understanding. How is this useful in your work?
- Before testing something new, imagine what might happen next.
- Before you start making something, consider your success criteria and, where relevant, sketch a plan. Can you combine elements from another idea or design to improve your design further?

? Reflection questions

1. Why is creativity important?

2. How is creativity useful in doing your work?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○   1 – Not at all confident

○   2

○   3

○   4

○   5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 7

I use creativity in the context of my wider life.

To achieve Step 7, you should be aware and reflect on how you use creativity in the context of your wider life.

In the previous step, you showed that you were aware of how you use creativity to complete your work. This step builds on this by expanding thinking about creativity into wider life as well.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How creativity is used in wider life
- The benefits of using creativity in wider life

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ○ Never
- ○ Rarely
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Often
- ○ Always

What you need to know

Different aspects of creativity

Creativity has three parts to it, as we saw in Step 6:

- *Using imagination* – this is all about thinking of something that does not exist, and to be able to capture and share it in some way. This is what we explored in Step 0, Step 1 and Step 2.

- *Generating new ideas* – this is about being able to harness imagination to create something new, or to improve it.

- *Turning those ideas into something* – this final step is about enacting those ideas and turning them into something – whether an action or a product.

Using imagination | Generating new ideas | Turning ideas into something
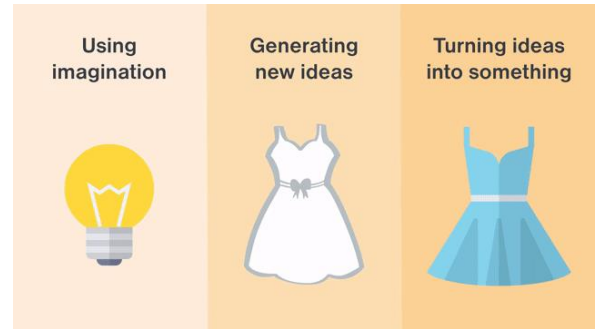
How creativity is relevant in wider life

Creativity has uses in lots of different areas of life. For example:

- When you plan on going somewhere, you imagine what it would be like to go there, and whether you would enjoy it or not.

- When you think about something you want to make, you imagine what it will look like when it is finished, and steps you will take to get there.

- When you change a routine that you have at home, you are generating new ideas and working towards making it better.

- You might also have hobbies or other interests which draw on creativity – things like drama, art, music, crafts or even gardening.

Imagine where you will go | Imagine what you will make
Ideas for improvement | Hobbies and interests

Quick question

Consider the past week or month. Note down any times you have used Creativity in your wider life.

✓☰ What you need to know

The benefits of using creativity

It is helpful to know when we are being creative so that we can make links between different areas of our work and lives.

We often treat our work and our wider lives as two completely different parts of our lives, without any overlap. However, when it comes to creativity, this is a great waste – often, inspiration can cut across both those areas if we spot it.

Using ideas in different areas of life

It is important to remember that good ideas often come from unexpected places. By recognising when we are creative, we can take ideas from one area of our lives and use them in other areas as well.
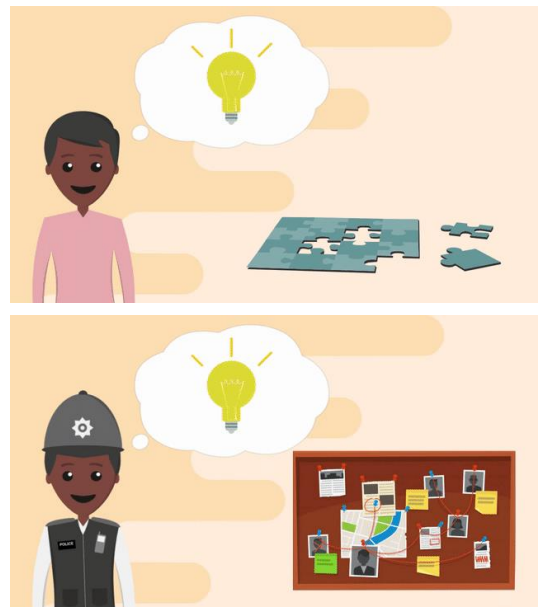
👥 Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Identify success criteria for a task you have been set or for one of your hobbies. Generate ideas for how you could improve.
- Without buying any new ingredients, create a new meal. Where possible, try to combine new flavours together.
- When you next watch a film or series or read a book, try to create an alternate ending or predict what might happen next.
- Choose a messy cupboard or area at home. What would it look like if it were tidier? Generate ideas to organise this space more effectively.

⑦ Reflection questions

1. How can creativity be used in different areas of life?

2. Why is it helpful to see when you are being creative?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○   1 – Not at all confident

○   2

○   3

○   4

○   5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 8

I develop ideas by using mind mapping.

To achieve Step 8, you will show that you can use mind mapping as a way of further developing your ideas.

In earlier steps, you explored what it means to use imagination in different situations and how to generate ideas. You have also explored how creativity can be useful in the context of both work and your wider life. These next steps are about using different techniques to develop and refine more sophisticated ideas – starting with mind mapping.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to create a mind map
- How mind maps can be useful
- Other visual creative tools

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ○ Never
- ○ Rarely
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Often
- ○ Always
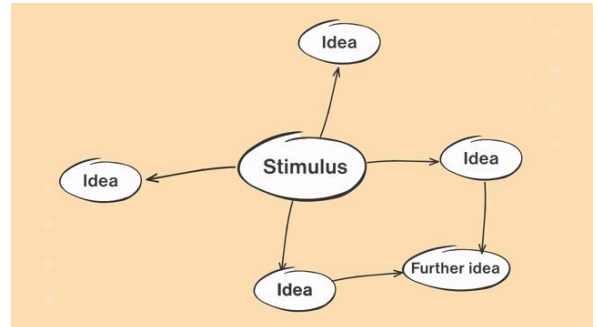
How to create a mind map

As we develop our creativity, we want to be able to not only generate lots of ideas but to start to link them and expand our thinking. *Creative tools* are methods that support creativity. That is, they support you to use your imagination, generate something new, and work towards an outcome.

A *mind map* is a simple creative tool to explore a particular idea:

- It starts with a single theme or question in the middle of the page, called the stimulus
- Initial ideas then fan out from that stimulus
- Lines are drawn between the ideas and the stimulus to show they are linked
- There might also be further ideas or connections that come from those ideas, and links between them can also be linked with arrows

How mind maps can be helpful

Mind maps can be helpful for a few different reasons:

- *Speedy*: They are quick to create and can be made using a pen and paper, or using mind mapping software to organise thoughts.

- *Adaptable*: Unlike writing in sentences, they allow for more flexible thinking, because ideas can be arranged and linked in different ways, and it is easy to add more thoughts later.

- *Sharable*: Because mind maps are widely used, they can be easily communicated, and it is possible to use a mind map as a visual to support an explanation to someone else (See Speaking Step 8 for how visual aids can help communication)

- *Support working together*: Since mind maps are not linear, they are a great collaborative tool as several people working together can all write their ideas onto a single mind map. This can be a great way of getting a lot of different ideas quickly.
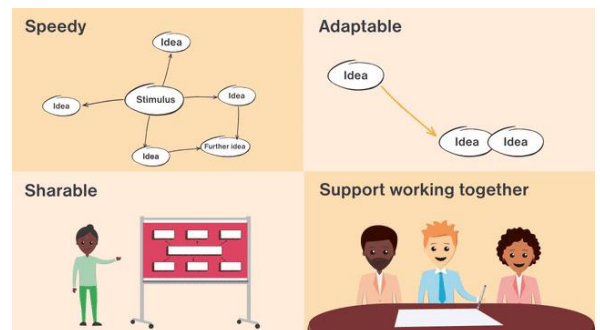
✅ What you need to know

Other Visual Creative Tools

While mind maps are useful tools, they have their limitations because they only focus on one stimulus or idea and work out from there.

An alternative is *concept maps* which take different ideas and then look at connections between them. They might include labels on their linking lines to explain what the connection is between those ideas.

At other times it will be useful to think about *flow charts*, for how ideas link together, or *circular diagrams* if there is a cycle. Again, these help to add clarity about what the connection is between different ideas (these are explored more in Problem Solving Step 8).

Finally, while mind maps are helpful for *identifying and organising ideas*, they are only a starting point – eventually, we are likely to want to create other things to help explore those ideas further, like diagrams, charts or fuller explanations.
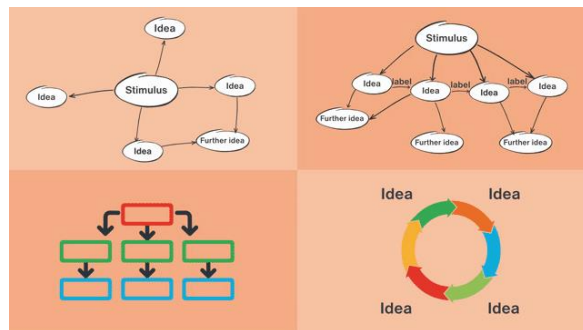
👥 Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Take a question you have been set, or a topic you'd like to explore ('How can we combat climate change?'), and create a mind map of your ideas. Use arrows to link related ideas or themes. You may want to use colours to separate the different strands or themes in response to your central question.

- Take a list of notes or piece of writing you are working on and group the ideas into a mind map. Can you see any new connections and links? Does this prompt you to reorganise your thinking?

- When working in a pair or group, suggest using a mind map to record ideas. Do your peers make connections you hadn't previously considered? Take turns being the note-taker and evaluate how your thinking is affected by each role.

? Reflection questions

1. What is a creative tool?

2. What is a mind map? How are they helpful?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○   1 – Not at all confident

○   2

○   3

○   4

○   5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 9

I develop ideas by asking myself questions.

To achieve Step 9, you will demonstrate that you can develop ideas by asking yourself questions.

In the previous step, the focus was on developing ideas through mind mapping. This step continues to think about how to develop ideas, this time through the use of effective questioning.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- The role of questioning in developing ideas
- What sort of questions to ask

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ○ Never
- ○ Rarely
- ○ Sometimes
- ○ Often
- ○ Always

The role of questioning

No idea is ever created fully formed and ready to go. All ideas evolve and are developed, refined and improved. This process of improvement is often called re-drafting.

Even the greatest masterpieces weren't created in one go – they were planned, refined and improved. For instance, many of the paintings that we think of as masterpieces have signs of earlier versions underneath the paint we see today. Similarly, many sculptures are preceded by smaller experimental models.

Almost all engineering designs are changed and substantially improved before they make it to being built. Famously, after his idea of a lightbulb, it took Thomas Edison hundreds of revisions and attempts to make the idea come to reality.

One of the best ways of helping ourselves to go through the process of improving our ideas is through asking good questions. These questions help us to pre-empt the response that others will have to our ideas and will help us to consider whether there are other ways of reaching our goals too.

A big difference between those who have mastered creativity and those who are at an earlier stage is the willingness to ask challenging questions and be open to changing the idea to make it better.

Ideas evolve and develop

Ideas evolve and develop

Ideas are refined and improved

Ideas are refined and improved

Closed and open questions

There are two broad types of questions, as you might be familiar with from Listening (See Listening Step 7):

- *Closed questions* are those which can be answered with a 'yes' or 'no' response. For example, 'Is that...' or 'Did...' They are useful for confirming or denying facts.

- *Open questions* are those that cannot be answered with a 'yes' or 'no' response. For example, they tend to start with words like 'who', what', 'why', 'when' and 'how'. Sometimes these questions can still be answered with short factual answers, but they have the potential to be much broader.

Closed questions   Open questions

✅ What you need to know

When to ask different types of questions

There is a place for closed questions when questioning your ideas, but mostly around whether you have achieved particular *success criteria*. If your ideas don't achieve the success criteria, then these sorts of questions will help you to identify that.

However, open questions are much more useful – for example, if you haven't hit one of the success criteria, the obvious question is 'how could this be adapted to meet the success criteria?' Other open questions that you might find useful include:

- How does this idea fit in with the brief?

- What could make this idea better?

- What would make this shorter / easier to use / more engaging / simpler to understand / more enjoyable?

- How will I know if this is an idea that will work in practice?

- How will other people react to this idea?

- What makes me think that this is the best idea I can come up with?
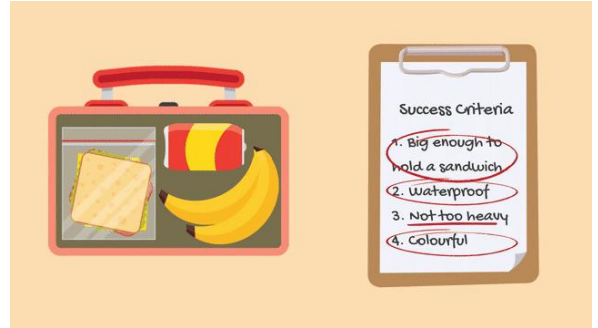
👥 Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Before you finish working on something, take a moment to ask yourself 'What could make this idea better?' or 'What would make this shorter / easier to use / more engaging / simpler to understand / more enjoyable?' Use these questions to further develop and refine your work.

- Ask to swap your work with someone else; as you review each other's work, make a list of 5 questions to help them develop their idea further.

- When making plans for your free time, ask yourself what you enjoy most and if there is something new you'd like to try. What new plans can you make?

⑦ Reflection questions

1. Why is questioning a vital part of developing ideas?

2. What sort of questions are likely to help to improve your ideas?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○   1 – Not at all confident

○   2

○   3

○   4

○   5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Step 10

I develop ideas by considering different perspectives.

To achieve Step 10, you will show that you can actively seek out and consider different perspectives.

In recent steps, the focus has been on how to develop ideas – going beyond just creating them to exploring them further through mind mapping and other tools, and then interrogating them through questioning. This next step introduces the importance of looking at ideas from different perspectives to improve them further.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- What different perspectives are, and how to seek them out
- How to make sense of different perspectives and use them to improve ideas

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

**2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?**

○   Never

○   Rarely

○   Sometimes

○   Often

○   Always

What you need to know

What is a perspective?

A *perspective* is a point of view that someone has of something. The term perspective is also used in art and design, referring to how a three-dimensional landscape looks different depending on when one stands relative to it. This is a helpful idea to bear in mind – we might be looking at the same thing, but from our two different viewpoints it ends up looking very different.
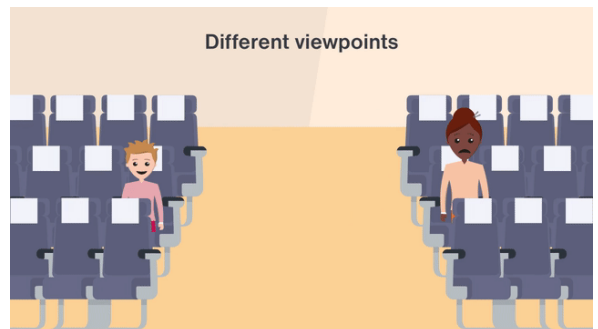

Perspective
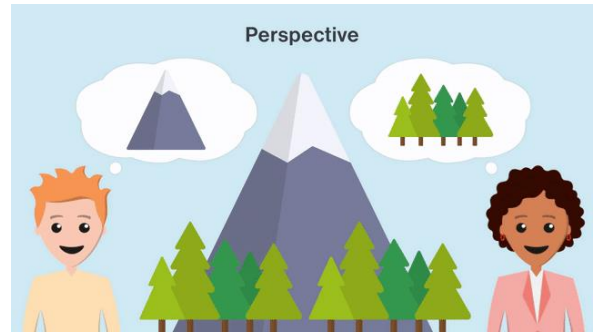
Secondary effects

Creativity and Problem Solving are intertwined, and if you've started to look at the Problem Solving steps, particularly Step 10, you will have seen that there are sometimes effects that come from an idea which are unexpected – these are called secondary effects. These secondary effects might be positive, or they might be negative. In any case, they are certainly worth consideration.

Secondary effects
Idea
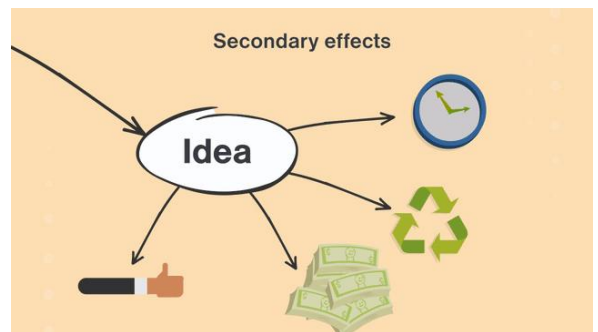
Different viewpoints

As we develop our Creativity skills, we need to be more challenging of our own ideas and considering different viewpoints is an important part of that. For instance, a tall person might have a very different view of lowering ceiling heights of rooms to improve energy efficiency to a shorter person. Someone with longer legs will be less enthusiastic about airlines saving money by putting seats closer together. In these cases, it is important to think about different perspectives and different needs when developing ideas.

Different viewpoints

Quick question

Imagine that the cost of train travel was going to significantly increase. Consider the viewpoint of both an executive working at the train company and a commuter who uses the train daily. Explain how their perspectives might differ.

What you need to know

Capturing different perspectives

When we develop ideas, we do it mainly from our perspective. You can find different perspectives in a variety of ways, by thinking about these questions:

- Who else might end up being a user of your idea?

- In what ways might those individuals vary?

- Do they have different needs or success criteria?

- Are there changes that are needed to make an idea feasible for them?

- What changes might other people suggest to your idea, and why?

These questions should give you a view of who your different *stakeholders* are – stakeholders are those groups of individuals who might share a common perspective on your idea.


Stakeholders
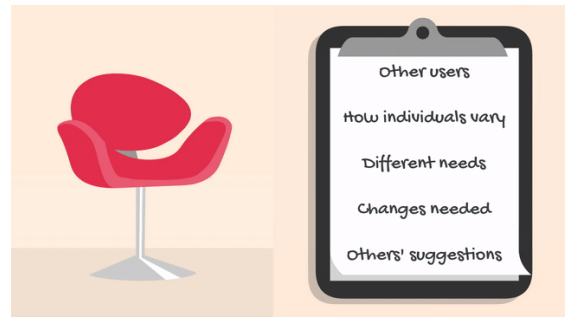
Compromise and differentiation

It is one thing to gather lots of different perspectives, but it is quite another to try to make sense of the results. This brings us on to the critical concept of *trade-offs*: we are unlikely to be able to fully satisfy everyone, all of the time.

To extend those examples from before – for a shorter person, lower ceilings are worthwhile because they lower heating costs. For a taller person, they want higher ceilings so that they don't feel constrained. In this case, *compromise* becomes important – what is the ceiling height that achieves the best trade–off of being high enough so that even tall people can feel comfortable, but as low as possible to be energy efficient.

For someone with shorter legs, they will be pleased that their seat price is lower as a result of the airline being more efficiently filled with paying passengers. The individual with longer legs would probably pay more to be less comfortable. In this case *differentiation* might be possible – that is, having different options for different passengers. This is why some airlines have seats available with more leg space at an extra cost – only those passengers who need the space would be willing to pay the extra, which means that everyone gets closer to what they are looking for.

These are two examples of how to reconcile different perspectives: *compromise* and *differentiation*.


Compromise

Differentiation
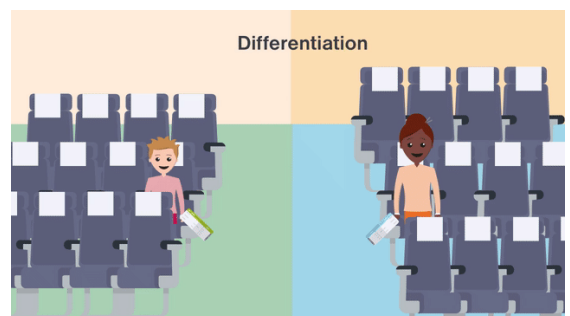
What you need to know

Prioritising different perspectives

There is a third important point though, which is that sometimes you need to *prioritise*. Perhaps ultimately your idea can't be for everyone, and you have to choose what the most important priority is. For example, if your intention was to help a particular marginalised or disadvantaged group, then you might prioritise their perspective over others. To be able to prioritise, you need to have a clear view of what your focus and success criteria are.
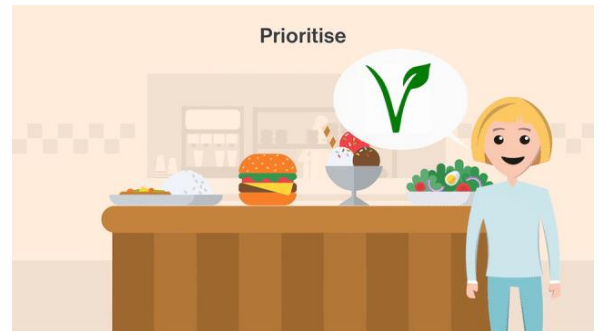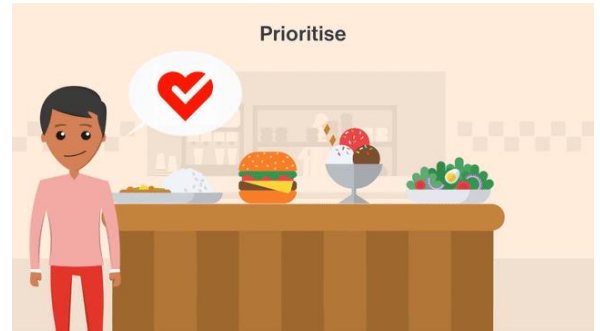
Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Creativity, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- When making something for someone, imagine what is important to them? What would they find interesting or useful?
- When making a group decision, ask yourself if there is a middle ground that would satisfy most perspectives?
- If reading a book or watching television, how would the story be different if it were told from another character's perspective?
- How would you retell a well-known fairy-tale from the perspective of the villain?
- Before you finish a piece of work, ask one or two others to share their perspective with you. Can you use their thoughts to improve your ideas?

⑦ Reflection questions

1. What do we mean by perspectives?

2. Why might there be very different perspectives on the same idea?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

○   1 – Not at all confident

○   2

○   3

○   4

○   5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by: