



This month we are talking about Creativity! The dictionary would tell us that the primary use of Creativity is to create something artistic, but the definition we are using is much bigger than that:

Creativity: *Using your imagination to create something or solve a problem.*

Creativity is one of the most important skills for a better future because it is only by imagining new or improved solutions that it is possible to solve present problems. While more and more of the world becomes automated, Creativity is becoming one of the most sought after skills in the workplace because it helps us think beyond the box, innovate, and imagine a better way. We are born tremendously creative and, as we grow up, it is easy to “stop playing pretend” or exercising our imagination. This month encourages just the opposite! We must practice building the muscle of Creativity if we are going to use it to solve the big and little problems all around us. We will work together in new, unique ways. We will build things and break old patterns. We will CREATE and imagine the best version of ourselves and the world.

Conversation Starters

K-2

- Xavier is having a hard time coming up with an idea for his Science Fair project when his Dad tells him to get creative. After he tries and tries, Xavier starts to think that he’s not the creative type. What would you tell Xavier if he told you that?
- Sometimes, when we are being creative, we can get frustrated if things do not go as planned. What strategies can you use if you begin to feel frustrated? How can you help someone else if you notice them getting frustrated?

- What inspires you as an adult? Share with your child music, art, books, or other media that speaks to you and why.

3-5

- Walt Disney is reported to have been fired from a newspaper for “lacking ideas” and having “no imagination.” How is this possible? What do you think he did next?
- Embracing our Creativity sometimes takes Courage. What is one creative activity you have always wanted to try? What steps can you take to make it happen?
- What are some issues affecting our local or global community? How can Creativity help us address some of these problems?

Questions You Could Ask

K-2

- What do you think it means to think “outside of the box?” What’s something you’ve thought about that might be “outside the box?”
- What does Creativity mean to you? Is Creativity a good thing? How can you become more creative?
- Who is someone Creative in our family or community? How do they show Creativity?

3-5

- Who is your most creative friend? What do they do that makes you think that they’re creative?
- Creative thinkers are able to identify problems and come up with new and unique solutions. It’s important to know your strengths and weaknesses to improve your Creativity. What is the hardest part of Creativity for you?
- What is a place that inspires your Creativity? What does it make you want to create or how does it help you see things differently?

Application Books

K-2

- **[Happy Dreamer](#)** by Peter H. Reynolds
Creativity starts with you! This book inspires students to have the courage to be free spirited, to have big and little dreams, and to stay true to who you are.
- **[Where's Your Creativity?](#)** by Aaron Rosen
Creativity doesn't just happen in your head. Look around and see the world in a whole new perspective. Children are encouraged to express themselves and embrace their individuality.
- **[Beautiful Oops](#)** by Barney Saltzberg
How can a splotch, a smudge, a smear make something beautiful? Let your Creativity run wild as you let those mistakes beautiful your world.
- **[Because](#)** by Mo Willems
How does one person's Creativity inspire the stakeholders who cross their path? Read the newest score by Mo Willems to find out how contagious Creativity can be.
- **[Remarkably YOU](#)** by Pat Zietlow Miller
Celebrate all of the things, big and small and everywhere in between, that make you YOU.
- **[The Most Magnificent Thing](#)** by Ashley Spires
A young girl has a magnificent idea in her head! She knows exactly how she wants it to look, but when she tries to create it, nothing goes her way. Find out how she uses Perseverance and Creativity to work through her challenges.

3-5

- **[The Girl Who Thought in Pictures: The Story of Dr. Temple Grandin](#)** by Julia Finley Mosca
Temple Grandin was a visual learner and her unique way of thinking helped improve farms and empathize with animals. She amazed everyone when she became a powerful voice in modern science.
- **[The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind, Young Reader's Edition](#)** by William Kamkwamba
When a drought leaves parts of Malawi with no crops to eat and to sell, William Kamkwamba has to think of a plan. He has to research a way to solve his problem and decides to build a windmill to bring electricity to his village, which changes the lives of the villagers.

- [The Dot](#) by Peter H. Reynolds
Where can a single dot take you? Read this Creativity masterpiece before creating your own.
- [Westlandia](#) by Paul Fleishman
Starting your own civilization is NOT too big a task for this big dreamer. Join Wesley on his creative adventure.
- [What Do You Do With An Idea?](#) by Kobi Yamada
What's a person to do when an idea pops out of nowhere and starts to pursue them? See what develops when you recognize the idea and give it the attentive Creativity it needs to get growing.

Activity

K-2

Coloring Outside the Lines

Get out a coloring book (or make your own with shapes and outlines) and then, a few times over the course of the month, take it out and color outside of the lines. Let loose; no boundaries. Then discuss with one another how it felt.

3-5

Morning Magic

Set up a pad of paper or dry erase board in the space where your child gets ready or eats in the morning. Every day this month, have them exercise Creativity for at least 30 seconds to 3 minutes before they head to schools. Use simple prompts to give them some ideas: Draw a mix of two animals. Draw something without lifting your pen. Write a word in 5 different styles. Make a word into a picture. Draw a picture using only numbers. Create your own!

For your reading

K-2

[10 Secrets to Raising Creative Kids](#) by Jennifer King Lindley

[How To Encourage Creativity In Our Children](#) via The Parenting Junkie Blog

3-5

Family Challenges:

K-2

Wheelie-Fun Olympics

Invite a few family friends to bring their bikes, roller skates, roller blades, scooters, and prepare to have a wheelie-good time outside in a friendly competition, Olympic-style. Set up an obstacle course or short sprints; get those creative juices flowing as you plan together. If not on your street, see if you can host the outing after hours in your school parking lot or at a local park.

Not good on wheels? Try taking a piece of athletic equipment and reimagining it to change the game. What does basketball look like if you can't move when you are holding the ball? How do you play soccer with a round field and 4 goals?

Get Curious

In this challenge, identify a toy that the children in the family are no longer playing or engaged with. Start with the question: How do you think this toy was made? Then tell them that together we are going to take it apart, to see how it's made before reassembling it. Before disassembling it, invite them to make some predictions: How many parts do you think it has? How easy or difficult will taking it apart and putting it back together be? What might it feel like to be a Toy Maker?

Family Scrapbook

As a family, discuss some of your favorite memories. Then, have each family member capture their favorite moments in their own way; they might draw, paint, chalk, build, act, or sing the moment. Be sure to record and hold onto the memories for the future!

Better yet, put your work together in a book or in a shared folder on a phone or computer and, over the course of the year, add to it slowly. Make a date once a year to review it as a family!

Build it with a Box

Find a large cardboard box and unleash your inner child as you work together with your family to create something new! What can the box become? Perhaps it will be a spaceship, an ice cream shop, a fairy castle, or a race car. Using craft supplies, work together to use Creativity to turn the box into a new creation.

Bonus: [Not a Box](#) by Antoinette Portis would be a fun, family read prior to this activity!

3-5

Pirate Ship Balloon Launch

Build a mock Pirate Ship in your backyard to be your balloon launching target. From the porch, patio, or a decent distance away, launch water balloons at the ship to keep the bad guys at bay. Throw them at the ship by hand or use a Balloon Launcher to get more distance.

No water balloons around? Become a pirate for the day with your child and see how long you can make believe together. At the very least, try out the pirate accent for a day!

Civilization (Barbara)

In this challenge, every family member has a canister (or three) of PlayDoh or modeling clay. Your challenge, should you choose to accept it, is to create a civilization out of the clay.

No clay? That's okay! Gather at least 5 random items/supplies from around your home to see how much of a village or city you can build.

Community Choreography

Grab members of the family or neighborhood and have a dance battle! You can work in partners or teams and add an extra challenge by assigning the other team their song, a story, or character to include or a genre to dance out!

Not ready for your own choreography? Look at some tutorials online and learn a dance together. Or, ask your child to teach you a new move each day this week!

Family Fun Jar

Plan ahead for the “I’m bored” blues and create a family fun jar that is filled with creative activities. Grab a mason jar, popsicle sticks, and permanent markers. Brainstorm with your family about simple ideas to write on the sticks that can bring some creative fun to your family. The next time someone is feeling bored, grab a stick from the jar!

Creative ideas to help you get started: Build an indoor tent or fort, turn a cardboard box into something new, build a fairy garden, play “don’t touch the ground” with a balloon, build an obstacle course, play “the floor is lava” inside your house, bake a favorite recipe, fly a kite, go to a park you have never been to, look at old photographs and talk about your favorite memories.