

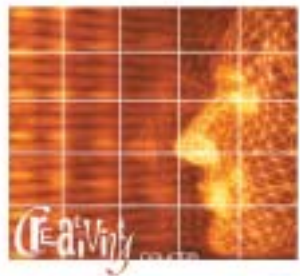


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Creativity Counts: A Report of Findings from Schools



Foreword

Encouraging creativity in young people is part of Scotland's National Priorities for education. The discussion paper, *Creativity in Education*, published by Learning and Teaching Scotland and the IDES Network in 2001, has come to be seen as a seminal exploration of the nature and importance of creativity and the ways in which it can be nurtured in young people. As well as finding use as a focus for professional reflection, *Creativity in Education* has provided inspiration for further development work designed to encourage and support the efforts being made by schools in this key area.

In March 2002 the Scottish Executive Education Department established a creativity task group to advise on suitable ways of evaluating progress in relation to creativity in education across Scotland. The group also considered various approaches to supporting learning for creativity in schools. One outcome of the discussions was a project called Creativity Counts, funded by the Scottish Executive and managed by the IDES Network in association with LT Scotland. This publication is a report on the findings from the Creativity Counts project.

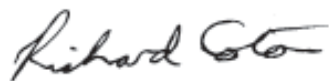
The play of words in the title of the current publication is quite intentional. Creativity *counts* and should feature across all school activity. And because it matters as an outcome of young people's learning, the development of creativity needs to be *counted* and evaluated. Assessing and evaluating creativity by simple counting or numerical measuring processes, however, is hardly likely to be adequate. *Creativity Counts: A Report of Findings from Schools* argues that we should be looking for a spectrum of qualities, both in classroom activity and in individuals' learning. This argument is supported by the findings of action research across a range of schools – primary, secondary and special – which have been active participants in the project. The key qualitative features emerging from this practical exploration of issues around assessment and evaluation of creativity are:

- young people 'seeing the big picture', understanding how they can develop through the tasks, setting ambitious goals, reflecting, developing skills and knowledge, taking risks
- relationships and a learning environment, which are not only harmonious but also result in focused, challenging team-working
- young people managing and developing tasks, which reflect the real world and are seen through to a purposeful conclusion
- resources, being understood and managed effectively by pupils themselves
- products, which have purposefulness, originality and value.

These features are presented in *Creativity Counts: A Report of Findings from Schools* as a framework for assessing and evaluating creativity. Using this framework, the report also describes a range of assessment methods that teachers have deployed and the roles that learners, teachers and others can play, working together in a 'negotiated assessment' process.

More detailed descriptions of how local authorities, schools and teachers have been going about fostering creativity are being published online as a set of *Portraits of Practice*. Another, related outcome of work initiated by SEED's creativity task group is a staff development pack entitled *Learning, Thinking and Creativity*.

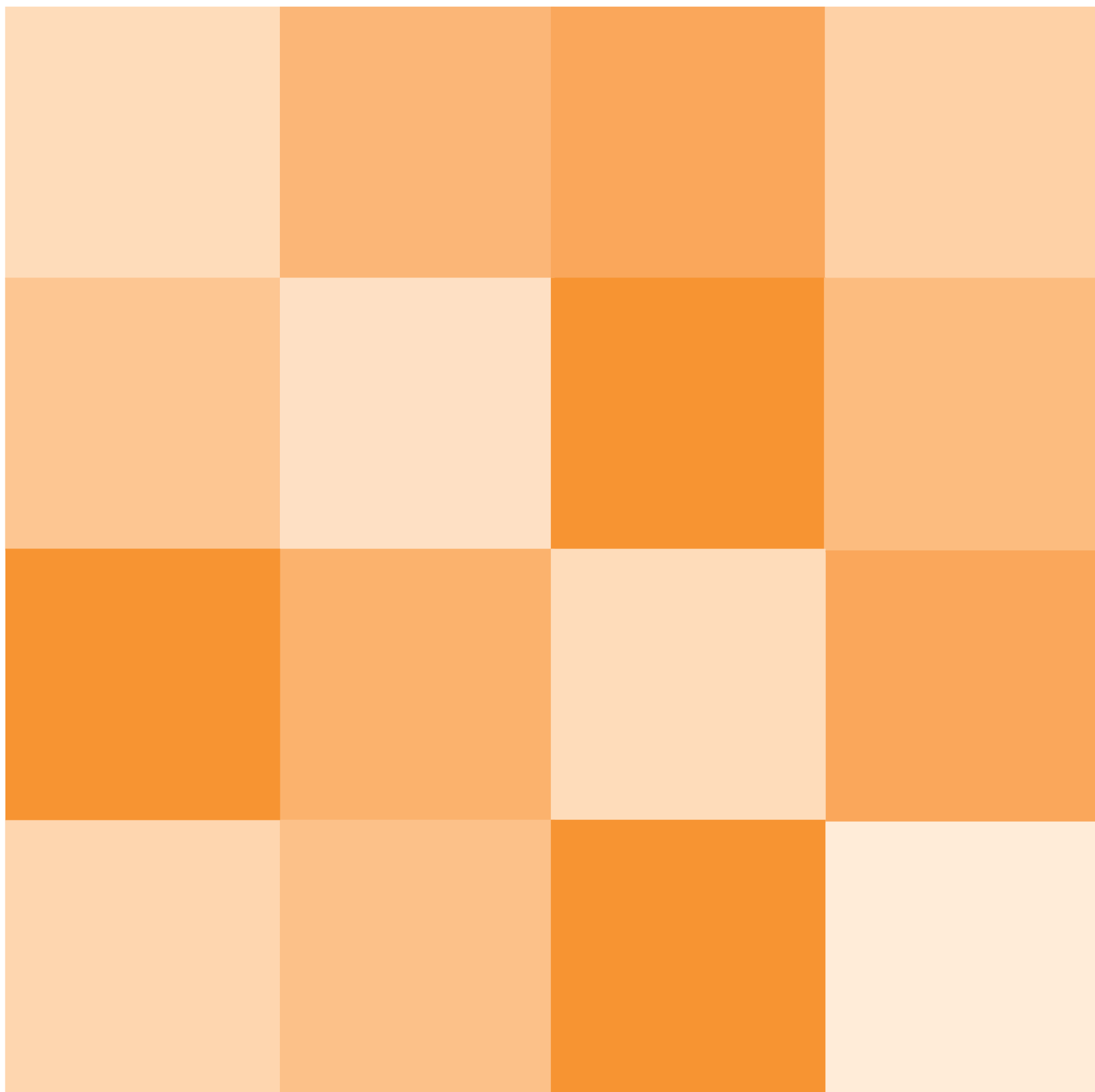
Our sincere thanks go to all who have helped with this project, and our best wishes to all who will use these approaches and related resources in their professional reflection and development of practice.



Richard Coton
Chairman
The IDES Network



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Creativity Counts

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Introduction

Creativity merits a specific mention in the National Priorities in Education because it is of central importance in the lives of individuals and for society as a whole.

National Priority 5 – Learning for Life
To equip pupils with the foundation skills, attitudes and expectations necessary to prosper in a changing society and to encourage creativity and ambition.

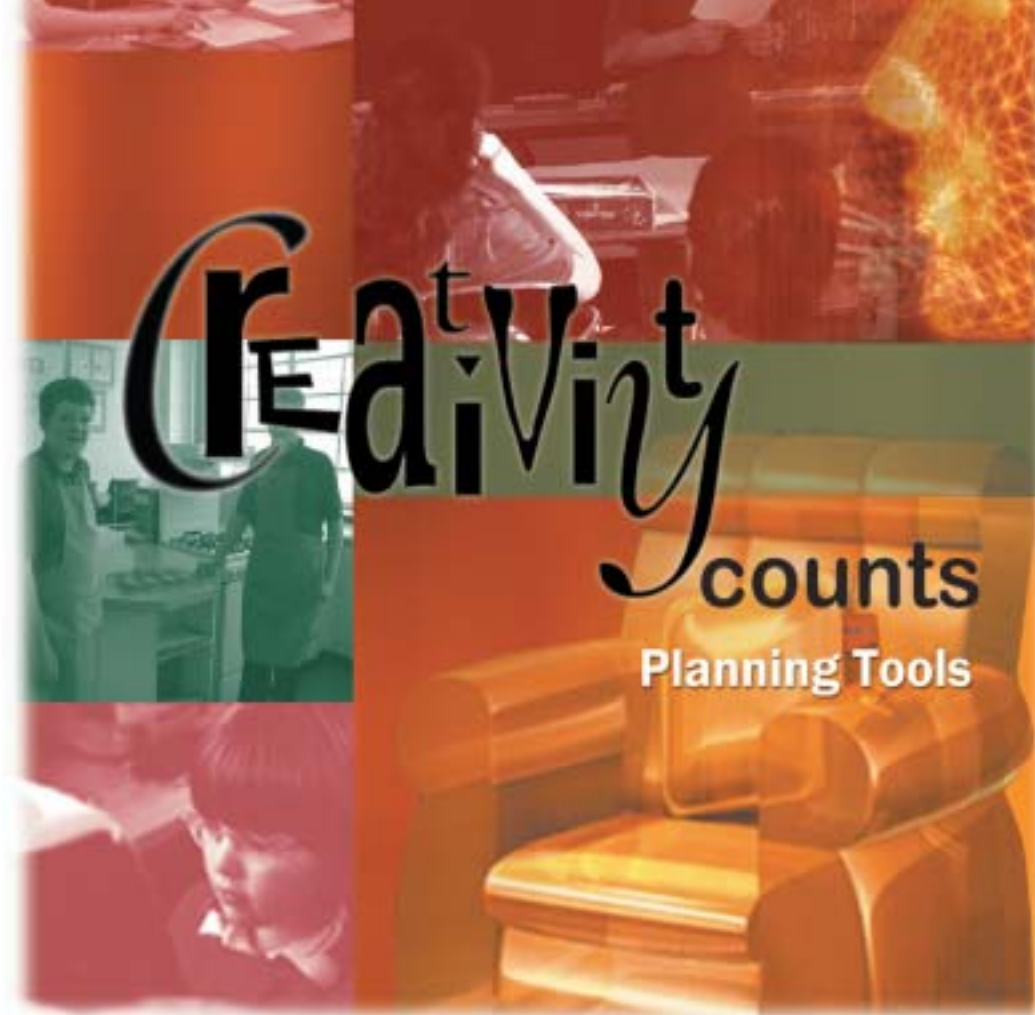
Teachers and schools have a vital role to play in creating an environment in which creativity can thrive. This publication focuses on the ways in which schools can support and foster the development of creativity in classrooms. It also looks at the important role assessment and evaluation play in providing information and feedback on the process. It is rooted in practical approaches taken by schools involved in a national project called Creativity Counts, which was initiated to take forward the ideas contained in *Creativity in Education* (IDES Network and Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2001). Readers are strongly encouraged to refer to *Creativity in Education* for a much fuller exploration of the meaning and importance of creativity in learning and teaching.

Useful resources

- *Creativity in Education*, IDES Network and LT Scotland, 2001
- *Assessing and Evaluating Creativity: A Literature Survey*, IDES Network, 2003
- Learning and Teaching Scotland website: www.LTScotland.org.uk/creativity
- IDES Network website: www.ides.org.uk
- Assessment is for Learning website: www.LTScotland.org.uk/assess/
- *Creativity in Education: Portraits of Practice*, IDES Network and LT Scotland, 2004
- *Learning, Thinking and Creativity: A Staff Development Handbook*, IDES Network and LT Scotland, 2004

What Creativity Counts did

Preparatory work for the Creativity Counts project began in summer 2002 with a survey of current research on creativity. The outcome of this was a framework for the development of creativity through learning and teaching.



This framework forms the planning and reporting tool of the main Creativity Counts development project.

Project aims

- To gather evidence of creativity in the classroom across all sectors and across all areas of the curriculum.
- To identify key approaches to learning and teaching, assessment and evaluation.
- To identify what schools need to do to foster creativity.

In response to an invitation to all schools to participate in Creativity Counts, 27 from across Scotland (seven secondary, one special and 19 primary) started work with the two project consultants in December, 2002. Each project school identified a specific development designed to foster creativity. There was considerable diversity across the schools' proposals. They included projects covering science, mathematics, English, history, technology and art and design as well as projects that targeted the development of enterprise, confidence building, motivation, improved relationships and achievement. Each project looked at how assessment (in its broadest sense) could be addressed. Schools were supported throughout the development phase of the project. Reports from participating schools were received in June 2003 and form the basis of this report and of a related publication that focuses upon portraits of practice.



section 1:

what are the benefits?

Schools involved in the Creativity Counts project were asked to reflect on the benefits of creativity in the classroom. Their views achieved wide consensus, irrespective of the age and stage of pupils involved or the curricular area developed. Here, as throughout, we have used actual comments from the schools themselves wherever possible.

For children and young people

Motivation, enthusiasm and enjoyment

Children were keen, enthusiastic and happy to continue with the task.

Children enjoyed the responsibility of making decisions; it fostered a good working atmosphere and the children were well motivated.

Through the creative process, pupils were given opportunities to take responsibility for organising their learning and their tasks. They worked cooperatively with others in their group and class, and took part in realistic peer and self-assessment. The more children accepted responsibility for their own learning, the more they were able to identify with its purpose and outcomes. They experienced enjoyment and showed enthusiasm.

Confidence and imagination

Pupils were coached and supported by teachers to think for themselves, rather than being told; they became more resourceful and reflective. They became good at knowing what worked for them and what did not. They responded well to dealing with failure and built confidence in using their imagination and developed a positive attitude to new ideas.

Children who don't often shine or achieve their full potential are more confident about coming forward and are experiencing achievement and success.

Children are given the opportunity to express their own ideas.

Sustained engagement

Children and young people demonstrated a positive attitude to the work in hand. This sustained engagement was driven by the individual and the group, rather than by the teacher. Peers were accepted for who they were and were able to speak, think and work, free from high levels of stress and anxiety. Children were motivated by a sense of contributing to the success of the group.

They learnt to work together, share ideas, brainstorm, make choices, make compromises and finally make essential decisions.

Group work supported less confident children.

Encouraging success

Teachers worked to provide the appropriate conditions for young people to feel confident about taking risks, helping them to understand and cope with the inevitable failures that are part of learning. Everyone, teachers and pupils alike, accepted that mistakes can be part of learning. The nature of the creative process in the classrooms allowed the children and young people involved in the projects to achieve success, and to experience the feelings and the emotions that success brings. It helped them learn to be resilient.

Pupils naturally felt disappointed when their solution did not work first time – but they were encouraged to try again, after discussion as to how they might correct it. In this way, achieving success became more rewarding.

No wrong answers: all ideas were encouraged, developed and used as a tool for learning.

The other side of success is failure, but failure here drove the pupils on to

© Headwell School, Fife Council

further efforts. As each group found itself competing with the other to produce best product, the mistakes that the pupils made were used as springboards to enable them to identify better choices and ultimately to create pleasing, popular products.

Adults must have the confidence to let the pupils go and explore and learn from mistakes.

For the teacher

Teachers involved in the Creativity Counts project found significant changes in classroom dynamics.

We have become more confident in empowering children to develop their own ideas.

The teacher's role changed to acting as a facilitator/mediator.

More delegation to pupils (e.g. self-assessment) gave more time for creative work.



© Notre Dame High School, Glasgow Council

Teachers themselves were able to model creative behaviour in the class, showing themselves to be self-motivated, disposed to being creative, using creative thinking skills. They were able to balance intervention, hands-off, and planning with improvisation. They were genuinely engaged with their learners and facilitated their learning. And they showed that they were enjoying themselves!

Teacher and pupils experienced mutual enjoyment.

Children have experience of a wide variety of teaching strategies.

Children given opportunity to relate more informally to the teacher.

For the school

The evidence shows that the school environment can benefit from creativity in the classroom. Happy, cooperative and confident young people carried these attributes into the wider school. Teachers found themselves more satisfied with the teaching process. The enthusiasm and vibrancy generated by the creative activities was highly valued. School leaders used the opportunity to build on the positive effects.

The ethos of the school is that staff are facilitators in pupils' learning and that pupils are encouraged at every opportunity to become independent learners.

The initiative has confirmed that much of what is happening in our school is already fostering creativity but it has enabled us to focus on our objectives. Less teaching at and more teaching with pupils.

section 2:

the learning environment

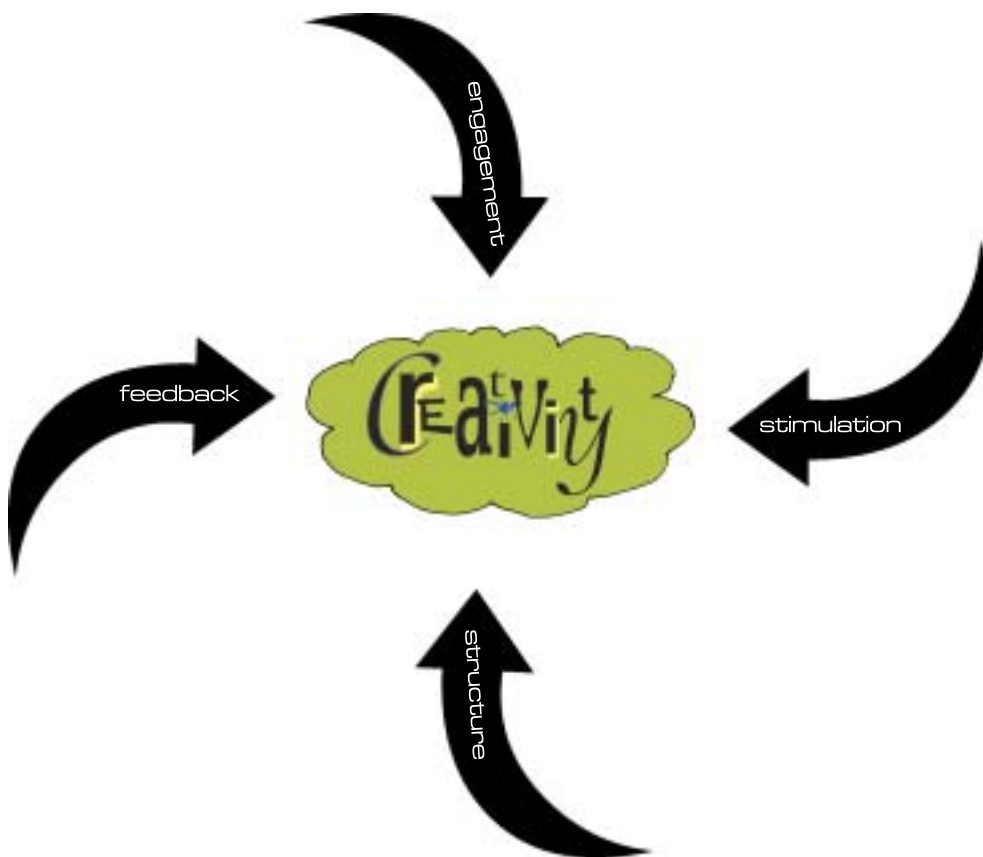
The learning environment for creativity is critical to its success, and the schools found that motivation and creativity were closely linked.



© Stromness Academy, Orkney Council

The four characteristics that contribute to a motivating classroom climate in which creativity can thrive were identified as:

- engagement
- stimulation
- structure
- feedback.



The model of the motivating classroom is derived from work carried out by Alan McLean and described in his book *The Motivated School*, London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd, 2003

Engagement

Not surprisingly, fostering good relationships was seen to be important in all the projects. There was an acceptance of young people, for who they are, and what they brought to the learning environment. At the same time, the teachers had high expectations, encouraging each pupil to aim for personal success.

Staff have worked hard to establish and sustain an environment and emotional climate that makes creativity possible. Relationships are the key starting point; we are constantly circulating the room and encouraging a positive atmosphere.

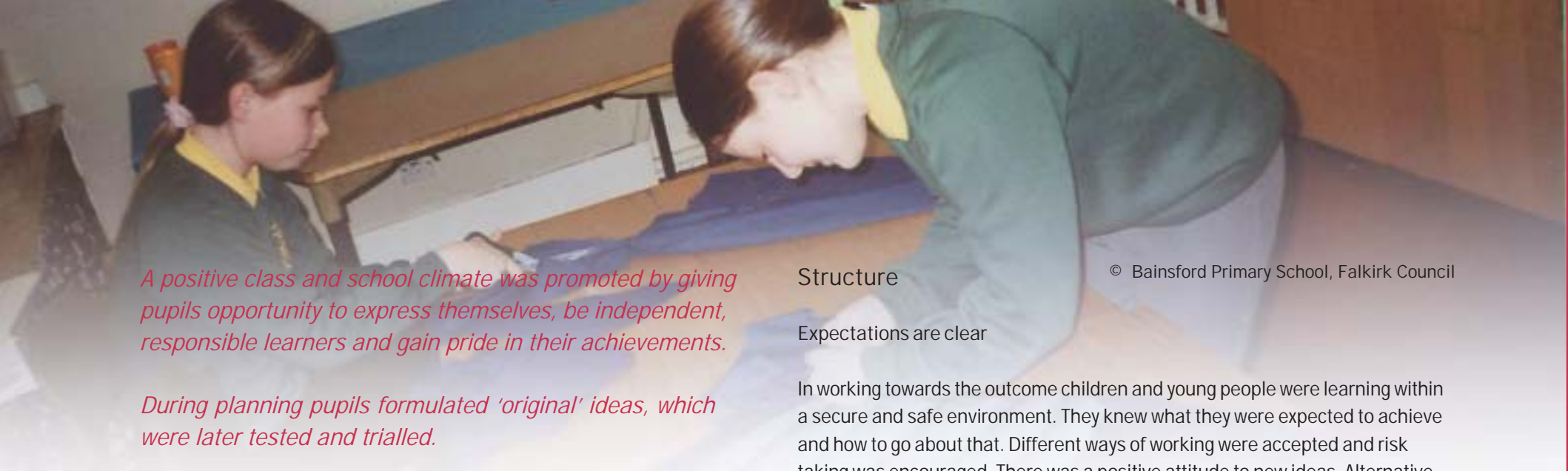
Stimulation

Active involvement

Teachers were involved in designing interesting and enjoyable activities and tasks, with an appropriate level of challenge. Tasks aroused the learner's curiosity, made them think and stimulated their desire to achieve success for themselves and for their group. There was little threat, little tension although the appropriate level of stress was there to encourage energy and flow. The young people enjoyed a sense of freedom, albeit within a supported, safe and structured environment.

The ethos of the classroom seems to have completely changed. It seems much more relaxed but at the same time more organised.

The teachers adopted a support and challenge role, and operated in a way that did not always control or direct the proceedings. They expected the learners to think for themselves, organise themselves and take responsibility for themselves



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A positive class and school climate was promoted by giving pupils opportunity to express themselves, be independent, responsible learners and gain pride in their achievements.

During planning pupils formulated 'original' ideas, which were later tested and trialled.

All pupils become engaged as the project uses all learning styles, e.g. practical, investigative, interactive, and reflective.

Pace of work is at a high level.

Risks were taken with regard to outcome. Pupils then could make informed decisions as to the right path to follow.

Peer and self-assessment

Peer and self-assessment helped learners reflect on their own inputs and products. Central to this empowerment was the pupils' involvement in peer and self-assessment of their progress and their achievements. The comments and evidence generated through formative and peer assessment provided the teacher with valuable insights into the learners' thinking. The teachers were then more able to help the children in making sense of the progress made by each individual and group.

There has been more focus on children's self-assessment based on a set of success criteria.

Self-evaluation of own performance, reflected children's high expectations.

Pupils' self-evaluation showed engagement with the task.

Assessment was less teacher directed, children self-assessing and evaluating others.

Teachers have the chance to stand back and observe the children's skills.

Structure

Expectations are clear

In working towards the outcome children and young people were learning within a secure and safe environment. They knew what they were expected to achieve and how to go about that. Different ways of working were accepted and risk taking was encouraged. There was a positive attitude to new ideas. Alternative ideas were given respect and space. There was structured support for new learning that helped release creative responses from the pupils.

The project moved in small steps, allowing children to learn new skills and use them at each stage. This built skill levels and confidence levels simultaneously thereby allowing children to be creative.

We have a focused approach to lesson structure, providing scaffolding to promote creativity.

Working with peers

The importance of recognising peer influence in the learning environment cannot be overestimated. Teachers shared with their learners an understanding of the processes taking place. They discussed with them their approaches to listening, understanding and supporting one another through the challenges. The teachers structured these challenges so that the group was encouraged to work purposefully together to achieve a common goal.

More democracy in class. Pupils brainstormed, buddied, planned, experimented, decided on final ideas and in some cases, for example, dance, completely organised the workshop.

Pupils were encouraged to collaborate, share knowledge and responsibility and challenge to produce the product.

The process encouraged reliance on a group and also sufficient self-belief to present their own ideas to a group.

Feedback

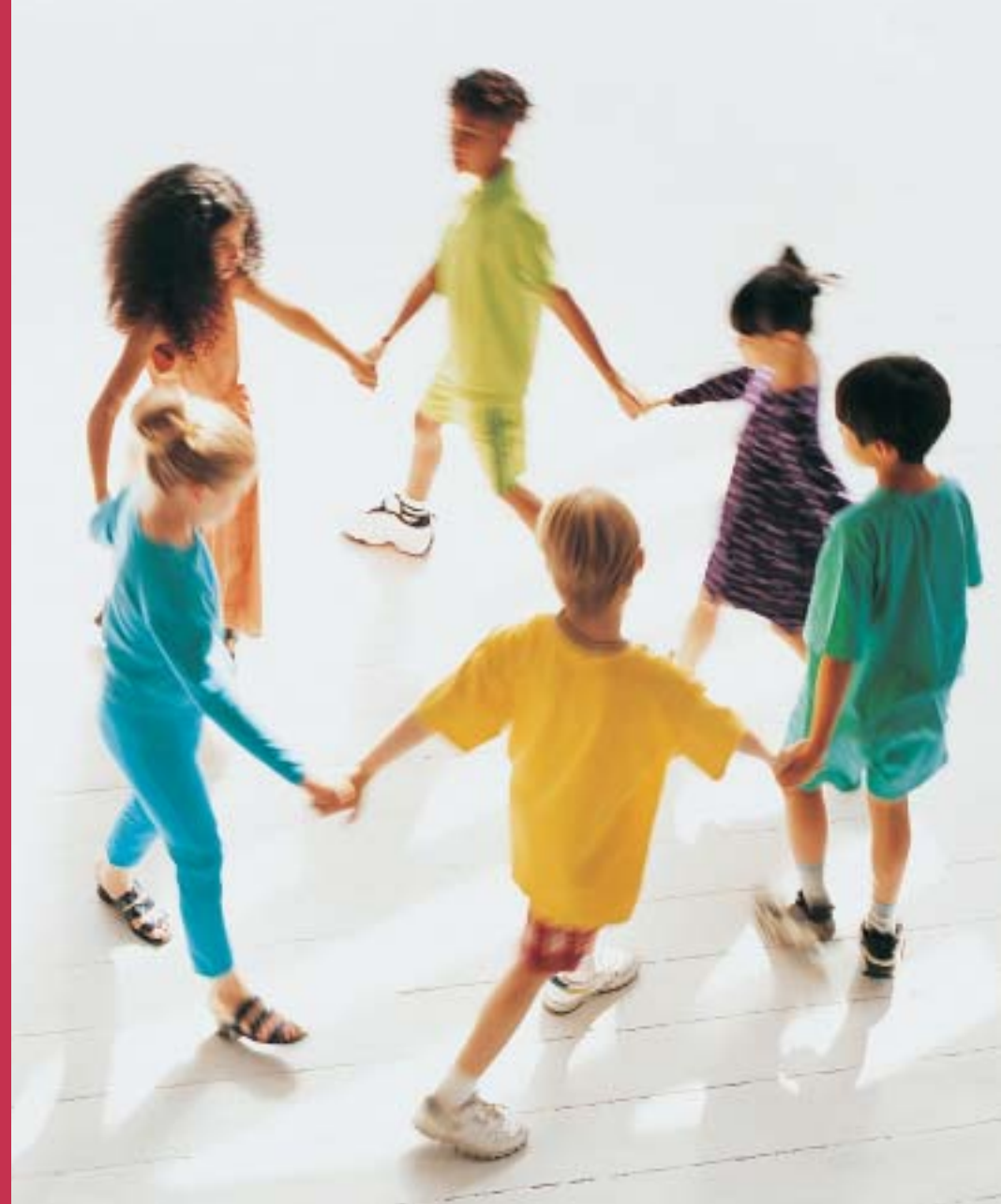
To learn effectively young people needed good quality feedback that was timely and tailored to individual and group needs. Supportive feedback built self-esteem and motivation, and sent messages to children about their importance and worth. The teacher helped them to evaluate their own performance. There was praise and reward, and it was done in a measured way. Support and criticism, where this was required, was thoughtfully balanced. Constructive feedback on weaknesses as well as strengths, and advice on how to deal with these, helped children develop the skills of creativity. Teachers praised the learning process, the nature of the activities, and the efforts being deployed. They stressed what needed to take place for improvement, and praised effort and strategy. The learners were given as much autonomy and control over their work as was practical and safe.

A variety of methods were used to evaluate work, both formal and informal (circle time activities were very useful for this).

It is the nature of the creative process itself – often a difficult area to assess – which can be clearly observed and recorded.

Question techniques have become less directive and more challenging to the pupils.

Teachers observed pupils as they exchanged ideas, as they negotiated design, and construction details, and as they remained self-motivated and on task throughout the process.





section 3:
assessment
and
evaluation:
focus and
methods

Be clear about what makes a creative classroom, then you know what you are looking for, both when you are assessing a pupil's work and evaluating your own teaching.

Creativity involves many complex behaviours. They cannot all be assessed at once. So pupils and teachers need to decide in advance which aspects will be assessed. Don't attempt too much.

assessing and evaluating

Creativity

Relationships and environment
Pupils help each other to focus on learning, developing supportive relationships that encourage risk-taking and expression of ideas.

Tasks
Pupils see how the tasks relate to the real world; they are clear about freedoms and constraints; they explore cause and effect; they make effective contributions and 'see things through'.

Learning aims
Pupils relate the parts of the project to the whole; they understand the learning aims behind the tasks; their confidence, in expressing ideas and feelings clearly and imaginatively, has increased.

Learning processes
Pupils critically reflect, are open and flexible, take risks, use general and detailed knowledge, make informal decisions, are clear about rights and responsibilities; they collaborate effectively, reach conclusions, realise high expectations, give support, challenge and feedback to each other.

Resources
Pupils understand and manage resources, effectively selecting and developing them. They develop their ideas through these and realise high quality completed products.

Products
Pupils understand the product's purpose, their solutions have originality, value, technical proficiency.

Prior to the Creativity Counts project being initiated a literature search was completed. This informed the development of a 'framework for creativity'. The resulting framework was used throughout the project to assist the process of sharing ideas, planning and reporting. It proved to be of great value. Here the framework has been used to guide the assessment and evaluation of creativity.

Assessing and evaluating are of great importance. However, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. The comments that follow are from teachers who were actively promoting creativity with pupils. Some comments relate to more summative approaches, but most are formative in orientation, enabling insights into a whole range of issues, such as:

- how ready and able pupils think they are
- the nature of the challenge and how it is being responded to
- the ways in which real learning is occurring
- social learning in addition to subject-related learning.

Involving the children more in many aspects, including assessment, making clear the aims of tasks and planning seems an obvious thing to do, but how often have I taught a lesson and not explained what I am looking for from the children?



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'Seeing the big picture'

Learning aims

These include pupils' enjoyment, motivation and sustained engagement; the building of confidence and imagination; encouragement of success; freedom to express ideas and feelings. Pupils are enabled to relate the parts of the project to the whole.

Learning processes

Pupils critically reflect; are open and flexible; take risks; use general and detailed knowledge; make informed decisions; have rights and responsibilities clarified; can collaborate, achieve conclusion, realise high expectations, receive support, challenge and feedback.

Informing pupils of the structure of the learning

Pupils need to understand the structure of their project and how all the parts fit together. Assessment which considers the learning processes helps pupils and teachers to understand how effectively they are learning. Negotiating success criteria with pupils will also greatly enhance appreciation and ownership of the purposes of the learning experience.

It is the nature of the creative process itself – often difficult to assess – which can be clearly observed and recorded.

Teaching is setting a framework for creativity. Focusing pupils to organise their thinking ... and finally to reflect critically upon what they have learned and how this has happened is essential if success is to be achieved.



Assessing collaboration

Opportunity to collaborate in learning has long been recognised as beneficial. The skills of listening, of compromising, of reflecting upon ideas and of supporting a collective decision-making effort are necessary for group working. They should therefore be supported by assessment that explicitly reflects these skills.

Some (pupils) were negotiating strongly within their groups, clarifying their rights through democratic means. There was an air of growing social confidence as interactions provided a platform for flexibility and openness.

Children were observed working well in groups. They identified roles and allocated them. They were also observed making decisions. They came up with their own ideas.

Opportunities for pupils to express themselves

Tasks that foster creativity are generally set up to encourage a variety of answers. Teachers found that this approach reduces the fear often displayed by pupils, replacing it with more self-confident expressions of ideas being valid, of risk-taking and flexibility being valued. It was relatively straightforward to develop criteria to take account of these dimensions. Sharing these criteria with pupils, even developing these with them, sent powerful messages that risk-taking is being encouraged and justifiable difference is good.

The children worked in groups to create their plan. The debate and negotiation produced a high quality of interaction as ideas were discussed and adapted.

Peer assessment was valuable, enabling them to provide positive criticism and praise for the work of other groups.

Using interim assessments or evaluations

Interim peer assessment is a useful means by which pupil groups can help one another. It can also help in raising standards across the whole class. Simply swapping work in progress among members of a class for an informed and focused interim evaluation was effective particularly at points when important decisions were needed. Spontaneous discussion about particular features such as risk-taking also led to worthwhile direct peer assessment. Such an approach is not too time consuming, considering its benefits.

Pupils made evaluative comments on the work of self and others, taking into consideration the hypotheses offered by other groups.

Feedback can be given by peers and adults. Receiving feedback and encouragement is really important to the self-confidence and motivation of pupils. Teachers found that doing so helped to raise achievement.

Feedback during the presentations emphasised that the interactions had taught the children a lot about themselves.

Overview: assessing and evaluating learning aims and processes

The *focus* for assessment and evaluation of learning processes can include questions about:

- pupils' appreciation of the task as a whole, including the freedoms and constraints being afforded
- the key features of support and direction, including the specific teaching provided to pupils to enable them to perform the task enjoyably and effectively
- any collaborative approaches being employed; their effectiveness in helping to clarify the task, generate ideas and/or enable pupils to raise standards and generally complete the task with satisfaction
- the extent to which open, flexible responses are encouraged and forthcoming
- the extent to which risk-taking is encouraged and evident in pupils' work: responses being confident and imaginative throughout.

Assessment and evaluation *methods* include:

- collaborative development of criteria; developing appropriate questions about the learning processes that help pupils and teachers reflect upon them
- employing interim reviews during the course of activity, focused upon important aspects of learning, standards being achieved, and progress being made
- guiding pupils to use appropriate media for interim and summary evaluation: whether self-focused, peer- or teacher-led
- providing adequate time to ensure that feedback is constructive and informative.

Relationships and the learning environment

These enable pupils to focus on their learning, are flexible and facilitate dynamic responses.

Relationships and much more

The key to providing a successful and productive environment that fosters creativity is the development of positive relationships.

Staff have worked hard to establish and sustain an environment and emotional climate that makes creativity possible.

Relationships are the key starting point; we are constantly circulating the room and encouraging a positive atmosphere.

Conditions that reflect this include:

- well-organised facilities and resources, where pupils operate and learn without frustration and in which pupils demonstrate respect by their willingness to maintain the area in good order
- an encouraging atmosphere, in which views can freely be expressed without fear of put-down or worse
- vibrant and supportive approaches, in which expression of ideas are encouraged
- partnerships being sought and encouraged, between adults and pupils, pupils and pupils. This should take place through the learning challenges (which are created and defined, whenever possible, through dialogue and discussion).

Seeking the views of pupils on some or all of the above helps inform the further development of a learning environment that not only is conducive to promoting creativity, but is also helpful to all aspects of learning in a modern culture.

Asking questions such as:

- 'To what extent were you able to express yourselves, freely and unhindered?' and
- 'What changes to your environment would have helped?'

can reveal much about the context in which pupils are operating. Of course, pupils being willing to talk openly and without fear is also an indication of how constructive and supportive the learning environment happens to be.



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We took more time on discussion and less time worrying about getting the right tick. A good working atmosphere for discussion and pupils sharing thoughts on each other's work raised standards immediately.

Any corrections that are identified are more meaningful to the individual now we use more peer evaluation.



Self- and peer assessment is very productive in this work. It encourages pupils to stop and think before moving on and helps them to be more self-reliant.

I employ focused observation far more now.

Overview: assessing and evaluating learning aims and processes

The *focus* for assessment and evaluation of the learning aims and processes can include questions about:

- the atmosphere and how it helps people express themselves freely without fear of being wrong or being put down
- the approaches employed and how they provide a balance between seeking ideas, thoughts and views as well as right answers
- the facilities, and how they are organised/used to provide encouragement and reduce frustration or stress
- the partnerships that are encouraged and maintained throughout a task.

The assessment and evaluation *methods* include:

- the development and application of criteria that embrace the above ideas and themes
- use of surveys and focused discussion as well as visual forms of expression suited to the children, for example ideograms, cartoon depictions, free writing and drawing by pupils
- focused observation by peers and adults.

Tasks

These reflect the real world, provide opportunities to explore cause and effect, provide clarity of freedoms and constraints, and require completion.

Appropriateness of the task to the pupils and their learning

When identifying the correct methods and focus for assessment, teachers found it essential to take account of the task or tasks. Doing so provided insight into the appropriateness of the task. Pupils' motivation can often be gauged by observing their commitment to the task, how well they work through difficulties and generally remain solution focused.

The task was 'a real life problem'. It required a conclusion (end product) In carrying out the task the pupils have become more competent in using success criteria and evaluating their own work.

Valuing the task is very important. If the children do not see the relevance of the task they will not engage with it. It is given greater importance by the children if they see it in the assessment in which they are involved.

Pupils used peer assessment of the task to help them clarify what was required. This is a technique which is well established in our school. This activity used this to its benefit.

In setting the task it is clearly important for the pupils to appreciate what they think the task is, how they can respond to it and what kind of opportunities they have for exploring, maybe through hypothesis, cause and effect.

Pupils were asked to evaluate and conclude which hypothesis offered by the groups was the most likely.

When pupils are involved in assessment, they are better able to clarify their ideas about the task and how they can respond to it. When teachers analyse what pupils say about the task, it gives insights into the pupils' understanding of the learning opportunities.

Overview: assessing and evaluating tasks

The *focus* for assessment and evaluation of the task can include questions about:

- its appropriateness to the pupils – to what extent they view the task as being real and relevant to them and their learning
- the extent to which pupils take ownership of the task and the learning implicit to it
- the extent to which the structure and presentation of the task enables pupils to be clear about their freedoms and constraints; the appropriateness of these in respect of pupils' preparedness to engage and remain motivated by their experience of the task.

Assessment and evaluation *methods* include:

- observation of the pupils, particularly in the early stages of their introduction to the task and its parameters
- scrutiny of pupils' interpretation of the task: their role within it. This might include listening to pupils, asking them to make proposals that show their appreciation of the task and how, in outline, they intend responding to it
- questions about the task in any review of the task carried out during or at the conclusion of it.





Resources

Practical and immediately available resources enable pupils' determined actions and assist them in realising quality, completed products.

Providing or restricting resources

Having access to appropriate resources so that ideas can be realised with minimum frustration has long been recognised as being key to pupils' motivation. Creativity demands a more holistic view of the importance and relevance of resources and their availability. Creativity can be aided through good provision of a range of materials. It can also be encouraged through the restriction of resources. Pupils can be extremely creative; some would say they have to be, if presented with a situation where resources are deliberately limited.

Resources for pupils to generate and test ideas

Resources for creating, for practising skills and for testing out ideas influence the success of a task. Such resources need to be available.

They used given materials (during this early planning stage) and showed evidence of creative thinking and collaborative planning relevant to the challenge.

Materials stimulate conversation and make believe.

Understanding what is available

Having materials set out so that pupils can view and feel them helps, particularly when pupils are inexperienced in using a range of materials. For more experienced children, and when the task is as much to do with encouraging their conceptualisation, lists of resources could be considered rather than the resources themselves. Whatever the methods used, and the resources provided, creativity benefits when there is a clear strategy for resources. This should be linked directly to the aims and learning intentions of the tasks.

We showed the children the resources available in the school, allowing them to choose.

Spontaneous play in the castle helped inspire the children to write their own imaginative stories.

Helping pupils to manage resources and make choices

Assessment and evaluation can play an important role in underpinning the choice of resources made and provided for pupils. Asking questions during a task will also help guide what additional structural support might be desirable.

Questions such as:

- 'What are the requirements of the materials?', 'Which materials suit these requirements?', 'Why do you think this?'
- 'What resources do you think will help you create or test out ideas?', 'Why do you think this?'
- 'How can your ideas be made a reality?'

can illuminate much and guide ongoing support for pupils' work.

They experimented and tested their own ideas. They captured different ways of expressing information about the school.

Pupils were given choices and the structure to help them to make decisions about the resources.

Pupils needed support to use the digital camera. They still require more practice in the use of the digital video camera.

Overview: assessing and evaluating resources

The *focus* for assessment and evaluation of the practical and immediate resource provision and its use can include questions about:

- the way in which pupils engage with the resources available; how determined they are as a result of the resource provided, whether restricted or open
- how ideas were generated and tested using the resources made available, and whether there were other ideas that were not pursued
- the extent to which desired quality was achieved as a result of resources, and pupils' use of them.

The assessment and evaluation *methods* include:

- incorporating questions about resource provision and management in criteria developed and used
- observing how pupils relate to the resources provided: how they meet the challenge and are creative with what is provided, to generate and test out ideas and to complete the entire task
- using interim, peer- and teacher-led reviews to evaluate the management of resources and the support necessary for their appropriate and creative use.

Products

Products have purposefulness, originality and value (to the learner or the recipient).

Looking at more than just the technical proficiency of what is produced

Evaluation of essays gave insight into the clarity of pupils' storytelling and the number and variety of ideas generated from the drawing stimulus.

Pictorial evidence also gave clear understanding of the pupils' learning.

Staff observation of the whole task also contributed to the assessment of the products.

With my help children developed their own success criteria and used these in the assessment of what they produced.

The product has long been seen as the prime focus for assessing creativity. It is important and can provide very useful insight into capability of groups and individuals. This is probably because it is a tangible outcome, something that remains and can easily be judged. There are dangers though. Criteria for assessment should reflect the purpose for the product, but also the reasons for the creative experience itself. Taking risks and being original are often suppressed as criteria for assessment in favour of ones that focus upon technical proficiency. Teachers asked 'Is it fit for purpose?', 'Is it well made?' and 'Does it look good?' But they found out they also needed to ask 'How original is it?' and 'Were risks taken and what was their effect?'

Assessment by people other than teachers

Often the judgement of outcomes is undertaken by experts. Adults forming judgement about the worth of a pupil's product is valuable. It is also important that pupils' views feature in the assessment process, both in forming criteria and in the assessment procedure itself. In this way, pupils themselves can form views about what is important, and to what standard they should be aiming.

It helped having other adults around. The children sought their views and this helped them a lot.

Involving people, for whom an outcome is being sought, in the development of criteria is also valuable. Pupils often respond more favourably to comment when it comes from a 'real' source, someone for whom the outcome is meant.

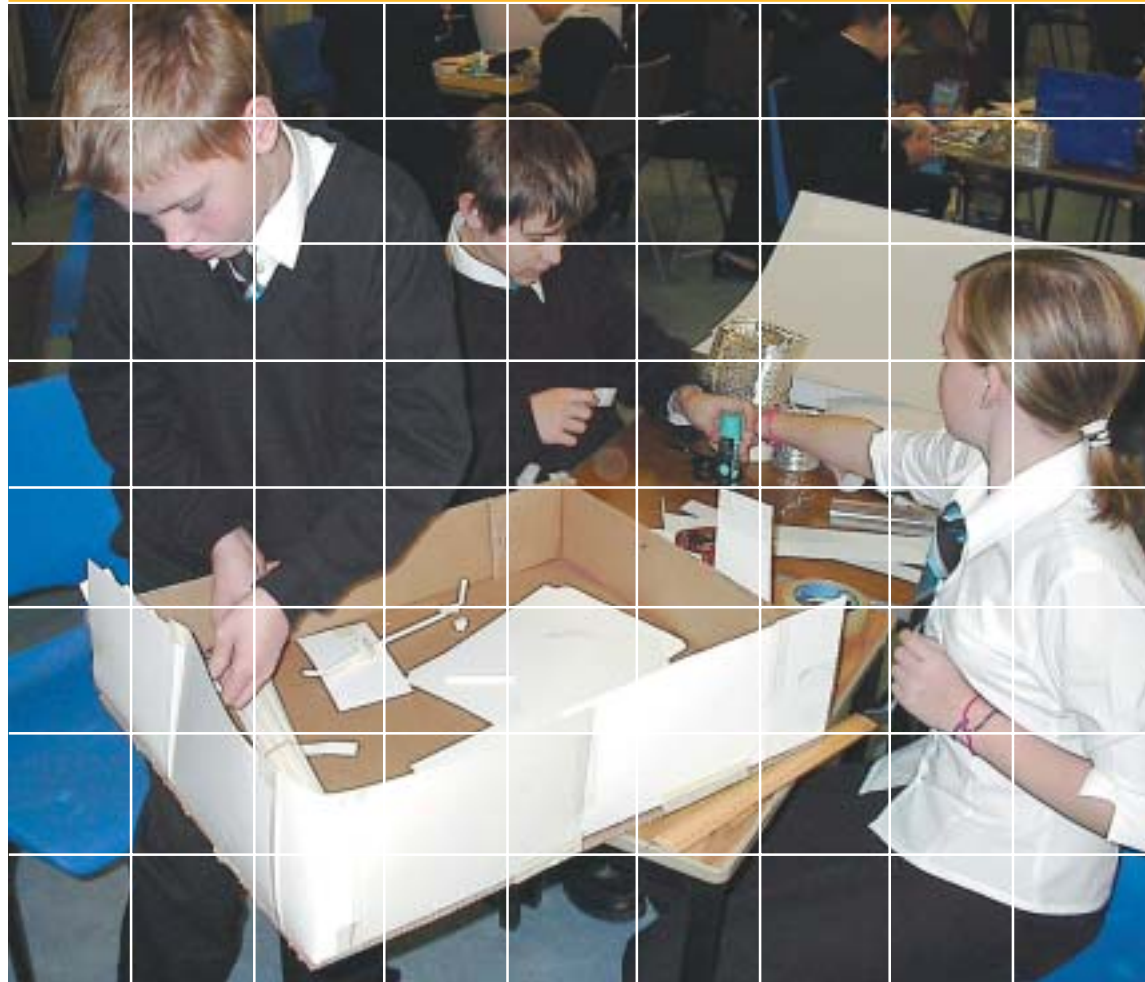
Overview: assessing and evaluating products

The *focus* for assessment and evaluation of the products created can include questions about:

- the purposes of the product
- the originality and value of the solutions as perceived by those producing and those receiving the products
- the technical proficiency displayed in production
- the degree to which the outcome was produced through risk-taking.

The *methods* can include:

- observation of the process, particularly when pupils are encouraged or choose to take risks
- peer evaluation and assessment that includes adults and those for whom products are meant, using the criteria developed prior to and during work being carried out
- scrutiny of products such as presentations, displays and pupils talking about their work
- self-expression by the pupils following completion of part of, or the entire, task.



section 4:

creativity
and the future:

what schools
are saying

Evidence from the Creativity Counts project supports the view that many teachers find creativity a positive experience for pupils, for themselves and their schools.

This made me aware that children have skills and abilities you do not always realise they have.

We have become more confident in empowering children to develop their own ideas. We have developed our learning and teaching skills.

The experience has rekindled my enthusiasm for what I do. I now remember why I chose to become a teacher.

Some professional reflections

What follows is a representative selection of comments expressing the thoughts and reflections of teachers involved in Creativity Counts. There is widespread support for the concept of creativity and the benefits its cultivation through teaching can bring. However, teachers and managers do cite a number of issues and questions yet to be resolved. Each of these is seen, from their practical experience, and the evidence that emerges from it, to be significant if creativity is to be given greater opportunity to flourish and grow within schools.

In reporting, teachers were asked to identify issues and questions that could only be substantiated by evidence from their own experience.

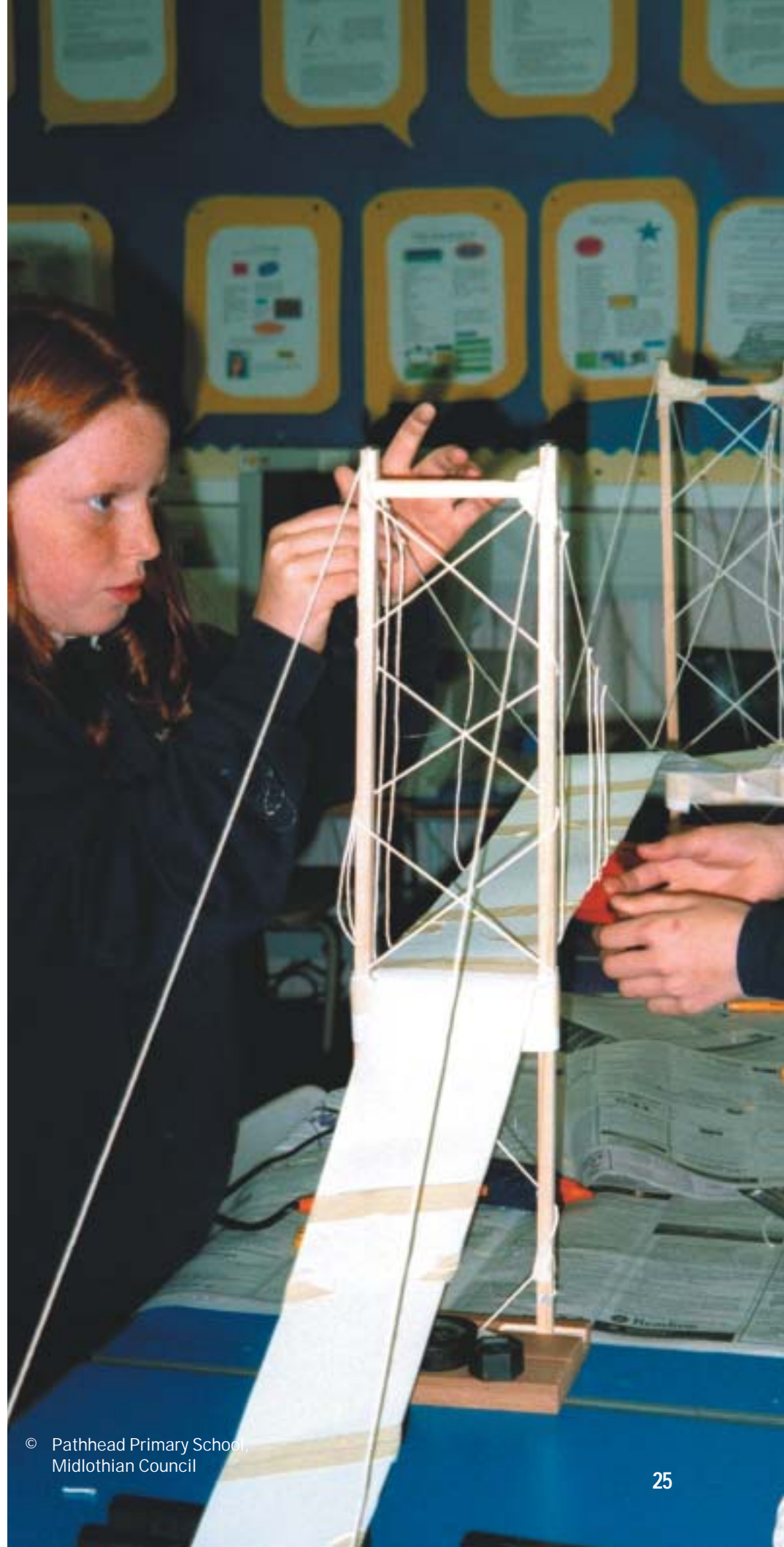
Policy

Creativity needs to be built in as a key feature of all areas of the curriculum.

It is important that we foster creativity at an early stage so that children are more prepared to lead an active role in their own learning, developing better self-esteem and more willing to take chances.

... more definition of the meaning of creativity and examples of how to include it in all curricular areas.

There should be less emphasis on what is being taught and more on how – quality of teaching.



Current assessment procedures need to be more flexible if creativity is to be fostered. More opportunities are needed for peer and self-assessment.

Practice

There need to be more opportunities for collaboration and for pupils to show perseverance, initiative, reasoning and confidence across the curriculum.

Thinking and content should be 'taught alongside each other'. There should be less emphasis on transmission and much more on problem-based and thinking strategies.

Perhaps our teaching methodologies on assessment should take into account how much the children have enjoyed the work.

The model adopted throughout this project is based on the view of the child as the active constructor of meaning – the adult's role is to support, challenge, and extend the young person's understanding.

Don't forget about spontaneity. There need to be more hands-on and less rigid learning experiences.

Professional development

Teachers need to be encouraged to relinquish some aspects of day-to-day classroom control, for example in terms of grouping, use of resources, in order to foster a truly creative environment.

Teachers need to be made aware of 'how' to foster creativity in the classroom – good practice in schools should be highlighted by headteachers, the local authority and through dissemination of evidence-based practice.



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In conclusion ...

This selection of quotations from teachers and managers is indicative of a range of professional perspectives on creativity in education. These perspectives and the findings of the Creativity Counts project are supportive of the development of National Priority 5, Learning for Life. Looking to the future, the professional reflections that have emerged from Creativity Counts are very relevant to the overall review of curriculum and assessment being undertaken as part of the Scottish Executive's Educating for Excellence agenda.

Acknowledgements

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Participating schools

- Heathrigg Nursery School, Falkirk Council
- Bainsford Primary School, Falkirk Council
- Borthwick Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Coupar Angus Primary School, Perth and Kinross Council
- Eastfield Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Ferguslie Primary School, Renfrewshire Council
- Hawthornden Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Inveraray Primary School, Argyll and Bute Council
- Ladywood Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Lasswade Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Lintrathen Primary School, Angus Council
- Longforgan Primary School, Perth and Kinross Council
- Pathhead Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Rosewell Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Sciennes Primary School, Edinburgh Council
- Slamannan Primary School, Falkirk Council
- Stobhill Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Wardie Primary School, Edinburgh Council
- Woodburn Primary School, Midlothian Council
- Headwell Special School, Fife Council
- Dalkeith High School, Midlothian Council
- Kilwinning Academy, North Ayrshire Council
- Larbert High School, Falkirk Council
- Monifieth High School, Angus Council
- Notre Dame High School, Glasgow Council
- Oban High School, Argyll and Bute Council
- Stromness Academy, Orkney Council
- Webster's High School, Angus Council

Special thanks go to all the staff and pupils of these schools who participated in the Creativity Counts development project.

Assessing and Evaluating Creativity: A Literature Search is available directly from the IDES Network, free to members on request.



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