

Creativity and Child-Centered Learning





Part 1: How Child-Centered Learning Fosters Creativity

Analyze how child-centered learning in the Dog Project fosters children's creative thinking, creative expression, and creative skills. Substantiate your analysis with at least 5 examples from the project. (3 paragraphs)

The child-centered learning in the Dog Project fosters children's creative thinking by their beginning phase of questions. The Dog Project allows children to ask questions, listen to each other, and share their own ideas and knowledge about the topic. According to Project Approach (n.d.), it explains how the Dog Project fosters creative thinking by allowing children to ask questions about dogs and create a list of their questions such as 'Why do some dogs have so much hair?' or 'Do dogs scratch?'. The Dog Project also had numerous guest speakers to talk to the class. A shop owner and organization member talked about her own experiences with rescuing dogs and the work they did with dogs to ensure they were getting the care to get better. They also had another guest who had answered impromptu questions regarding a specific dog and training.

In providing children with a creative expression, the Dog Project allowing children to create their own dog park using the sensory table. According to Project Approach (n.d.), a question after visiting a neighborhood dog park was why they have fences, and the teacher took this opportunity to engage children kinesthetically and creatively by providing them with materials to create their own dog park. Another example that the Dog Project fosters creative expression was throughout the research, they allowed children to express themselves through stories and drawings that they had shared about dogs with their classmates. Additionally, the Dog project also allowed children to draw their idea of dogs. This activity allowed children to take control of their imagination and create the most beautiful dogs.

The Dog Project also provides children with creative skills such as curiosity during their first phase of asking questions as a group while also keeping a very open mind to creating different types of hypotheses for their questions. A special activity that the Dog Project did as a thank you for to their guests were create dog treats and pupcakes. This provided children with handful of creative benefits such as concentration when they were measuring and adding the right ingredients as well as positive emotion through their thank-you cards to all their guest speakers. Furthermore, the Dog Project wraps up by the creative posters made of various types of dogs and even included a dramatic play area of a grooming shop in their classroom to continue to encourage learning about dogs.

Part 2: How Creative Teaching Fosters Creative Learning

Summarize your definition of a creative teacher including an analysis of why being a creative teacher is essential to fostering children's healthy development and learning. (2—3 paragraphs)



A creative teacher infuses core learning with a sense of meaning and purpose for children's growth and development. According to Hands On Scotland (n.d.), it explains that creative teachers ensure that children's learning covers all senses to be more effective for growth and development. Creative teachers tend to have materials and ideas that spark curiosity, encourage open-mindedness, inspire imagination, and provide experiences for problem solving opportunities. Within the classroom, creative teachers can adapt to changing situations, messy areas, and loud noises. Additionally, creative teachers ensure that children have an ample amount of room for creativity such as a designated area for drawing or dramatic play.

According to Clifford (2012), it explains how embracing creativity as part of learning such as creating a classroom that recognizes creativity as part of the learning process. This also allows children to see the numerous ways to solve problems and construct creative solutions based on real-world scenarios. By showcasing creativity as a learning progress, it provides children with the experience of creative problem-solving that can support their development and learning both emotionally and socially. Creative teachers should always encourage questions and comments during discussions to promote positive validation in children's creative thinking that can spark interests for the child as well as provide them with opportunities to spark their mind to create the unexpected that even the teacher can share with other students, parents, and faculty members.

Analyze how the teachers in the video, *Thinking Big Extending Curriculum Projects*, exemplify creative teaching. Substantiate your thinking with at least 5 examples from the video. (3 paragraphs)

In the video, both teachers used creative teaching in the most amazing ways to spark ideas and creation. In the beginning, they expressed how it all started through carefully observing the children during play. It wasn't just observing to

ensure they are playing safely but the items they were playing with and the reason behind them playing it this way. Children began to build even bigger towers, creating stronger foundations, and collaborating with each other as they continued to make it a daily goal to build and build. As the days continued, the teachers encouraged this idea of building the tallest towers by creating a bulletin board that consisted of tall buildings and people who have climbed mountains and high areas. However, during this time, they had changed from building the tallest towers to building a cityscape nearby the pictures. Children also continued to build towers, cityscapes, and a new idea of building on mirrors where they noticed their creations doubled.

Teachers significantly observed and listen to the conversations within the children and brought their little ideas to life through discussions. In the video, they explained that it was not just birds itself but the idea of how birds are able to land at the tallest towers and tree. Children imagined what they could see being that high. The teachers had also read books that had images of towers to even using their bodies to measure. In this classroom, they managed to do a small math curriculum and utilize it in the theme of building towers by allowing children to see how long or how tall their structures were. Teachers also encouraged physical arts to encourage the use of strength and coordination by allowing children to climb using ropes as well as provide them with rock climbing belts that were used in the dramatic play area.

The teachers didn't stop there, they even included the community in which they visited both the water tower and space needle. In both trips, children were able to draw what they saw, and the children worked very hard in constructing their detailed and complex artwork of what they saw. This method supported their creative skills of imagination to create magnificent images of what they saw. They also constructed many types of arts with different materials such as pens/markers, watercolors, sugar cubes and clay. Children were even mixed to create big tower designs, teachers mixed children who loved to draw and those who didn't, and they created the most beautiful towers together through collaboration. Children also wrote letters to each other to *stop building tall towers* which supported their development of language, fine motor, and speech. Overall, these teachers provided children with an ample number of materials to support their creative process through arts, play, and the community.

Resources

Clifford, M. (2019, December 6). *30 things you can do to promote creativity | creative learning strategy*. InformED.

<https://www.opencolleges.edu.au/informed/creativity/promote-creativity-in-your-classroom/>

Education Scotland. (2021). *What are creative skills*.

https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Creativity/CRE1_WhatAreCreativitySkills/WhatAreCreativitySkills.pdf

Hands On Scotland. (n.d.). *Creativity*. Retrieved July 26, 2021, from

<http://www.handsonscotland.co.uk/creativity/>

The Project Approach. (2021). *The Philadelphia school preschool dog project*.

https://education.gov.scot/improvement/Documents/Creativity/CRE1_WhatAreCreativitySkills/WhatAreCreativitySkills.pdf

Thinking Big Extending Emergent Curriculum Projects. (Hilltop Educator Institute.

(n.d.). *Thinking Big Extending Emergent Curriculum Projects* [Video file].

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