

BUILDING FEARLESS CURIOSITY

The title 'BUILDING FEARLESS CURIOSITY' is written in a bold, black, hand-drawn font. The word 'BUILDING' is on the top line, 'FEARLESS' is on the middle line, and 'CURIOSITY' is on the bottom line. A yellow lightbulb with a black base is positioned between the 'I' and 'S' of 'CURIOSITY'. The lightbulb has a black squiggle inside representing a filament. Various colorful decorative elements are scattered around the text: an orange star above the 'I' in 'BUILDING', a cyan star above the 'I' in 'FEARLESS', a purple star above the 'I' in 'CURIOSITY', a pink squiggle on the left side of 'BUILDING', a blue squiggle on the left side of 'CURIOSITY', and several small yellow and orange squiggles around the lightbulb. There are also some black brushstrokes and lines around the text.

THINK, CREATE, AND CONNECT FOR DEEPER THINKING



LESSON PLANS FOR THE
DEEPER THINKING CARD DECK



ISBN:

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Written by Katie Trowbridge and Jason Silva

Design by Sally Barlow

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WHY WE CREATED PLAYFUL THINKING CARD DECKS

In a constantly evolving world, equipping our children with the ability to think creatively and critically is more crucial than ever. As educators and parents, we hold the incredible responsibility of shaping young minds, and what better way to do so than by fostering these essential skills?

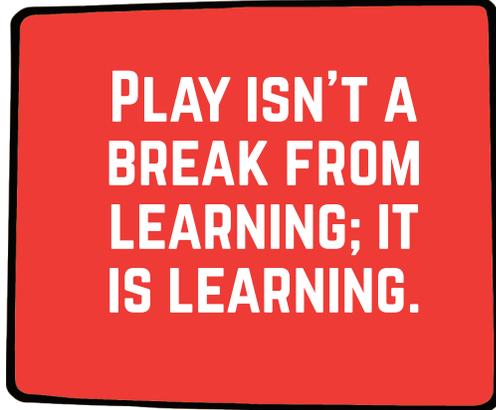
One thing is abundantly clear when I reflect on my time in the classroom: students (at any age) thrive when they're allowed to play. It's easy to overlook play, especially with the pressure to meet standards and prepare for evaluations. But when we immerse ourselves into the research, it's undeniable—play is at the heart of creativity, curiosity, and ideation. Isn't that what we ultimately want for our children?

Play isn't just a break from learning; it is learning. Research underscores that playful experiences are among the most effective ways for children to develop critical thinking and creativity. A study by Whitebread et al. found that play fosters curiosity, problem-solving, and deeper cognitive engagement, allowing students to absorb and apply knowledge more effectively (2017). Similarly, research by Heljakka highlights that play-based learning enhances resilience and innovation, preparing students to face real-world challenges confidently (2023). By turning abstract concepts into tangible experiences, play transforms traditional education into a dynamic, imaginative process. Why should learning feel rigid when it can be as invigorating and engaging as play?

This instructional guide accomplishes just that—inspiring and empowering others to incorporate these skills into everyday learning experiences, thus ensuring our children succeed academically and thrive mentally (Guilford, 1967; Torrance, 1979).

Curiosity is the starting point for deeper learning, and when we nurture it, students ask the right kinds of questions—the ones that lead to critical and creative thinking (Whitebread et al., 2017). One of my favorite moments came when we were reading *The Odyssey*. I used the cards to get students thinking about the

themes of heroism and challenge. I gave each group a card with a challenge that mirrored something Odysseus faced: "Imagine you are trapped on a deserted island—how do you escape?" or "You've been cursed by a god; how do you break the curse?" The moans and groans that would erupt when I mention Homer stopped, and students asked for more hypotheticals in its place. They connected Odysseus' struggles to their own lives and the world around them, finding parallels between their own stories and ancient myths.



**PLAY ISN'T A
BREAK FROM
LEARNING; IT
IS LEARNING.**



Learning these skills should be fun and playful, so set a goal to create a way for you to incorporate them practically and meaningfully. As you read this guide, consider all the ways you might use the different decks. The possibilities are endless.

Keep them handy. They are great in the classroom, playroom, car, or even your briefcase. Whenever you have downtime with your kiddos, pull out these cards, start being curious, and practice creative and critical thinking.

WHY PRACTICE?

Like any other muscle, our minds require practice and use to be as efficient and effective as possible. To generate ideas, we must test and use our imagination to the fullest! For example:

- What would a treehouse built by and for stuffed animals look like?
- Write a story centered around a hummingbird— how exciting can you make the story?
- How could economic growth come with any repercussions or consequences?

By cultivating deeper thinking skills in our children now, we prepare them to solve any problem that may arise, even the ones we can't imagine in the future. Fostering creativity, curiosity, and critical thinking is essential to success in the classroom or at home (Puccio, 2012).

WHY CURIOSITY?

Curiosity is the spark that ignites all thinking. As parents and educators, we have the privilege of nurturing that spark, watching it grow into something extraordinary. From the moment they open their eyes, children are eager to explore the world. In those early years, curiosity is all about wonder and discovery. They touch, taste, and observe everything they can, filling their days with endless questions and delightful experiments. This natural drive to explore is the foundation for a lifelong love of learning (Whitebread et al., 2017).

Think about the little ones who constantly ask "Why?" You may hear questions like: why is the sky blue; why do birds fly; why is a firefly called a firefly if it's not actually on fire? These moments of wonder are pure magic, a reminder of how deeply kids want to understand the world.

As children grow into middle childhood, their curiosity shifts. Between the ages of 6 and 11, they start asking deeper, more thoughtful questions. Their "Why?" transforms into "What if?" This is the perfect time to nurture their curiosity and dive into the topics that captivate them. By encouraging their explorations and providing opportunities to connect ideas, we can help them develop critical thinking and a richer understanding of the world. Let's go back to the child fascinated by fireflies—now they're not just wondering why they're called fireflies; they're asking, "What makes them light up? What do they eat? Where do they live?" (Heljakka, 2023).

When kids reach adolescence, curiosity grows into a powerful tool for creativity and critical



thinking. Teens begin to explore complex ideas and use curiosity to solve real-world problems, discover who they are, and find their place in the world. Their questions evolve: “What are all the ways we could solve this?” “How might we do this differently?” “What if we tried something completely new?” At this stage, a firefly might represent more than a glowing insect—it could inspire questions about how to harness bioluminescence to create sustainable energy or make a social impact (Kudryavtsev, 2017).

When we nurture curiosity at every stage, we help children develop a love for learning that reaches far beyond the classroom. Curiosity keeps them engaged, encourages deeper questions, and motivates them to explore and experiment, setting them up for a life of endless possibilities (Whitebread et al., 2017).

WHY CREATIVE THINKING?

From curiosity flows creative thinking, the ability to see the world as it is and as it could be. It lets kids connect unrelated ideas, think beyond the obvious, and develop fresh, imaginative solutions. Creative thinking empowers kids to adapt to challenges, express their unique perspectives, and develop the skills they need to navigate an ever-changing world (Hay, 2024).

Young children are natural creators. They tell wild, magical stories, draw pictures full of color and emotion, and dive headfirst into make-believe play. For them, anything is possible, and that’s the magic of early creativity. By giving them the tools to explore—whether it’s crayons, costumes, or building blocks—we’re encouraging their innate creative potential. This kind of open-ended play lays the foundation for the more complex thinking they’ll need as they grow (Parker et al., 2022).

As kids move into middle childhood (ages 6-11), their creative thinking becomes more structured. They start experimenting with turning their ideas into something real, whether it’s a model they’ve built, a story they’ve written, or a new game they’ve invented. This is when creativity becomes a process of trial and error, and every experiment—successful or not—teaches them something valuable. By encouraging collaboration and providing opportunities for hands-on projects, we help kids develop flexible thinking and build confidence in their ability to create and solve problems (Hay, 2024).

**FROM CURIOSITY
FLOWS CREATIVE
THINKING—THE
ABILITY TO SEE THE
WORLD AS IT IS AND
AS IT COULD BE.**

Creativity takes on even greater depth and meaning by the time they reach adolescence. Teens use their creative thinking to explore their passions, tackle abstract challenges, and make their mark on the world. Whether they express themselves through art, writing, music, or technology, their creativity becomes a powerful tool for innovation and change. This is when we can guide them toward using their talents to address real-world problems—



helping them see their creative ideas as a way to make an impact. Creativity at this stage is about resilience, innovation, and finding their voice in the world (Hay, 2024).

Creativity doesn't just happen. By fostering creativity at every stage of a child's development, we empower them to dream big and think boldly. Creative thinking builds confidence, inspires experimentation, and teaches kids to embrace the unknown. It helps them grow into adaptable, resourceful problem-solvers ready to tackle whatever challenges life throws their way (Torrance, 1979). Curiosity and creativity are an unstoppable duo. Together, they unlock limitless possibilities for kids to learn, grow, and make a meaningful difference in the world.

CREATIVITY DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN—IT'S NURTURED. BY FOSTERING IT, WE EMPOWER KIDS TO DREAM BIG, THINK BOLDLY, AND TACKLE LIFE'S CHALLENGES.

WHY CRITICAL THINKING?

Critical thinking is the perfect partner for creative thinking. Where creativity sparks new ideas, critical thinking ensures those ideas are practical, logical, and grounded in reality. It's the skill of analyzing information, questioning assumptions, recognizing biases, and making thoughtful decisions. As educators and parents, we have the privilege of guiding children through this fascinating journey of growth and discovery. Together, creativity and critical thinking give children the tools to tackle challenges and thrive in an ever-changing world (Guilford, 1967).

In the early years, critical thinking starts with the simplest of problem-solving and decision-making tasks. Young children begin to sort, classify, and make basic choices—often through play and everyday experiences. This stage is filled with discovery, where kids explore cause and effect, ask “why” a hundred times a day, and test their understanding of the world around them.

For example, stacking blocks teaches more than balance—it shows the importance of stability, sequencing, and experimentation. Providing opportunities for hands-on learning, like sorting objects or solving simple puzzles, helps lay the groundwork for critical thinking. When we allow children to explore and find answers through play, we're nurturing their ability to think logically and systematically (Whitebread et al., 2017).

As children grow into middle childhood (ages 6 to 11), their critical thinking skills become sharper and more analytical. They begin to evaluate information, compare perspectives, and make informed decisions. This stage is marked by an increased ability to reason, see patterns, and consider multiple viewpoints.

At this age, engaging children in thoughtful discussions, problem-solving activities, and open-ended questions is vital. For instance, presenting a real-world scenario like, “How

would you solve this problem?” or “What could we do differently?” encourages them to analyze and think deeply.

It’s also important to embrace productive struggle during this stage. As much as we may want to step in and help, letting kids wrestle with challenges teaches resilience and fosters growth. Of course, there are moments when support is needed, and finding the balance between guiding and stepping back is one of the most valuable lessons we can offer (Puccio, 2012; Heljakka, 2023).

WHY CRITICAL THINKING MATTERS

Critical thinking is the skill that helps children navigate a world overflowing with information. It teaches them how to evaluate facts, recognize biases, and make thoughtful decisions. Whether in academics, relationships, or personal challenges, critical thinking equips kids with the tools to approach problems logically and rationally.

By nurturing this ability, we’re preparing children to succeed not just in school but in life. We’re helping them become thoughtful, reasoned decision-makers who can adapt to challenges with confidence and clarity (Hay, 2024).

As educators and parents, fostering critical thinking isn’t just about teaching skills—it’s about encouraging a mindset of curiosity, resilience, and growth. Together with creative thinking, it forms the foundation for a lifetime of learning and problem-solving. Let’s empower our kids to think boldly, deeply, and critically, so they’re ready to take on the world!



THE DECKS

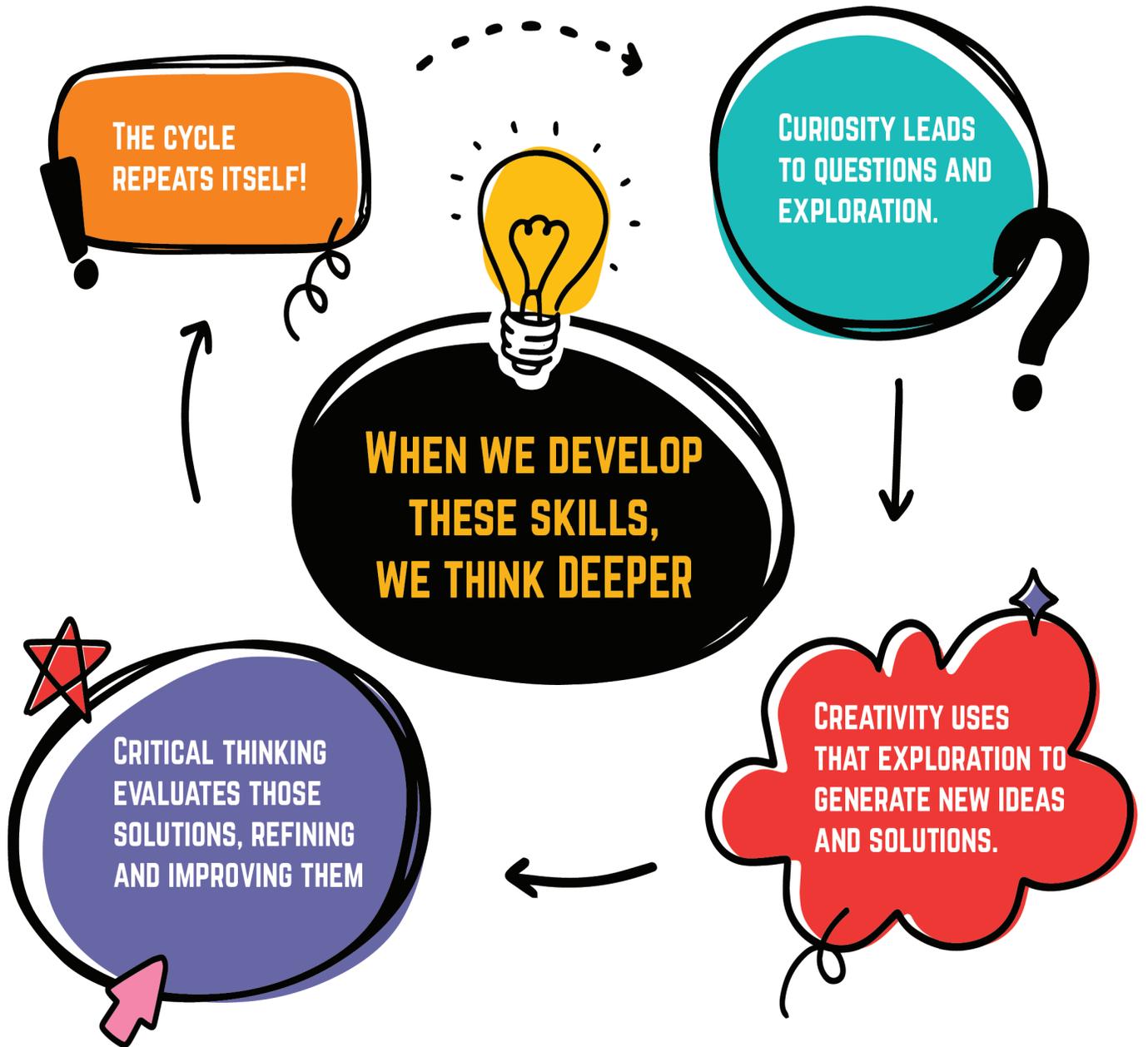
CURIOUS CREATOR PACK (Grades K-5)

FEARLESS CURIOSITY PACK (Grades 6-12)

CREATIVE THINKING PACK (Grades 6-12)

CRITICAL QUESTIONING PACK (Grades 9-12)







HOW DOES PLAY HELP US THINK?

Play is a powerful tool for building strong, flexible thinkers. When we play, our brains light up with curiosity, imagination, and problem-solving energy. Playfulness keeps the brain engaged and active, which not only makes learning more fun but also more effective. It creates a low-pressure environment where ideas can flow freely, mistakes are embraced as part of the process, and learning feels like an adventure rather than a task.

What's more, play has the magical ability to bring people together. Whether it's a family game night, a quick activity in the classroom, or a fun break with coworkers, games foster connection, communication, and collaboration. Through play, we develop critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork—all while having a great time.

What's amazing about play is how versatile it is. Whether you're at home, in the classroom, or at work, you can tailor games to the environment and the people around you. Play builds connection, strengthens minds, and, most importantly, it makes learning fun!

WAYS TO USE THE CARD DECK.

Grab a card when:

- You're waiting for students who are trickling in after the bell.
- You're waiting for the class to line up.
- The bell has rung, and the class is settling into focus mode.
- Class is wrapping up, but you've still got a few minutes before the bell rings.
- You're relaxing in the teacher's lounge and want to spark some fun with coworkers.
- You're on hold with customer service and need something to drown out that elevator music.
- You're waiting for the class pet rock to pick rock, paper, or scissors, finally.
- You're just looking for a fun and engaging way to connect with others—or even yourself!

As you use these card decks and explore the instructional guide, remember that you are teaching students to question everything, dream big, and think critically about the world around them.

THESE ARE THE SKILLS THAT WILL HELP THEM NAVIGATE THE CHALLENGES OF TOMORROW WITH CURIOSITY AND CREATIVITY!



WHAT'S IN YOUR CREATIVE TOOLKIT:

Curious Creator Pack (Grades K-2)

Based on the Curious Creators Book Series

Fuel the natural curiosity of your youngest learners with the Curious Creator Pack. Designed specifically for younger students, this pack opens the door to imaginative exploration through simple yet powerful questions. These prompts are perfect for sparking playful storytelling, creative problem-solving, and getting young minds to think about the world in new ways. Whether you're exploring what a turtle's adventures might look like or pondering if dinosaurs had playdates, this pack makes learning fun and personal!

Give your students room to let their curiosity and creative and critical thinking soar while making meaningful connections to the everyday world around them with the Curious Creators!

HOW DO YOU USE YOUR TOOLS?

These card packs are designed to make creativity and critical thinking accessible. Each card features two sides: one with an image that sparks creative ideation and the other with a thought-provoking question to drive deeper exploration. The image and question are connected, but they can also be used independently, allowing for flexibility in how you introduce them in the classroom.



WARNING!

Caution: Using this deck of cards may significantly alter how you approach thinking, generate ideas, and solve problems. You might experience a newfound joy as you unlock your creative potential. Side effects include sudden flashes of creative insight, a newfound passion for exploring alternative solutions, and the ability to make unexpected connections, which might amaze others. Literal laughing out loud has occurred in some participants.

We encourage you to experiment and adapt the suggested activities to fit your classroom needs. The creators of this deck are not responsible for the creative transformations that may occur with continued use.



USE WITH (ABANDONED) CAUTION!



CONTENT CURATOR

Content curation is the practice of gathering and organizing information meaningfully with the goal of igniting curiosity in students. Using The CREATE Method will assist educators in determining the most valuable and meaningful content to use in a unit.



RISK FACILITATOR

Many students and teachers hesitate to express new or contrasting ideas out of fear of failure and judgment. With The CREATE Method, we aim to change that mindset. This segment encourages you to embrace ambiguity and be open-minded. We're here to show you the significance of deferring judgment.



EXPERIENCE NAVIGATOR

Brace yourselves for captivating, inquiry-based, problem-solving units! With The CREATE Method, you can personalize your classroom experience by engaging and challenging your students uniquely.



ATTITUDE SHIFTER

Adopting a curious and creative mindset requires shifting how we perceive the learning process, ourselves, and others. The CREATE Method explores the impact a creative classroom environment has on building engagement.



TEAM TRANSFORMER

Getting accustomed to a creative environment allows team members to become more robust, efficient, and confident communicators and collaborators. The CREATE Method provides invaluable tools and strategies to transform communication skills and enhance team effectiveness.



EVALUATION DESIGNER

Assessing skills like creativity and curiosity can be challenging. This section of The CREATE Method will teach you how to provide opportunities for students to take ownership of their learning and design meaningful assessments.

LESSON
PLANS

The image features the words "LESSON PLANS" in a bold, black, hand-drawn font. The letter "O" in "LESSON" is replaced by a yellow lightbulb with a black outline and a filament. The lightbulb has three yellow rays emanating from its top. To the left of the word "LESSON", there is a red five-pointed star and an orange wavy line. To the right of the word "PLANS", there is a blue arrow pointing downwards. Below the word "PLANS", there is a horizontal row of six small colored dots: pink, orange, purple, red, teal, and yellow.



LESSON TITLE	TARGET SKILL	SUGGESTED AGE	COMMON CORE STANDARD
Web of Ideas	Creativity, Critical Thinking	Grades 4 - 8	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations.
Telling Tales	Storytelling, Collaboration	All Ages	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences using effective technique.
Force Fit	Creative Thinking, Critical Thinking	Grades 6-12	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4: Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
Cover Story	Storytelling, Imagination	Grades 3-12	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7: Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats.
Picture Perfect Storytelling	Creativity, Narrative Development	Grades 3 - 8	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.
Card Charades	Creativity, Communication	All Ages	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4: Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly and concisely.
Match Set Game	Collaboration, Quick Thinking	Grades 3-12	CCSS.MATH.PRACTICE.MP1: Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.
Visual Vibes	Creativity, Collaboration	All Ages	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1: Engage effectively in collaborative discussions
Story Spines	Narrative Development,	All Ages	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.
Presentation Demonstration	Public Speaking, Improvisation	Grades 6 -12	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4: Present information, findings, and evidence in a clear and concise manner.
Imaginary Inventions	Innovation, Problem-Solving	Grades 4 - 8	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to convey complex ideas clearly.
Debate Builder	Argument Development, Critical Thinking	Grades 6 - 12	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence.
Perspective Shifter	Empathy, Creative Problem-Solving	Grades 6 -12	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.7: Conduct research to answer a question, demonstrating understanding of multiple perspectives.
Emotional Storytelling	Emotional Awareness, Narrative Skills	All Ages	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.3: Write narratives that express an event, real or imagined, using effective techniques.
Design Your Own Card	Creativity, Self-Expression	Grades 3 - 12	CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.6: Use technology to produce and publish writing and collaborate with others.



WEB OF IDEAS

GEARED TOWARDS: Grades 4-8

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Dry-erase markers or Yarn

TIME NEEDED: 30 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Create new webs of ideas using images from one of the card packs. Watch your students connect different images with ideas of varying complexity centered around a topic of your choice. Encourage creative thinking and imagination in your classroom by constructing a **WEB OF IDEAS!**

WHY IT WORKS: This activity fosters creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration—all while having fun exploring connections!

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE

1. Distribute Cards

- Give each student three cards to start.
- For a more challenging activity, distribute more cards and see how many connections students can make within a set time frame.

2. Examine the Images

- Ask students to carefully study their cards and think about how the images might be related or connected.

3. Visualize Connections

- If students spot a connection between two or more cards, have them use yarn or dry-erase markers to visually represent those connections.
- If using yarn, provide tape so students can secure their connections, even if the cards shift. (Bonus: It'll look like a creative web!)

4. Explore Variations

- Encourage students to explore diverse visual representations by using symbols like arrows, lines, and shapes to illustrate various types of relationships.
- Challenge them to see how many connections they can make across all their cards.
- Remind students that there are no wrong answers. What's important is how students explain how the cards are connected.

5. Present and Explain

- Once their connections are complete, ask each student to present their cards and connections to the group.
- Have them explain the reasoning behind their choices and describe how the images relate.

5. Encourage Creative Thinking

- Guide students to think outside the box about their connections. Are they thematic, functional, or symbolic? Encourage them to consider different perspectives and stretch their imaginations.

LEVEL TWO

1. Form Groups

- Divide the class into small groups of 3-4 students.

2. Build on Level One

- Have each student bring the connections they made in Level One to their group.
- Ask groups to lay their cards face-up on a flat surface like a table, desk, or the floor, and discuss possible connections between all the cards.

3. Expand and Refine Connections

- Challenge students to build on their original Web of Ideas, incorporating new connections while maintaining some of their previous ones.
- Encourage them to brainstorm collaboratively and explore different perspectives.

4. Create the Web of Ideas

- Once they've identified their connections, students should use dry-erase markers to draw lines or symbols on the back of the cards to represent their ideas.
- Remind students to use various visual cues for their connections:
 - Straight lines for direct relationships.

- Wavy lines for complex or nuanced connections.
- Dotted lines for indirect or abstract relationships.

5. Group Presentation

- After completing their web, each group will present their work to the class.
- Groups should explain each connection, discuss how the images are interconnected, and highlight any themes, ideas, or patterns that emerged.

6. Encourage Diverse Thinking

- Guide groups to explore a wide variety of connections, such as those based on:
 - Storylines
 - Visual themes
 - Emotions
 - Symbolic meanings

LEVEL THREE - THE ULTIMATE CHALLENGE

Can your students take it to the next level?

- Invite all the groups to combine their Webs of Ideas into one colossal web.
- Encourage them to connect cards, themes, or concepts between groups, creating a unified network of ideas.
- Once the mega-web is complete, have the class discuss their process, highlighting their connections and the emerging big-picture themes.

This collaborative activity fosters creative and critical thinking while encouraging teamwork and deeper exploration of ideas!



TELLING TALES

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: None

TIME NEEDED: 25 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Students will take on the role of authors and illustrators, using the images on their cards to create a book cover and story synopsis. This engaging activity sparks creativity, encourages storytelling, and helps students develop their imagination through visual and narrative connections.

WHY IT WORKS: Engage your students in a fun and imaginative storytelling activity using a deck of playful thinking cards. Students will use the cards as inspiration to contribute to an evolving narrative, building improvisation, quick thinking, and creativity skills.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: BUILDING THE BASICS

1. Set Up the Game

- Deal six Playful Thinking cards to each player.

2. Start the Story

- The player to the dealer's right begins the story by placing one card face-up in the center and using the image to inspire the first part of the narrative.
- Use culturally inspired story openings to spark creativity:
 - Once upon a time... (Western tradition)
 - A long, long time ago, in a land far away... (Middle Eastern and South Asian tradition)
 - In the beginning, when the world was still young... (Indigenous oral traditions)
 - There was, and there was not... (Persian folktales)
 - Long, long ago, in a certain place... (Japanese tradition)
 - In the distant past, in the time of the dragons... (Chinese folklore)

3. Take Turns Adding to the Story

- Each player continues the story using one card from their hand, building on the narrative.
- If a player cannot add to the story with their cards, they may draw another card from the deck and try again.
- If they draw up to three cards and still cannot contribute, they pass their turn, and the next player continues.

4. Continue Until the Story is Complete

- When a player uses all six cards, deal six more cards to each participant and keep the story going until all the cards are played.
- Celebrate the collaborative effort by reflecting on the twists and turns of the story as a group.

LEVEL TWO: ADDING DEPTH

1. Use Questions for Inspiration

- Players can also use the questions on the back of their cards to add details or twists to the story.
 - Example: "What if this character had a hidden secret?"

2. Call for a "SWITCH"

- Players can call "SWITCH" at any time during another player's turn:
 - If the current card is an image, the player must flip it over and use the question side to add more detail.
 - If the current card is a question, the player flips it to the image side and adds an element based on the picture.

LEVEL THREE: CHALLENGE THE PLAYERS

1. Choose a Theme or Style

- Add complexity by selecting a genre or style for the story before starting.
- Suggested themes or styles include:
 - Fairy Tale
 - Romance
 - Action Adventure
 - Mystery, Thriller, Suspense
 - Newspaper Report
 - Instruction Manual
 - Self-Help Guide
 - Blog Post

1. Adapt Storytelling Rules to the Theme

- Encourage players to tailor their storytelling choices to match the chosen genre or style, which will make the activity even more engaging and imaginative.

FORCE FIT MAKING UNEXPECTED CONNECTIONS

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: None

TIME NEEDED: 30 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Students will take on the role of authors and illustrators, using the images on their cards to create a book cover and story synopsis. This engaging activity sparks creativity, encourages storytelling, and helps students develop their imagination through visual and narrative connections.

WHY IT WORKS: This activity pushes students to think in new and unexpected ways, honing their ability to make logical leaps and connections between seemingly unrelated ideas. It's perfect for encouraging creativity, building confidence in critical thinking, and having fun while developing new perspectives.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: BUILDING THE BASICS

1. Set Up the Game

- Each student selects *one card* from the playful thinking deck.
- The card's image will serve as the inspiration for their analogy.

2. Create an Analogy

- Students must complete one of the following analogy prompts by incorporating the image on their card:
 - Life is like...
 - Our family is like...
 - Our team is like...
 - Our vision is like...
 - Education is like...
 - My friends are like...
 - Weekends are like...
 - Work is like...
 - School is like...
 - Vacation is like...

- Teaching is like...
- Our classroom is like...
- Shopping is like...
- Our problem is like...
- Our solution is like...
- Exercising is like...
- Working together is like...

3. Examples to Inspire Creativity

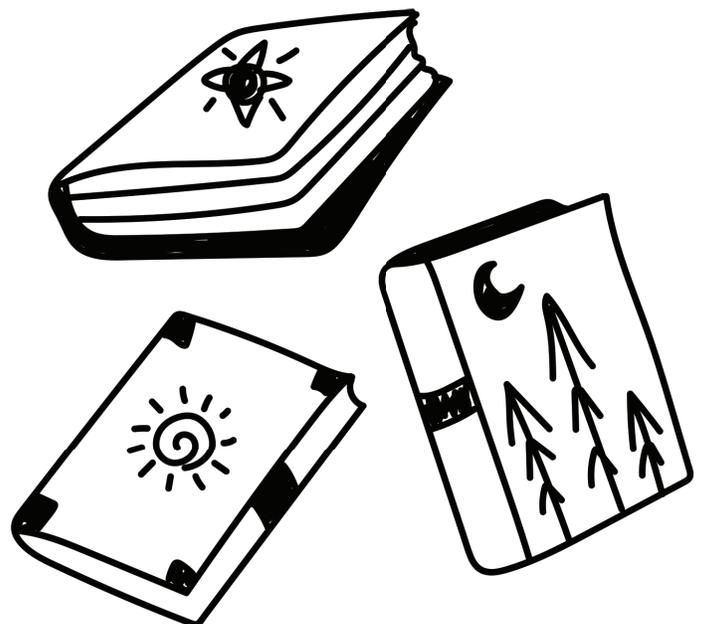
- Encourage students to make unexpected connections! For example:
 - "My friends are like a box of chocolates because some are plain nuts, others are deep and dark, and the rest are just plain sweet!"
 - "Teaching is like a garden—you plant seeds of knowledge, tend to them with care, and watch them grow."

4. Increase the Challenge

- Add an extra twist: Instead of choosing a prompt, have students create their analogy starting directly from the *image* on their card!

5. Share and Discuss

- Once everyone has created their analogy, invite students to share their creations with the group.
- Encourage them to explain their thought process and how they connected their card's image to the analogy.



COVER STORY CRAFTING A WORLD OF IMAGINATION

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Paper, writing utensils

TIME NEEDED: 25-35 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Students will take on the role of authors and illustrators, using the images on their cards to create a book cover and story synopsis. This engaging activity sparks creativity, encourages storytelling, and helps students develop their imagination through visual and narrative connections.

WHY IT WORKS: This activity fosters creativity, storytelling, and collaboration. By working through the levels and exploring new ways to connect images and ideas, students learn to think flexibly and express their imaginations confidently. Whether working individually or as a team, Cover Story encourages students to dream big and bring their ideas to life!

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE

1. Select a Playful Think Deck Card

- Each student picks one card from the Playful Thinking deck. The image on their card becomes the cover illustration for a book they've "written."

2. Describe the Book

- Students take turns describing their book, using the card's image as inspiration. They should include:
 - What kind of book is it? (Genre)
 - What is the story about? (Synopsis)
 - Who are the main characters?
 - What is the plot twist?

3. Encourage Interaction

- Other players can ask for more details by saying, "Tell me more about..." to expand the story.

4. Time Limit

- Each student has one minute to present their cover story.

LEVEL TWO ~ ADD A TITLE TWIST

1. Incorporate the Back of the Card

- Students must incorporate an idea or phrase from the *back of their card* into the book's title.
- For example: If the card's back says "Adventure in the Unknown," the title could be "The Lost Map: An Adventure in the Unknown."

2. Present to the Group

- Students share their updated cover story, now with a unique and intriguing title.

GROUP VERSION: CO-AUTHOR CHALLENGE

1. Pair Up

- Students work in pairs as co-authors.

2. Combine Cards

- Each pair uses two cards—combining the images as inspiration for their book's cover.

3. Collaborate

- Together, they:
 - Create a title using ideas from the backs of both cards.
 - Develop a storyline incorporating both images.
 - Write an opening or closing sentence using prompts from both cards.

4. Present as a Team

- Each pair presents their collaborative cover story to the class, highlighting how they combined their ideas.

PICTURE PERFECT STORYTELLING

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Dry-erase markers, Glitter, Trinkets

TIME NEEDED: 20 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Spark creativity and storytelling skills by transforming a simple deck of cards into a dynamic storytelling tool. Students will explore narrative possibilities by adding creative elements to images, collaborating, and weaving engaging stories.

WHY IT WORKS: This activity combines creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration while encouraging students to view images from new perspectives. Whether adding elements to cards, continuing stories with plot twists, or crafting magazine articles, Picture Perfect Storytelling fosters imagination and helps students think flexibly about storytelling.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: ADD A NEW TWIST

1. Draw and Transform

- Each student selects a card from the Playful Thinking deck.
- Using a dry-erase marker, they add a new element to the existing image (e.g., drawing a spaceship in the background or a crown on a character).

2. Tell the Story

- Students create a short story in which their added element plays a critical role.
- Encourage them to think about the significance of their addition: Why is the spaceship there? What does the crown represent?

3. Share and Discuss

- Students share their transformed cards and stories with the group. shift. (Bonus: It'll look like a creative web!)

LEVEL TWO: COLLABORATIVE PLOT TWISTS

1. Pass the Card

- After adding an element to their card, students pass it to a partner.

2. Continue the Story

- The partner continues the story, using the newly added element as a major plot twist.
- Example: If the original image was a forest and the first student added a glowing orb, the partner might say, "The glowing orb turned out to be a portal to another world!"

3. Feedback and More Twists

- The original student provides feedback on the story and may add another twist to the plot.

4. Share with the Group

- Pairs present their collaborative stories and explain how the added elements transformed the narrative.

LEVEL THREE: FULL NARRATIVE SEQUENCE

1. Create a Storyboard

- Students use multiple cards, each with an added element, to build a complete narrative.

2. Arrange the Cards

- Arrange the cards in a sequence, ensuring each image and added element contributes to the storyline.
- Encourage students to build toward a climactic conclusion.

3. Craft the Story

- Students write or verbally present their story, explaining how each image and element plays a role in the plot.

4. Present the Final Story

- Share the final narrative with the group, showcasing the sequence and how the added elements brought it to life.

ALTERNATIVE GAME: STORY LINE (MAGAZINE EDITION)

1. Set the Scene

- Deal six cards to each player.

2. Create a Magazine

- One player suggests a magazine title (real or fictional) such as:
 - Surviving High School
 - Parents Are People Too
 - The Teacher's Lounge
 - Flying Around the World

3. Submit an Article

- Each player selects a card from their hand that connects to the magazine's theme and creates a brief storyline for an imaginary article.
- Example: For Fishing World, an image of a typewriter could inspire the story, "The fisherman who writes epic fishing tales between casting his line."

4. Rotate Titles

- After all players have submitted one article, the next player suggests a new magazine title, and the game continues until all cards are played.

5. Brainstorm Magazine Titles

- Allow players to brainstorm creative magazine titles before starting the game or randomly select from a pre-made list.



CARD CHARADES

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Dry Erase Markers

TIME NEEDED: 10-20 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Combine the fun of charades with the creativity of drawing! Students will interpret images on their cards and communicate ideas through drawing, guessing, and even acting. This activity develops creativity, communication skills, and the ability to think symbolically—all while having a blast.

WHY IT WORKS: Card Charades encourages students to interpret and communicate ideas creatively, whether through drawing, acting, or storytelling. It's adaptable for all ages, making it a versatile and engaging activity for the classroom, family game night, or any group setting.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: DRAW THE CLUES

1. Pick a Playful Thinking Cards

- Each student selects a card from the deck.

2. Add Visual Clues

- Using a dry-erase marker, students draw on their card to create visual clues related to the word, concept, or story depicted in the image.

3. Guess the Answer

- The rest of the group takes turns guessing what the card represents based on the clues drawn.

LEVEL TWO: TEAM CHALLENGE

1. Work in Pairs

- Students pair up. One student draws on the card to provide clues, while the other guesses within a set time limit (e.g., 1-2 minutes).

2. Score Points

- Each pair earns points for every correct guess. You can tally points individually or as teams for a fun, competitive element.

3. Keep It Moving

- Rotate roles so everyone gets a chance to draw and guess.

LEVEL THREE: ADD THEMES AND DRAMA

1. Set a Theme

- Introduce specific themes or categories for the clues to make the game more challenging. Example themes include:
 - Animals
 - Famous landmarks
 - Careers
 - Fairy tales
 - Sports

2. Add a Theatrical Element

- After guessing, students must work together to create a short skit or performance based on the image and clues.
- They can incorporate the guesses into their skit to build a creative narrative.

3. Dry Erase Alternative

- If your markers are dry, switch it up with classic charades—no speaking, just acting!

4. Use a Word List

- Need more inspiration? Use a random word list from the book's appendix to spark ideas for themes or categories.

MATCH SET GAME (TEAM GAME)

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: None

TIME NEEDED: 30-45 minutes

OBJECTIVE

This fast-paced team game challenges students to find creative connections between images on their cards. By explaining their reasoning, teams practice quick thinking, collaboration, and critical thinking. The goal is to collect the most cards by spotting connections!

WHY IT WORKS: The Match Set Game fosters creative and critical thinking by challenging students to find unique connections between images, encouraging them to think outside the box. Its collaborative format builds teamwork and communication skills, while the fast-paced nature keeps students engaged and sharpens their quick-thinking abilities. By explaining their connections, students practice reasoning and articulating ideas, strengthening both analytical and communication skills. Adaptable for all ages, this activity offers a fun, dynamic way to promote curiosity, collaboration, and deeper learning.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Divide into Teams

- Split students into 2-4 teams.
- If teams are large, have players take turns representing their team in the “arena.”

2. Set Up the Game

- Place all the cards question-side up in a deck at the center of the “arena.”

3. Start the Match

- Flip two cards image-side up in the center.
- Teams race to find and explain an “obvious” connection between the two images.

4. Claim the Cards

- The first team to successfully explain a connection wins the two cards and adds them to their team’s pile.

5. Continue Play

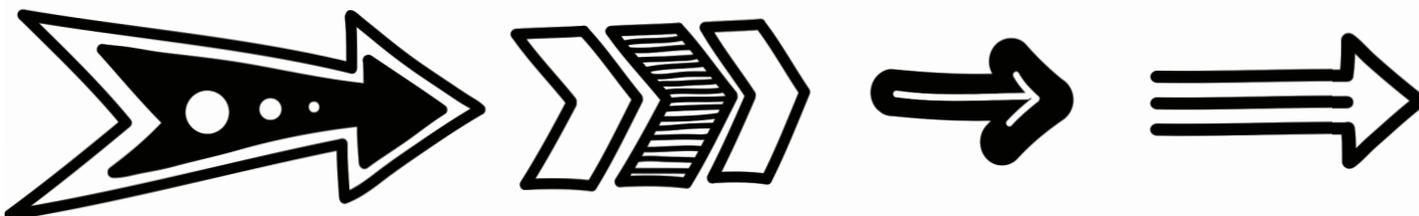
- Repeat until all cards have been played. The team with the most cards at the end wins.

6. Breaking a Tie

- If there's a tie, flip three image cards, and the first team to connect all three wins.

OPTIONAL CHALLENGE:

- Make it harder by asking teams to name three connections between the images.
- Rule: Connections cannot repeat those already used in the game.



VISUAL VIBES

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Dry-erase markers and Paper

TIME NEEDED: 20 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Encourage students to explore their imagination and creativity by interpreting, evolving, and collaborating on visual ideas inspired by the images on their cards. This activity fosters independent thinking, collaboration, and connecting and building on ideas.

WHY IT WORKS: Visual Vibes encourages independent imagination while building collaborative creativity. By interpreting images, expanding on others' ideas, and creating a unified piece, students practice critical thinking, teamwork, and visual expression. The activity is adaptable for all ages, making it a fun and engaging way to promote creativity and connection in the classroom or at home.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: INDIVIDUAL INTERPRETATION

1. Select a Playful Thinking Card

- Each student picks a card and places it in front of them.

2. Draw What You See

- On a separate piece of paper, students use a dry-erase marker to draw what the image inspires in them.
- Example prompts to guide their interpretation:
 - "What does this object represent to you?"
 - "Can this image be part of a bigger story or idea?"
 - "What does this shape or figure remind you of?"

3. Focus on Imagination

- The emphasis is on personal creativity—there are no right or wrong answers. Students are encouraged to think beyond the image and create something uniquely their own.

LEVEL TWO: COLLABORATIVE EXPANSION

1. Swap Cards

- Students exchange their cards with a partner or classmate.

2. Expand the Drawing

- On the same piece of paper, next to or underneath their first drawing, students add to or modify their drawing based on the new card.
- Example prompts:
 - "Does the new image enhance or change the original idea?"
 - "How can you creatively connect the two interpretations?"
 - "What new story can emerge from these combined elements?"

3. Collaborative Creativity

- Students must consider their own ideas and the new card's influence, blending interpretations in creative ways.

LEVEL THREE: GROUP COLLABORATION

1. Combine Drawings

- In small groups, students combine their individual drawings to create a large mural or collaborative collage.

2. Discuss and Integrate

- Groups discuss how to integrate their pieces, considering themes, common elements, or contrasts between their drawings.
- Example guiding questions:
 - "What story are all these pieces telling together?"
 - "Can we create a theme or idea that links all our drawings?"
 - "How do different elements complement or challenge one another visually?"

3. Create a Unified Artwork

- Students work together to arrange and blend their individual pieces into one cohesive narrative or artwork.

STORY SPINES

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: None

TIME NEEDED: 20-30 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Students collaboratively create a story by building on a structured narrative spine provided by the teacher. Using images on their cards, they contribute creatively to a flowing narrative, fostering imagination, critical thinking, and teamwork.

WHY IT WORKS: Story Spines is a versatile activity that encourages collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. By working within a structured spine, students learn to balance constraints with imagination, creating cohesive and engaging narratives. Adding genres and plot twists deepens their understanding of storytelling elements while sparking curiosity and adaptability. This activity is perfect for all ages and fosters meaningful connections between ideas, images, and collaborative storytelling.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: BUILDING THE NARRATIVE

1. Distribute Cards

- Select a set of cards with varied images and distribute one to each student.

2. Provide the Story Spine

- Begin with a structured "spine" for the story:
 - Once upon a time... Introduce the world and the main character's routine.
 - Every day... Show the main character continuing in their routine.
 - But, one day... The main character breaks the routine.
 - Because of that... Consequences arise, creating uncertainty.
 - Until finally... The main character embarks on success or failure.
 - And ever since then... The main character establishes a new routine.

3. Create the Story

- Students take turns using the image on their card to contribute a sentence that aligns with the current part of the spine.

- Encourage students to explain their thought process and why their image fits into the story.

4. Review the Story

- Once complete, review the story together, discussing the creative connections between the images and the narrative flow.

LEVEL TWO: ADD A GENRE TWIST

1. Assign Genres

- Give each student a genre, such as mystery, science fiction, adventure, or fantasy.

2. Shape the Narrative

- As students add their sentences, they must ensure their contribution fits within their assigned genre.
- Example: In a mystery genre, a student might use their card to introduce a suspicious clue.

3. Reflect on Genre Integration

- After finishing the story, discuss how each genre influenced the story's direction and how different styles were blended.

LEVEL THREE: PLOT TWISTS AND SURPRISES

1. Challenge Creativity

- Encourage advanced students to introduce plot twists or unexpected elements based on the images on their cards.
- Example: A card with a treasure chest might introduce a hidden fortune that changes the character's fate.

2. Adapt to Change

- Students must adapt their sentences to maintain coherence while reacting to the twists introduced by others.

3. Reflect and Discuss

- Discuss how the plot twists changed the story's trajectory.
- Pose the question: "Do constraints, like the spine or cards, help or hurt your creativity?"

PRESENTATION DEMONSTRATION

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Presentation software (Google Slides, PowerPoint)

TIME NEEDED: 30-45 minutes

OBJECTIVE

Students will practice public speaking and improvisation by creating and delivering presentations based on randomly selected cards. This activity fosters creative thinking, flexibility, and presentation skills as students adapt their cards to various themes or prompts. It can be done individually or in groups, making it versatile for different classroom needs.

WHY IT WORKS: This activity combines creativity, critical thinking, and practical skills in a fun and engaging way. Students learn to think on their feet in Level One, adapt and integrate new ideas in Level Two, and organize their thoughts into polished presentations in Level Three. By delivering their ideas in front of peers, they build confidence, improve communication, and develop essential public speaking skills. The flexibility to work individually or in groups ensures inclusivity and adaptability for all learning styles.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: QUICK IMPROVISATION

1. Distribute Playful Thinking Cards

- Randomly hand out one card to each student or group.

2. Present Without Prep

- Students deliver a brief presentation or tell a story inspired by the image or prompt on their card.
- Focus on key public speaking skills: clear communication, confidence, and creative thinking on the spot.

3. Class Feedback

- After each presentation, the class provides constructive feedback on delivery and how effectively the image or prompt was used.

LEVEL TWO: ADD A THEME OR WORD

1. Introduce a Theme

- Assign a random word (from a resource list) or a theme related to your class.

2. Incorporate the Theme

- Students must incorporate the random word or theme into their presentation, using their card as the basis for their story or discussion.

3. Solo or Group Presentations

- Students can present individually or work in groups to collaboratively develop their presentations.

LEVEL THREE: FULL SLIDE PRESENTATION

1. Prepare a Slideshow

- Give students time to create a 3-5 slide presentation using PowerPoint, Google Slides, or similar software.
- The presentation should expand on ideas, connections, and interpretations inspired by their card and the assigned theme or word.

2. Present to the Class

- Students present their slides, focusing on delivery, organization, and how effectively they tied their card to the overall theme.

3. Individual or Group Work

- Depending on class size and preference, students can present solo or collaborate in groups.

IMAGINARY INVENTIONS

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Paper, Markers

TIME NEEDED: 30-40 minutes

OBJECTIVE

In this activity, students use images from their cards to brainstorm and design imaginative inventions. By drawing, explaining, and presenting their ideas, students practice creative thinking, problem-solving, and innovation, all while having fun creating something unique.

WHY IT WORKS: This activity fosters creativity and innovation by challenging students to turn random ideas into functional designs. It builds problem-solving skills by encouraging them to address real-world issues or create improvements for everyday life. Presenting their ideas develops communication and confidence while engaging peers in thoughtful feedback encourages collaboration and critical thinking.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: BASIC INVENTION DESIGN

1. Distribute Cards

- Give each student or group 1-3 cards from the deck.

2. Brainstorm an Invention

- Students use the images on their cards as inspiration to design an invention. Encourage out-of-the-box thinking and creativity.

3. Create a Diagram

- Students draw a labeled diagram of their invention, highlighting its parts and features.
- They also write a brief explanation of how the invention works and what it does.

4. Present the Invention

- Students share their invention with the class, explaining:
 - How the images on their cards inspired the design.
 - What the invention does and how it works.

LEVEL TWO: INVENTION SHOWCASE

1. Expand the Concept

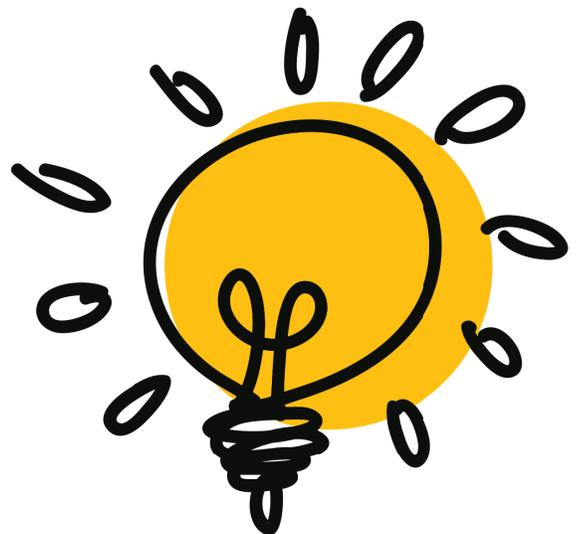
- Students build on their invention by creating a commercial or “pitch” showcasing its features and benefits.

2. Solve a Problem

- Students identify a specific problem their invention solves or explain how it improves daily life.

3. Present and Gather Feedback

- Each student or group delivers their pitch to the class, demonstrating how their invention works and why it’s useful.
- After each presentation, the class asks questions and provides constructive feedback.



DEBATE BUILDER

GEARED TOWARDS: 6-12 grades (best used with critical thinking pack)

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Paper and Writing utensils

TIME NEEDED: 30 minutes per level of activity

OBJECTIVE

Students will practice critical thinking and argument development by engaging in debates inspired by images or prompts on randomly drawn cards. This activity fosters logical reasoning, teamwork, and the ability to view issues from multiple perspectives.

WHY IT WORKS: Debate Builder encourages students to analyze concepts critically, form coherent arguments, and think on their feet. By basing debates on random cards, students must connect abstract ideas to practical applications, enhancing their creativity and flexibility. The activity also develops teamwork and communication skills, as students collaborate to construct and present their arguments. This lesson provides a structured pathway for developing critical thinking and argumentation skills, scaling in complexity to meet the needs of diverse learners.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: BASIC DEBATE

1. Set the Stage

- Distribute one Playful Thinking card to each student or group.
- Each card serves as inspiration for a debate topic.
- Example: A card with a factory might prompt the topic, "How can we balance human needs with environmental conservation?"

2. Formulate an Argument

- Students take a few minutes to create a brief argument based on their card, focusing on one perspective (either "for" or "against").

3. Debate and Feedback

- Students present their arguments to the class or in pairs.
- After each presentation, classmates provide constructive feedback on the clarity, logic, and persuasiveness of the argument.

LEVEL TWO: TEAM DEBATES WITH RANDOM TOPICS

1. Divide into Teams

- Split the class into two teams for each debate. Assign one team to argue “for” and the other “against” the topic inspired by the card.

2. Collaborate and Prepare

- Teams have 5-10 minutes to brainstorm and organize their arguments together.
- Encourage students to anticipate counterarguments and plan responses.

3. Debate in Rounds

- Teams take turns presenting their arguments.
- Example structure: Opening statements, rebuttals, and closing statements.

4. Class Reflection

- After each debate, the class discusses which arguments were most persuasive and why, encouraging reflection on logic and rhetoric.

LEVEL THREE: MULTI-LAYERED DEBATE WITH COMPLEXITY

1. Introduce a Broader Context

- Draw a card and connect it to a complex, multi-faceted issue.
- Example: A card with a clock could inspire the topic, “Should the workweek be reduced to four days?”

2. Assign Roles

- Each team member takes on a specific role (e.g., environmentalist, economist, policymaker, or community member).

3. Debate with Structured Rounds

- Debates include multiple structured rounds:
 - Opening Statements: Present individual arguments from assigned roles.
 - Team Collaboration: Teams regroup to synthesize arguments and present a cohesive rebuttal.
 - Closing Statements: Summarize the strongest points and advocate for their position.

4. Debrief and Analysis

- After the debate, discuss how diverse perspectives shaped the arguments.
- Pose reflective questions:
 - “Did the constraints of your role affect your argument?”
 - “How did considering different perspectives enhance the discussion?”

EXTENSIONS AND VARIATIONS:

Rapid-Fire Debates

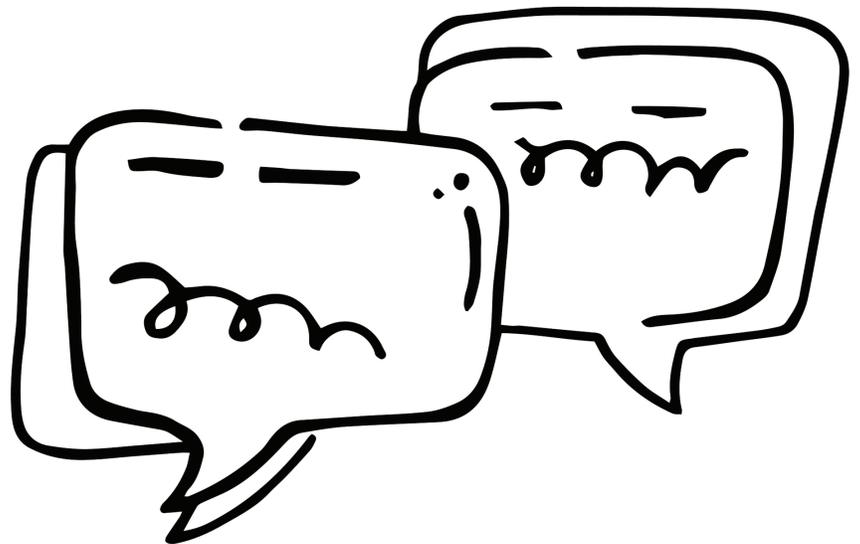
- Shorten preparation time for a more improvisational approach.

Student-Led Topics

- Allow students to suggest debate topics inspired by their cards.

Cross-Team Collaboration

- After the debate, have teams collaborate to draft a compromise solution based on their discussion.



PERSPECTIVE SHIFTER

GEARED TOWARDS: Ages 6 - 12 (*Suggested Playful Thinking Deck Creative or Critical Thinking*)

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: None

TIME NEEDED: 25-30 minutes

OBJECTIVE

Students will practice exploring multiple perspectives by interpreting an image on a card through the eyes of different individuals or groups. This activity fosters empathy, creative problem-solving, and the ability to understand diverse viewpoints, enhancing collaboration and critical thinking.

WHY IT WORKS: Perspective Shifter encourages students to look beyond their own experiences and consider how others might interpret the same situation or image. This not only builds empathy but also strengthens creative problem-solving as students think flexibly about how different needs, priorities, and values shape perspectives. It's an engaging way to deepen understanding of complex concepts and foster open-mindedness.

DIRECTIONS

LEVEL ONE: BASIC PERSPECTIVE EXPLORATION

1. Distribute Cards

- Give each student a card from the deck.

2. Interpret the Image

- Students brainstorm what the image might represent to them personally.
- Prompt questions to guide thinking:
 - "What does this image mean to you?"
 - "What feelings or ideas does it inspire?"

3. Expand to One Perspective

- Ask students to view the image from the perspective of a specific group or individual.
- Example: For a card depicting a bridge, they might consider, "What would an engineer think of this bridge?"

4. Share and Reflect

- Students present their interpretations, explaining how and why their chosen perspective influences their view of the image.

LEVEL TWO: MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

1. Introduce Diverse Viewpoints

- Draw a card and ask students to brainstorm multiple perspectives related to the image.
- Example: A bridge might represent:
 - An engineer: A technical marvel of design.
 - An environmentalist: A potential disruption to wildlife.
 - A traveler: A means of connecting distant places.

2. Group Discussion

- In small groups, students share and discuss their perspectives.
- Encourage them to identify overlaps, conflicts, or surprising insights between the viewpoints.

3. Develop a Collaborative Story

- Groups create a short story integrating at least two perspectives, showing how different individuals or groups might experience or interpret the same object.
- Example: A traveler crossing a bridge meets an environmentalist protesting its impact.

4. Present and Reflect

- Groups present their stories and discuss what they learned from considering diverse perspectives.

LEVEL THREE: APPLYING PERSPECTIVES TO PROBLEM-SOLVING

1. Assign a Problem

- Draw a card and pose a real-world issue related to the image.
- Example: A card with a forest might inspire the question, "How should this forest be managed to balance ecological health, tourism, and local livelihoods?"

2. Role Assignment

- Assign each student or group a specific role (e.g., scientist, local resident, government official, tourist).
- Students must interpret the card and address the problem from their assigned perspective.

3. Collaborative Problem-Solving

- Students come together to discuss their perspectives and brainstorm a collaborative solution that incorporates the needs and priorities of all stakeholders.

4. Debrief and Reflection

- Facilitate a class discussion:
 - “How did considering different perspectives influence your approach to the problem?”
 - “What challenges did you face trying to balance conflicting needs?”
 - “How might this process help in real-world decision-making?”

EXTENSIONS AND VARIATIONS:

Cultural Perspectives

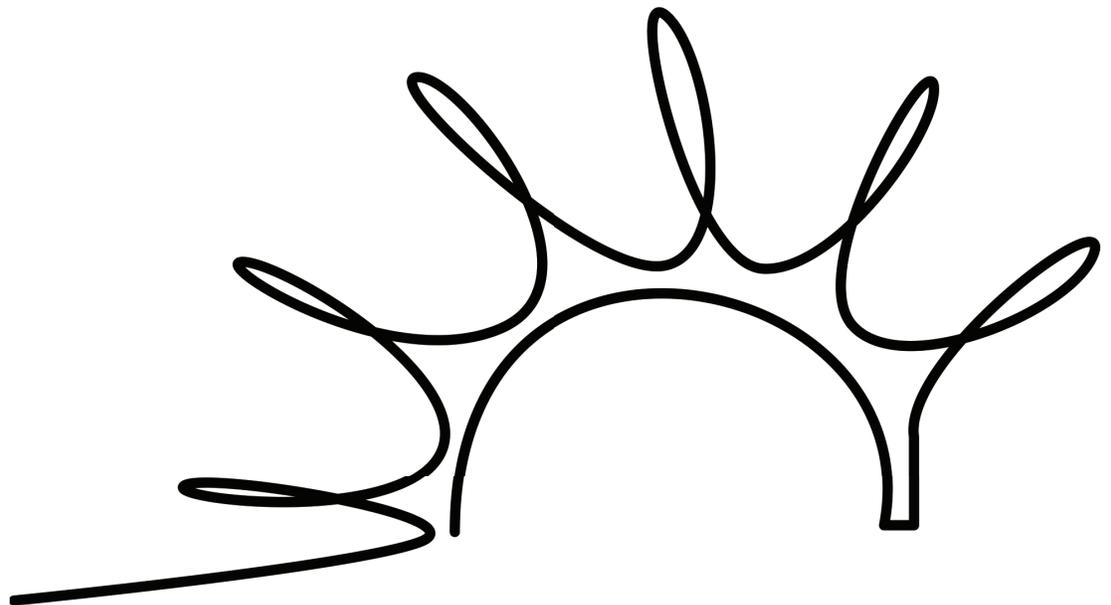
- Explore how different cultures might view the same image or problem.

Role Reversal

- Have students switch roles midway through the discussion to experience a different perspective.

Creative Expression

- Instead of a discussion, students create art or write stories showcasing multiple perspectives on the image.



DESIGN YOUR OWN CARD

GEARED TOWARDS: 3rd - 12th grades

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Paper and markers

TIME NEEDED: 15 minutes

OBJECTIVE

Encourage students to explore their imagination and creativity by interpreting, evolving, and collaborating on visual ideas inspired by the images on their cards. This activity fosters independent thinking, collaboration, and connecting and building on ideas.

WHY IT WORKS: This activity allows students to channel their creativity and express their unique perspectives. By designing both the image and discussion question, they develop a deeper understanding of how visuals and language can spark curiosity, inspire storytelling, and drive meaningful conversations. Sharing their cards with the group fosters a sense of community while highlighting diverse ways of thinking.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: INDIVIDUAL CARD DESIGN

1. Introduce the Activity

- Explain that students will create their own cards, each featuring:
 - An image they draw, design, or describe.
 - A discussion question inspired by their image.

2. Brainstorm and Sketch

- Give students time to brainstorm ideas for their image. Encourage them to think about visuals that spark curiosity, tell a story, or provoke thought.
- Example Prompts:
 - "What kind of picture would make someone stop and think?"
 - "What question would get people talking?"

3. Draw and Write

- Students draw or describe their image on one side of a card and write their discussion question on the other.

4. Share and Reflect

- Each student shares their card with the class, explaining their choices for the image and question.

LEVEL TWO: PEER FEEDBACK AND REFINEMENT

1. Pair or Group Sharing

- Students pair up or form small groups to present their cards.

2. Feedback Exchange

- Group members provide constructive feedback:
 - "What about this image grabs your attention?"
 - "How could the question spark an even deeper conversation?"

3. Revise and Refine

- Students make changes to their card based on the feedback they received, enhancing the clarity, impact, or creativity of their design.

4. Class Display

- Create a gallery of all the cards, allowing students to view and celebrate their peers' work.

LEVEL THREE: COLLABORATIVE DECK CREATION

1. Group Deck Design

- Divide students into small groups to design a themed deck of cards. Each group selects a theme (e.g., nature, emotions, the future) and designs 5–10 cards collectively.

2. Collaborate on Consistency

- Groups ensure their cards fit the theme while showcasing individual creativity. Encourage them to balance visuals, questions, and variety.

3. Present the Deck

- Groups present their completed decks to the class, explaining the theme and sharing how they worked together to create a cohesive set.

4. Discussion and Reflection

- Facilitate a class discussion:
 - "What themes or images stood out in the decks?"
 - "How did collaboration enhance your designs?"
 - "What did you learn about creating visuals or questions that inspire thought?"

EXTENSIONS AND VARIATIONS:

Class Card Deck: Combine all individual cards into one collaborative deck for future activities.

Digital Design: Use online tools or software to design digital versions of the cards.

Theme Challenge: Assign specific themes or categories to guide the card designs, such as "dreams," "adventures," or "mysteries." perspectives on the image.

EMOTIONAL STORYTELLING

GEARED TOWARDS: All Ages

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED: Paper and markers

TIME NEEDED: 20-30 minutes

OBJECTIVE

Students will explore and express emotions through storytelling by interpreting an image from their card through a specific emotional lens. This activity promotes emotional awareness, creative thinking, and communication skills.

WHY IT WORKS: Emotional Storytelling encourages students to connect with their feelings and practice articulating emotions through creative expression. By interpreting visuals through specific emotions, students deepen their understanding of how different perspectives shape stories and how emotions can influence creativity. This activity also fosters empathy as students share and listen to diverse emotional experiences.

DIRECTIONS:

LEVEL ONE: Individual Emotion Exploration

1. Draw a Card

- Each student selects a card with an image.

2. Assign an Emotion

- Assign each student an emotion (e.g., joy, sadness, fear, anger) or allow them to choose one that resonates with their card.

3. Interpret the Image

- Students consider how the card's image connects to their assigned emotion.
- Example Prompts:
 - "What story would this image tell if it represented joy?"
 - "How does this image change if seen through sadness?"

4. Write or Share the Story

- Students create a short story inspired by their card and emotion. They can write it down or share it verbally with the class.

LEVEL TWO: COLLABORATIVE EMOTIONAL EXPLORATION

1. Pair Up

- Students pair up to share their cards and stories.

2. Swap Perspectives

- Each student assigns a new emotion to their partner's card, and the partner reinterprets the image to fit the new emotion.

3. Compare and Reflect

- Pairs compare their original and reimagined stories, discussing:
 - "How did the emotion change the story?"
 - "What surprised you about the new perspective?"

4. Group Discussion

- Facilitate a group discussion on how emotions influence creativity and storytelling.

LEVEL THREE: MULTI-EMOTION STORYTELLING

1. Draw Multiple Cards

- Students draw 2-3 cards and assign a different emotion to each.

2. Build a Narrative

- Students create a longer story that weaves together all the emotions represented by their cards.
- Example: A story could start with a joyful scene (first card), move into fear (second card), and resolve with hope (third card).

3. Present and Reflect

- Students present their stories, explaining how they transitioned between emotions and how each card contributed to the overall narrative.

4. Class Reflection

- Discuss how combining emotions created more nuanced and engaging stories.
- Pose reflective questions:
 - "How did shifting between emotions challenge your storytelling?"
 - "What did you learn about expressing emotions through a story?"

EXTENSIONS AND VARIATIONS:

Role Reversal:

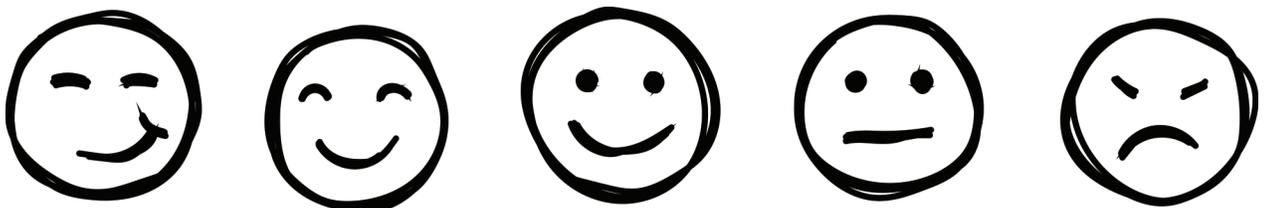
- Assign students an emotion opposite to the one they feel most connected to and challenge them to create a story from that perspective.

Empathy Exercise

- After sharing stories, have classmates identify moments where they related to or felt empathy for the characters or situations.

Group Story Creation

- Assign specific themes or categories to guide the card designs, such as “dreams,” “adventures,” or “mysteries.” perspectives on the image.



QUICK ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVE: Use cards as a versatile tool to spark creativity, generate new ideas, and connect concepts to classroom activities. These quick and adaptable exercises are perfect for enhancing engagement and creativity in your lessons.

WHY IT WORKS: These activities provide simple yet powerful ways to integrate creativity and critical thinking into your classroom. They encourage students to make personal and imaginative connections, enhance engagement, and provide fresh perspectives for teaching and learning. Whether it's journaling, writing, or brainstorming, these quick activities turn a deck of cards into a dynamic educational tool!

LESSON IDEA GENERATOR

How to Use: Draw a random card during your lesson-planning process.

Goal: Use the image or prompt on the card to inspire fresh approaches to your subject.

Questions to Ask Yourself:

- "What ideas do I get from looking at this picture?"
- "How does this word or image connect to what I'm teaching?"

Example: If you're teaching ecosystems, a card showing a bridge might inspire a discussion about ecological connections or the impact of infrastructure on habitats.

REFLECTIVE JOURNALING

How to Use: At the beginning or end of class, have students draw a card from the Playful Thinking Deck and write a short journal entry connecting the image or word to something they learned that day.

Goal: Reinforce key concepts and help students make personal connections to the material.

Example Prompt:

- "How does this card relate to today's lesson?"
- "What personal connections can you make to this image or word?"



CREATIVE WRITING PROMPTS

How to Use: Use the cards to inspire creative writing projects.

Goal: Encourage students to use the image or word on their card as the foundation for a story, poem, or essay.

Questions to ask yourself:

- "Write a short story inspired by this image."
- "Create a poem about the concept or feeling this word evokes."



CLASSROOM ICEBREAKERS

How to Use: At the start of a new term or class, have each student draw a card from the Playful Thinking Deck.

Goal: Use the card to foster conversation, spark creativity, and build community.

Activity Options:

- Option 1: Students brainstorm creative ideas related to the image.
- Option 2: Students reflect on how the question or prompt relates to them personally.

Example: A card with a question like "What's your biggest dream?" can spark meaningful group discussions.

RAPID ROLE-PLAY

Target Skill: Improvisation, Collaboration

How It Works: Each card represents a character, object, or setting. Students act out a scene inspired by their card.

Variation: Combine several cards to create a mini-play. For example, a student with a "clock" card might play a timekeeper, while another with a "mountain" card plays a climber.

PROBLEM-SOLVING WORKSHOP

Target Skill: Innovation, Critical Thinking

How It Works: Present a real-world problem (e.g., climate change, lack of clean water). Students draw cards and must incorporate the images or ideas into their solutions.

Example: A card with a compass could inspire navigation technology for disaster relief.

THEME MAPPING



Target Skill: Conceptual Thinking, Collaboration

How It Works: In small groups, students draw several cards and work together to find a unifying theme or concept.

Example: A group with cards showing a boat, a map, and the sun might identify “adventure” as their theme and explain how the images connect.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Target Skill: Sequential Thinking, Storytelling

How It Works: Students draw cards in turns to create a sequential story. Each card contributes to the plot as students build on the previous one.

Variation: Use the questions on the back of the cards to guide twists or surprises in the storyline.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- ALWAYS separate your DIVERGENT thinking from your CONVERGENT thinking.
- Only evaluate or select ideas once you have completely exhausted your ability to generate ideas and have several options.

Divergent Thinking

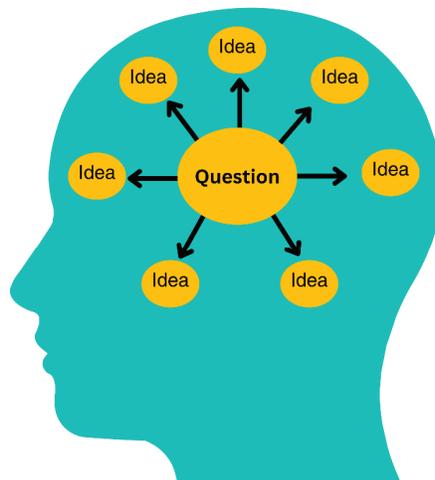
- Used when generating an exhaustive list of interesting options.
- Most successful when adopting the right mindset and following these guidelines:
 - Accept all offers.
 - Build on ideas.
 - Push for quantity (*set a quota of 30 ideas and increase the quota if working in a group*).
 - Look for novelty.
 - Incubate - live with the challenge for a while, and ideas will percolate to your consciousness.

Convergent Thinking

- Used when identifying promising ideas from the list of interesting options.
- Essential to adopt the appropriate mindset and follow these guidelines:
 - Consider pluses first.
 - Keep the goal in mind.
 - Keep novelty alive.
 - Improve ideas.
 - Incubate - live with the ideas for a while, and they will coalesce into solutions.

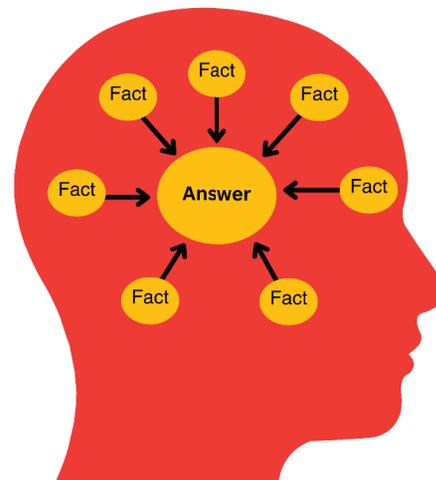
Divergent Thinking

Using Imagination



Convergent Thinking

Using Logic



GROUND RULES FOR
DIVERGENT THINKING

1

DEFER JUDGEMENT

2

STRIVE FOR QUALITY

3

SEEK WILD & UNUSUAL IDEAS

4

BUILD ON OTHER'S IDEAS

Adapted from Miller, B., Vehar, J., Firestein, R., Thurber, S., & Nielsen, D. (2001) Creativity unbound. Williamsville, NY: Innovative System Group

GROUND RULES FOR
CONVERGENT THINKING

1

BE AFFIRMATIVE

2

BE DELIBERATE

3

CHECK YOUR OBJECTIVES

4

IMPROVE IDEAS

5

CONSIDER NOVELTY

Adapted from Miller, B., Vehar, J., Firestein, R., Thurber, S., & Nielsen, D. (2001) Creativity unbound. Williamsville, NY: Innovative System Group



ADDING WORD PLAY

We have provided a suggested list of random words below!

Want to alter the connections made with the cards? Just use the random words below! These words are perfect for viewing a card from a different perspective. Randomly choose some and see what you can imagine— utilize random words for different age groups and see which connections are made!

Do NOT use words that describe or connect closely to the image on the card's flip side. Need new words? Find an online random words generator, or use a language dictionary to add words in any language the players are familiar with.

The deck can be designed for use with different age groups, using the vocabulary you wish the students to acquire. Language teachers, in particular, can use these cards to build vocabulary as part of the activities.

GRADES K-2

cat	egg	kid	kite	root	bird	break	square	mother
dog	van	bed	star	heart	sheet	share	phone	father
sun	wet	cut	boat	trunk	desk	bread	cereal	friend
bus	hug	milk	year	home	smile	ring	chain	flower
big	fox	goat	kind	team	laugh	library	magnet	music
red	box	math	bark	clue	clock	puzzle	water	dance
hop	bug	leaf	wave	trace	space	hamster	chair	corner
pig	log	hero	zebra	fruit	group	window	garden	energy
cup	map	farm	snack	slide	plane	ocean	circle	story
win	pen	fish	shape	chip	color	turtle	station	number
nest	rug	jump	bean	pencil	truck	button	sister	honey



GRADES 3-8

fraction	bacteria	stanza	quadrant	scholar	persuasive	ancestor	quiver
monarch	ingredient	synapse	erosion	alliance	drama	cylinder	depletion
canyon	measure	portrait	photosynthesis	currency	forecast	conduction	hypothesis
horizon	climate	collage	civilization	polygon	metaphor	convection	timeline
culture	mixture	amphibian	oxygen	artisan	figurative	ecosystem	organelle
economy	narrative	friction	terrarium	momentum	astronomy	ethics	safari
magnetism	dialogue	dissolve	democracy	property	avalanche	gravitational	pivot
recycle	genetics	theorem	election	perimeter	biodiversity	isosceles	cameo
velocity	integer	chrysalis	geometry	ratio	rectangle	prime	hydrogen
radius	geology	summary	volcano	barometer	measurement	magnify	habitat
diameter	altitude	patriot	equation	tapestry	document	rotate	symmetry
volume	revolve	medieval	expression	cellular	kitsch	dimension	erosion
decimal	strategy	circuit	monarchy	chlorophyll	transistor	classify	adaptation

GRADES 6-12

juxtapose	anomaly	alliteration	imperative	calligraphy	intrinsic	reverberate
ubiquitous	ephemeral	metamorphosis	philosophy	elucidate	binary	coalesce
paradigm	serendipity	synergy	context	idiosyncrasy	equilibrium	renaissance
ambivalent	quintessential	pragmatic	parameter	juxtaposition	rationale	culminate
diaspora	formidable	vulnerable	quixotic	altruistic	trajectory	amalgamate
existential	postulate	ambiguous	epiphany	punctilious	vehement	benevolent
fervent	derivative	catalyst	nepotism	empirical	meander	immutable
syntax	impetus	camaraderie	longevity	sophomoric	conundrum	obsolete
epitome	mosaic	auspicious	amnesty	symbiosis	collaborate	extrapolate
cognizant	dissertation	inception	sporadic	dichotomy	articulate	transparent
tangible	incongruous	hypothetical	enigma	penchant	melancholy	tenacity
intangible	philanthropic	labyrinth	prototype	phenomenon	aesthetic	ambiguity
nuance	esoteric	accumulate	surreptitious	exonerate	fortitude	euphemism
bourgeois	restitution	correlate	infallible	transcend	magnanimous	proclivity
rhetorical	mitigate	evanescent	colloquial	incremental	cognitive	inadvertent



EMBRACING CURIOSITY AND CREATIVITY

As we reach the end of this journey, it's clear that the power of curiosity and creativity cannot be overstated. The activities in this book are more than just games—they are pathways to deeper thinking, meaningful connections, and transformative learning experiences. By using cards as a playful tool, we unlock endless possibilities for imagination, collaboration, and discovery.

Whether you're an educator fostering a dynamic classroom environment or a parent looking to ignite your child's creativity, the tools and ideas here are designed to inspire. They remind us that learning should be joyful, engaging, and full of wonder. Every card flipped, every story told, and every connection made reinforces the idea that thinking creatively and critically is not just a skill—it's a mindset.

As you continue to explore and adapt these activities, remember that the true magic lies in how you and your students or children interpret and expand upon them. Let curiosity guide you. Let creativity surprise you. And let connection remind you of the joy that comes from learning together.

Thank you for joining this adventure. Here's to a future filled with fearless curiosity, boundless imagination, and meaningful learning experiences. Keep thinking, creating, and connecting!

**THINKING
CREATIVELY
AND CRITICALLY
IS NOT JUST
A SKILL—IT'S
A MINDSET.**





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RESOURCES:

Want to Learn More? Please visit www.curiosity2create.org for additional resources.

Please email us at katie@curiosity2create.org to share your experience using these cards. We would love to hear about all the new and exciting ways you have used this resource.