Incorporating Creativity Into the Lesson

Following are several techniques you can use to integrate creativity into your classroom.

Scamper

This is an acronym that describes a structured, guided way to assist students with creative thinking and problem solving.

- **S**ubstitute: Using a trial-and-error process to try different things out
- **C**ombine: Synthesizing to create something new
- **A**dapt: Changing what is already known or existing practices
- **M**agnify or **M**inimize: Modifying the size, number, or quality of variables for more outcome possibilities
- **P**ut to other uses: Using things for other purposes than originally intended
- **E**liminate or **E**laborate: Removing or adding more details to a particular quality for more outcome possibilities
- **R**everse or **R**earrange: Focusing on opposite or contrary quality, or changing the order or sequence that would affect the target

Brainstorming

This technique provides a thinking process that strives for a nonjudgmental, supportive atmosphere in which idea production can flourish. The four basic rules of brainstorming are:

1. We rule out criticism.
2. We welcome freewheeling.
3. We desire a quantity of ideas.
4. We seek combination and improvement.

Method 635

This technique is related to brainstorming and often is referred to as *brainwriting*. It involves a group of students generating ideas to solve a specific problem or issue. For instance, six students write down three solutions ideas in five minutes. Each student passes the ideas to the student next to him or her for improvement or to add three new ones. The process continues until every student in the group gets a chance to contribute.

Attribute Listing

In this method, the teacher divides the problem or product into key attributes that the students address separately. By identifying key attributes of the problem or product, the teacher can break the task into manageable components that can then spur new combinations of ideas. To illustrate, consider the following.

Example: What are the key attributes of the story?		
Character?	Setting?	Conflict?

If the students slice and dice what they already know and mix the attributes, they can create surprising and creative ideas.

Adding Random Input

This technique generates new perspectives and ideas. In this strategy, the teacher juxtaposes the problem or subject for creative thought with a randomly selected word. By attempting to make connections between the subject and the unrelated word, students can escape from restrictive thinking patterns and see the problem from a new vantage point or generate new ideas.

Consider the following example. Students are reflecting on their understanding of the responsibilities, duties, privileges, and rights of citizenship. They can select a random noun, whether from a prepared set, from a dictionary, or from words available on the classroom bookshelf. The word can even be from outside the field being studied, such as *ants*. Brainstorming and making associations from there, the class can generate a number of new ideas. For example, the students extrapolate their knowledge about ant colonies to human societies to talk about division of labor, social classes, and privilege that comes with birth.

Six Hats

Six hats (de Bono for Schools, 2015) is a quick, simple technique to help students (or anyone, for that matter) improve and organize their thinking. The six hats refer to the kind of thinking students are engaging in at any given time. As each student is working on a problem, he or she places one of the hats on his or her head to determine what kind of thinking to use. The hats can be either imaginary or phased from de Bono for Schools (2015). The six hats are as follows.

1. The **white hat** calls for information known or needed. This involves data gathering and objective thinking. What are the facts?

2. The **red hat** signifies feelings, hunches, emotions, and intuition. This allows the thinker to use feelings and intuition without justifications.

3. The **black hat** is used for judgment and caution. It is a very valuable hat. The purpose of black hat thinking is to point out why suggestions might not be appropriate for this situation. This is the logic hat.

4. The **yellow hat** symbolizes brightness and optimism. It means positive, logical thinking. The hat allows the user to determine what will work and what it will offer in terms of benefits.

5. The **green hat** focuses on creativity. It entails statements of provocation and investigation.

6. The **blue hat** is used to manage the thinking processes. This is the metacognitive hat. It solves questions like, What is the goal? How are we doing?

Sources: Adapted from Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. (n.d.). Techniques for creative teaching. *Accessed at www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching-resources/classroom-practice/teaching-techniques-strategies/creativity/techniques-creative-teaching on October 6, 2014; de Bono for Schools. (2015).* Six thinking hats: A tool to strengthen critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity skills. *Accessed at www.debonoforschools.com/asp/six_hats.asp on July 15, 2015; Starko, A. J. (2005).* Creativity in the classroom: Schools of curious delight *(3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.*