Creative Learning Today

CENTER FOR CREATIVE LEARNING NEWSLETTER • DR. DON TREFFINGER, EDITOR

Volume 15, Number 2 April-July, 2007

Does Teaching For Creativity and CPS Matter?

Editorial by Dr. Don Treffinger

Unfortunately, schools today seem still to be caught (largely by external pressures on them) in the trap of focusing narrowly, and often exclusively, on scores on standardized tests as the indicators of educational quality and success. The most common question we still hear is, "Will teaching our students creative or critical thinking and CPS lead to higher scores on our state tests?"

This is a loaded question, because of two assumptions that appear to be built into it. The first is that raising those test scores is the ultimate criterion of the educational value or merit of any program or process. But the second assumption is probably even more worrisome: that the tests we use should be accepted as valid and comprehensive indicators of any and all educational goals and outcomes, regardless of their complexity.

In some ways, just to be able to have a quick and easy response to the question, it is tempting to argue that we should pursue more research. Students might be assigned randomly to experimental groups that receive CPS instruction or control groups that do not, and compared on the results of their standardized test scores (in one or more basic academic content area). It is certainly plausible, I believe, to hypothesize that students who learn and apply CPS will also grow in skills that relate to such academic skills as reading and language (analyzing and understanding written material or oral presentations, and communicating skillfully with others), writing (expressing one's ideas to others), or math (analyzing and using quantitative data), for example.

However, my concerns about the second assumption immediately lead to difficulties. I am not at all confident that the tests upon which we rely so heavily actually measure effectively students' ability to demonstrate those skills in real-life contexts, or that they engage students' thinking beyond the levels of recall and recognition. Nor am I confident that the tests provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their ability to apply or use their academic or intellectual skills in dealing with complex, open-ended, unstructured problems and challenges— the kinds of problems that are at the essence of the goals and purposes of CPS instruction.

I understand that Albert Einstein once said, "Not everything that we can count counts, nor can we count everything that counts." I understand and accept the importance of being accountable for the impact, outcomes, or benefits of instruction in creative learning and CPS. However, to meet those challenges, it is essential that we raise our sights beyond standardized achievement tests and engage in rigorous inquiry employing more complex and appropriate assessments and criteria.

If the challenge is to provide direct evidence of meaningful impact on important outcomes, we should embrace it. It is clear, for example, that success in personal life and in the world of work, today and in the future, will require students to be able to work effectively as part of a team, know how to formulate and attack complex, ambiguous problems that extend beyond "looking up the answers," generate possible solutions and action plans, and prepare to take effective action on their solutions. These require that we look beyond today's standardized tests.

Where To Find It

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ISSN #0895-9234

Assessing Creative Outcomes in British Schools

By Dr Tom Balchin

School teachers in Britain are currently mandated to encourage creative cultures in most areas of the National Curriculum. For instance, Design and Technology particularly highlights this obligation, although paradoxically in the Curriculum itself and accompanying guides, no advice whatsoever exists concerning how to recognise or reward it. Teachers in charge of talent development face the same problem. They are told that creativity is at least a third part of the phenomenon of giftedness, and are usually shown Renzulli's enrichment triad model (Renzulli, 1977) to prove it. Unfortunately, the constant assessment of just about everything is very much part of the current British government's *modus operandi*. Thus teachers consequently face the problem of needing to show school performance assessors that they are doing their jobs, and their students that they are actively producing judgements concerning creative effort.

In order to find the scale of the problem, the views of school coordinators of gifted education from 812 schools (responsible for just over 400,000 students) from all over Britain were sought (Balchin, 2007). This represented a 4% sample of all the schools in Britain, but a 12% sample (by extrapolation from government statistics) of British schools with an active gifted and talented register in 2006. Amongst other problems facing teachers, the role of creativity in identification of student ability was highlighted. When asked what signs this sample typically looked for in students to identify giftedness, a startling 72% identified indications of creativity, without being cued, as *the* best way to identify giftedness.

It was found that coordinators are currently recommending students for gifted and talented provision almost purely via the subjective nominations of teachers, combined with some knowledge of individual academic achievements at certain scholastic aptitude tests. This practice contrasts with the way US gifted education coordinators usually have at their disposal the results from a phalanx of tests before recommending that certain students should receive extra provision. The national survey revealed the serious lack of any helpful tools for teachers to use in order to justify their own intuition and professional judgement.

When attempting formally to distinguish between the relative creative effort inherent in many scholarly outcomes, British teachers demand a reliable method of evaluating products which does not take too long to complete, and replaces other kinds of assessment burdens. It was decided to design and evaluate a consensual assessment tool which fully described creative products, but which was designed using feedback from teachers and which attempted to use significantly fewer definitions than Amabile's 1982 consensual assessment technique (CAT).

The collaborative, discursive process used has been shown to be a major strength; it has been shown to have the power to offset individual bias and frames of reference. Inter-judge reliabilities reported in this area of research have been found to be high – in excess of r=.90 (Pearson product moment co-efficient). For example, Dollinger & Shafran (2005) achieved a mean correlation rating of r=.91 with a sample of 200 students' drawings (drawn in response to stimuli provided by the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT), and assessed with Amabile's CAT.)

Creativity research should ultimately endeavor to assist practitioners. Given the onerous assessment obligations that British teachers feel dominates their practice, the initial aim was to produce a practical tool for those teaching the arts subjects where particular visible outcomes emerge, in order to help inform compulsory assessments. Furthermore, it needed to be completed three or four times a year by teachers themselves without too much hardship, or time being wasted. It is speculated that older students, particularly those in further and higher education can usefully be included in the judging process of their own products.

The creative product feedback sheet has just seven criteria of creativity for products to be scored against. These were generated in 2005 by constructing lists of descriptors of creative products from the extensive literature (mainly US produced) then repeatedly subsuming the available criteria until only the very essentials emerged. It can be seen that the form derives its base format in particular from the Creative Product Analysis Matrix (CPAM) theory produced by Besemer and Treffinger in 1981. Readers will be aware that the CPAM is a three-dimensional model of creativity in products, which hypothesizes novelty, resolution, and elaboration/synthesis as three factors which most help to judges to focus their attention on relevant attributes of products (Besemer 1998). The form was then trialled in schools around Britain for nine months in order to see if could retain fully the complexity of the phenomenon.

Four criteria describe the creative concept, or ideas, and three criteria describe the quality of outcome; which evaluates how well the creative thoughts have been shown in the product. It is proposed that creativity is seen in both the concept and the standard of production that the result showed. But it is the creative concept stage where the unique ideas can be seen to be brought forth, and the quality of outcome stage is the manifestation of these. The latter cannot occur without the former; it is proposed that the quality of outcome is a vehicle for the creative thought.

The particular format for assessing products made in technology classes is shown below:

Uniqueness: what is the degree of deviance from the normal incidence?

Association of ideas: is there a link or attempt at synthesis of two or more broad ideas?

Risk-taking: is it a bold attempt? How ambitious it? Is there a clear challenge taken on?

Potential: does it have the capacity to succeed or solve the problem? What is its likely promise?

Operability; is it effective? Does it really work?

Well-craftedness; is it carefully, neatly, robustly made?

Attractiveness: is it enjoyable, surprising, pleasing to look at?

The association of ideas in particular is a most important criterion at the heart of the many of the accepted overall definitions of creativity, and it was important to find out that simply asking a panel whether they could tell such information from a product alone actually worked. During trials, clear evidence emerged to show that it did work. Checking with information on processes from the students involved showed that the products nearly always revealed strong clues to the inspiring factors involved - enough for the judges to feel confident about reaching conclusions. Clearly, knowledge of the task, processes and skills levels of the creator assists this confidence.

In general, if the condition of the item is poor, creativity is harder to see and score. This is why operability, well-craftedness and attractiveness are important markers in creativity judgements, because they relate to the feeling of rightness of a product and the sense that ideas have been pulled together into a coherent whole.

The sheet incorporates an adapted Likert scale (with 12 points) to use for each criterion; intended to mirror the A, B, C and D of traditional marking schemes, with the corresponding pluses and minuses. This scale has been shown to have the same effect of forcing opinions as a 4 point scale, as the marker cannot "sit in the middle." Importantly, measures taken from the scale can either be looked upon as having value only in the way they help to force judgements by getting the scorers to focus their attention on the criteria, or to produce concrete measures. The version being developed now focuses on the production of a single score for teachers by totalling the scores from the scale and dividing by the number of criteria.

The trialling initially used 3D products made by students of design and technology around Britain, ranging from products with obvious everyday frames of reference for the judges, like chairs, to those with fewer comparators, like a hat made in a textiles department, with a mock cooling mechanism (!) built in. The form was then used variously by teachers of art, design, performing arts, information technology, creative writing and music at primary, secondary, further and higher education levels. For some of these subjects, the criterion *well-craftedness* was found to be unnecessary. To ramp up the reliability of the consensual assessment sheet, during all trialling, judges were given no information about the person or process, but usually were aware of the 4th P (press; or climate).

The trials have produced significant evidence that whatever the product under investigation (even if it was badly made and did not work), with appropriate criteria, a group of people who understand the nature of the product (which may imply the nature of the task) can achieve a very high level of agreement (ranging from r=.89 to r=.95) when deciding upon the creativity of products.

The teachers reported back that they believed that the sheet could assist students to harness their creative powers once they have begun to understand that time spent ideating and risk-taking during design phases can be directly rewarded. Moreover, that incomplete work (resulting from brave experimentation and working outside comfort zones) will not be penalized. They particularly viewed these assessments as a good way of showing students that they need to raise some aspect of their work in order to gain high marks, whether this be to concentrate more on creative thinking, or the presentation of their ideas.

The form is being developed now in conjunction with other tools for the British education market which focus on creative climates and processes. It will be called a Creative Feedback Package (CFP), and recommended for use by departmental panels in schools and higher education institutions.

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Citizens of the Future World: International Outreach in the Future Problem Solving Program

By Valerie Volk

Globalization affects us all. From the average citizen to world leaders, its impact is frequently the subject of discussion. At a recent meeting of APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) Singapore's Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong noted many of these effects: the dangers for the economy of the region resulting from the "strong ripple effect … of the globalised nature of our trade and supply chains," the international repercussions of terrorism and pandemics, and the ever-present environmental problems "which are not confined within national boundaries, so that countries must deal with trans-border issues like acid rain, industrial pollution and haze" (Straits Times, 20 November, 2006).

Such an overview gives only some indication of the global issues which tomorrow's leaders, today's students, will need to address. It opens for scrutiny the question of the extent to which education systems world-wide are preparing students to think beyond national boundaries, and to see problems in an international context.

Writers in the field have been critical, with comments such as that of Edwards (2001, p.1): "We may dream of a global community, but we don't yet live in one." Educationists are ready to talk about the need to achieve this outcome, but there are discrepancies between words and practice, such as that between the "centrality of international education in academic policy statements and the lack of concrete examples of how educators actually go about internationalising the curriculum in a tangible and easily replicable way (Eisenchlas and Trevaskes, 2003, p. 87)."

Bridging this gap thus becomes an important aspect of educational programs and curriculum design, and the Future Problem Solving Program International (FPSPI) demonstrates one valid and significant approach. That it achieves its objectives is clear when participating students speak about their experiences and the outcomes that they identify, both in terms of the world of the future, for which they will be responsible, and the world of today.

> "FPS helps us to appreciate that these goals and needs of the international community are intertwined; that the global impact of issues like agriculture or climate change is not something solely of the future, but of the present as well." (Sim Jingwei and Chua Shiyun, Raffles Junior College, Singapore)

For the FPS program to have maximum impact in the shaping of student consciousness of the world as a global community, it is clear that it needs to operate across national boundaries and to allow students themselves to feel that they are part of an international network. This recognition has become an area of central concern throughout the Future Problem Solving Program. Looking at a number of new programs and developing areas throughout the program not only shows the way in which a globally-minded future generation can be nurtured, but also alerts us to some of the difficulties and issues such outreach itself creates (including, for example, strategies for the planting programs in new areas, training, financial support, building links with local authorities, accommodating regional differences in dates of the school year and grade levels, nomenclature, range of languages for program implementation and feedback). There are also larger issues to consider, such as educational aims and goals in different societies, cultural differences in outlook, and acceptability of diverse moral and ethical codes.

We nurture global awareness not only through the selection of topics for study, but also through the students' realization that the challenges they are addressing are also being studied by students in many different countries. While their main opportunities for personal contact and interchange with these other students come in regional and international finals, the development of electronic communication and the possibilities of international chat sessions, forums, and other web based means will increase hugely the sense of common enterprise and the value of internationally shared thinking.

A snapshot of several different FPS areas beyond the program's origins in the United States gives an indication of how some of these opportunities and challenges are being addressed. (Professor Yung Che Kim has reported on his work with FPS in Korea in a previous issue of *Creative Learning Today*.)

Australia and New Zealand

These are longer-established programs, with several decades

of experience behind them, and many thousands of students involved in Australia and New Zealand. In both cases, some administrative problems have had to be overcome in order to participate in the FPSPI as a truly global program: even issues as specific as different timings of the school year (basically February-December rather than August-June). Due dates, competitive work, issues of confidentiality, and timing of finals have been problems that have been dealt with, as have the often vexing issues of distance, travel time and costs for international finals attendance from distant parts of the world. These are the mundane challenges that a global program must face. With increasing use of on-line facilities internationally, maintaining a genuine global program will become possible.

New Zealand has accepted a particular challenge which also has lessons for other programs: the raising of levels of achievement among Maori students, a priority for the Ministry of Education, one in which Community Problem Solving (CmPS) has been instrumental and effective. New Zealand's Affiliate Director has initiated a three-year program for six Far North schools, leading to impressive achievements for Maori students in this branch of the FPS program and selection of a number of teams for International Finals. She notes that "CmPS is particularly effective for gifted Maori students as Maori giftedness tends to incorporate a sense of service to the community and often flourishes in collaborative situations. It also allows teachers to contextualize learning in authentic contexts for their Maori students." Globally, this same lesson, the importance of working within the local cultural context, must be accepted within any program that wishes to be internationally relevant, and the FPSPI is accepting the challenge of flexibility that different cultures may bring.

Hong Kong

The main impetus for spread of the FPSPI to Hong Kong has come from the presence of a number of teachers from overseas in the international schools, both the American based international schools and those of the English Speaking Federation. Here enthusiastic ex-coaches from Australia and America have organized information sessions and training programs for new coaches, which has led to the establishment of the program in a number of schools. Hong Kong is currently mentored by Australia, and student work is submitted by post or electronically to Australian evaluators, leading to top teams being invited to the Australia/Asia Pacific regional finals each October, with the opportunity of achieving selection for the International Finals in the USA. Hong Kong shows us a program in development, with mentorship and assistance from the established Australian affiliate. A number of Chinese schools have shown interest in the program and Hong Kong Baptist University has explored the possibility of translation of materials, an avenue still under exploration.

Malaysia

This small but dedicated program is mentored by Australia, and has developed as the result of enthusiasm by a single individual whose commitment to creativity development, problem solving, and futuristic thinking led her to marry the FPSP with English language teaching and opportunities for more extensive practice in this field. Despite limited numbers, the program is now attracting attention from corporate sponsors and business organizations, with growing recognition of the value that the skills it encourages can have for public and commercial enterprises. Malaysian students also have attended both Australian and international finals, and have been enthusiastic participants.

Singapore

A different model is found in Singapore, which presents one of the most rapidly growing and successful new programs in the world, with an active and efficient Regional Committee and a large number of participating schools and more than 100 registered teams as well as many individuals. It will become an autonomous affiliate, an independent member of the International Organization in the next few years. What is its secret?

Establishment of the program in Singapore came about after interest from staff in the Gifted Education Branch of the Ministry of Education led to the initial information and training sessions being offered to MOE staff and lead figures in some key schools. This reflected the Ministry's strong commitment to the government's twin goals for Singapore's students: development as an individual and development as a citizen. The public interest in and official commitment to education as foundational in the country's progress, and its adoption of the knowledge based society as a focus, have meant that a program such as FPSPI, which matches so many of the country's educational goals, has received outstanding official support. Commitment to competition in an international arena has meant that Singapore's students have been applauded for their outstanding successes in the program. The fact that schooling is conducted in English has meant that there has been no language adjustment needed.

In the FPS team booklet competition, thorough research and careful analysis of issues has been the basis of thoughtful and original work. The Scenario

FPS-International

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Writing activity, which requires futuristic short stories based on the set topics for the year, has elicited creative and well-crafted work, and Community Problem Solving has shown a commitment of current community problems and a caring approach to their solutions. There has been impressive work on problems as diverse as foreign domestic worker abuse, buddy programs with disabled children, fair trade, integration of immigrant students in schools, programs with autistic children, anti-pollution campaigns in schools, poor road drainage, and many more. The twin goals, individual and citizen development, have been the focus of Singapore's involvement, and the students' success at local, Australian and international level is only one measure that demonstrates that these goals are being achieved. More important is the impact these students are having in their community, an impact reflected in the encouraging media coverage of their work.

South Africa

Like New Zealand's Maori population, the South African students in this emergent program will create a need for organizers to think outside the white ethnocentric square. The program will operate through the Gateway Science based Competition Program for South Africa and Africa, with the New Frontiers Science Programme providing the avenue for Future Problem Solving. The focus here will also be on Community Problem Solving, leading one leader to comment: "The situation in South Africa is a clear example of how FPS has to be conceived in different ways in different countries if it is to be accepted."

Japan

A different aspect of internationalism emerges in Japan, another new program. In this country, with an examination-oriented education system, more than 100 Middle Level students, ages 9 to 13, work on the booklet program as part of their Art and Literature courses. Video meetings with elementary school students in Alaska (the Affiliate mentoring the Japanese program) have been organized, and planning is under way for video conferencing on one of the later topics for this year with Middle School students at a South Australian school. This type of interchange once again points to future possibilities to explore in a more systematic way another avenue for developing global awareness.

European outreach

Both Switzerland and Romania reinforce the importance of the personal drive of committed individuals. Leaders have made plans for German-speaking students to begin work using future scenes from previous years of the program and have taken their own enthusiasm for FPS into their work to further creativity among their students, also providing opportunities for English practice through an English Club. They find that participation in FPS challenges students to think about real world issues and encourages them to be original. The students enjoy competitions and see this as a exciting challenge in using English and learning and applying problem-solving methods. The Romanian efforts also reveal another possible avenue for fostering internationalism, with support being given to the FPSPI program there by a U. S.-based branch of Rotary International. Such global community organizations have the capacity to foster global thinking and international links in future generations, by their involvement on a shared basis in FPSPI.

Russia

Initiating FPS in a new area has been stimulated in yet another way in the small village of Shchuch'ye in Russia, where contacts made by a Wisconsin coach with a local teacher through the Sister Cities program led first to interest, then ongoing correspondence concerning the possibilities of establishing an FPS program. It was furthered by a visit to the area by a Senior Wisconsin team, who taught Russian students the FPS process and collaborated with them on a Community Problem Solving project, aimed at improving the safety of the village citizens, who live very close to a large stockpile of chemical weapons.

Ongoing contact from 2004 to 2006 led to visits by Russian students to the Wisconsin Affiliate State Bowl and the International Conference in Kentucky, and reciprocal visits by American students to Shchuch'ye and the city of Kurgan, with plans to extend the program to another large university city, Chelyabinsk. For these programs, students write their work in Russian, then translate their materials into English before sending it electronically to Wisconsin for evaluation.

Russia demonstrates a different possibility for outreach and global connection. As a consequence of other forms of international contact, the FPSPI can provide a means of further working together on projects of mutual interest and concern.

Lessons: Learned and To Learn

From these snapshots can any bigger picture emerge? What can best help this program, or other similar creative educational

opportunities develop on a more world-wide basis? Are there trends that emerge from these random pictures?

Getting programs started, or expanding into new territories or population groups, is a key issue. Many programs show the importance of the enthusiastic and committed individual. Whether it is a coach who has experienced the program at home, then takes it, missionary-style, to a new part of the world, or a local figure who hears of the program or finds by chance or intent a web site and initiates contact, these are the individuals who become the torch-bearers for program establishment in a new place. Romania, Switzerland, South Africa, Hong Kong are only a few of the cases where this has been the starting point. International programs, whether community-based, such as through Sister Cities, or organizations such as Rotary International, have also provided the opportunities for initial contacts to be made on a person-to-person basis, as both Russia and Romania show.

In other places, established or official groups, such as Singapore's Ministry of Education, or New Zealand's Ministry of Education Talent Development Initiative, have provided impetus to establishment or expansion. Private or business sponsorship, as given by Australia's Macquarie Bank Foundation, New Zealand's Todd Foundation, or the Nestle Company in Malaysia all have been invaluable sources of support in outreach.

Ongoing issues have emerged in several programs. Any international program must cope with differences and diversities, whether these are the smaller ones of "administrivia," or the more fundamental problems of cultural frames of reference or ethical outlooks that diverge from our own. Perhaps this is more properly seen not as a problem but as a challenge to be met: the moving beyond our own limited vision. Contact with others in other places, a shared focus on common problems may lead our students, with a new perception of themselves as world citizens, to the outcome that Singapore Future Problem Solver Lock Hong Quan hopes for: "Our world needs more ideas, not the systematic repetition of hackneyed solutions influenced by outdated political ideology."

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Note. For additional information about the Future Problem Solving Program, or to locate a contact person in your area, visit the program website: http://www.fpsp.org

Creative Outcomes

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Still Seeking Interest in Tools Video Clips!

In the last issue of Creative Learning Today, we invited readers to join us in crating brief video clips of generating or focusing tools in action, with students of any age level and in any content area. We are still seeking partners who are interested in this opportunity. Contact the Center if you're interested, or if you missed this invitation and need a new copy of the issue. We'd love to hear from you!

Problem-Solving Style Assessment Now Available for Small Groups (Including Student Groups, Grades 6+)

VIEW: An Assessment of Problem-Solving Style is a powerful tool. It is widely used for:

- building teamwork and collaboration among members of a group
- helping individuals to discover their personal strengths
- enhancing individual and group effectiveness in solving problems and managing change
- identifying ways to guide learning and application of tools for generating and focusing ideas, finding and framing problems, and preparing for action.

You can learn more about VIEW by visiting www.ViewStyle.net or at the "Problem Solving Style" page of www.creativelearning.com. VIEW measures three important dimensions of problem-solving style; these are:

Orientation to Change. When you are solving problems or managing change, how do you deal with novelty, structure, and authority? Do you prefer the Explorer or Developer style?

Manner of Processing. When you are solving problems or managing change, do you prefer to begin working by talking or interacting with other people (an External style preference), or by reflecting quietly on your own before sharing ideas with others (an Internal style preference)?

Ways of Deciding. When you are solving problems or managing change, do you start thinking about decisions and preparing for action by first considering people, harmony, and relationships (a Person-oriented style preference), or by first considering sound, logical, objective factors (a Task-oriented style preference)?

VIEW is intended for use by adults or by students of middle-school age or older (generally, ages 12+). This powerful tool is already being used by thousands of people each year in more than 20 countries around the world and in a variety of global corporations and organizations.

Now Available for School Use

In response to many inquiries we are pleased to announce a new program that makes VIEW available to educators at specially reduced costs. The special ***VIEW In Education*** package provides an opportunity for school groups to obtain a group assessment of problem-solving styles using VIEW for small groups of adults (such as building leadership or school improvement teams or curriculum planning teams).

For use with students (the minimum age level is grade 6), the special ***VIEW In Education*** package is ideal for project teams or groups, teams participating in creativity programs, or groups in G/T resource or cluster programs. We can also provide the package for entire class or school groups.

How It Works

The *VIEW in Education* package enables all participants to respond to VIEW, receive both individual results and a group report, and receive guidance in understanding and applying the results through a personal conversation by telephone or web-based conference with an experienced VIEW facilitator and educator. Your ***VIEW in Education*** package includes:

- Password to allow teachers and students in your group to respond to the on-line edition of the VIEW inventory (internet access and an up-to-date internet browser required)
- Individual VIEW reports for each person who responds, providing his or her own personal problem-solving style results
- A group profile for the teacher (or group leader), with suggestions for maximizing teamwork and group effectiveness.
- Handouts for each person to help strengthen everyone's understanding of VIEW, the group's results, and ways to apply the results for group effectiveness.
- A 60 to 90 minute conversation with a VIEW facilitator to present and review the results, guide understanding, respond to questions, and support your group in its preparation to apply the results in your situation. (This may be a telephone call, or a web-based conference depending on technical capabilities and access.)

The Details

The cost of the ***VIEW in Education*** package depends on the size of your group. For a group of up to 10 adults, or one teacher and up to nine students, the cost is $200.00. For larger groups, the cost is $200.00 plus an additional $15 per person for the 11th and each additional participant (adult or student). The ***VIEW in Education*** package must be scheduled in advance, and pre-payment is required. We can also arrange, at an additional cost, to provide a trained VIEW facilitator who will come to your school to present the program and results in person, answer questions, and work with staff on applying the results. Schools or school districts can also arrange VIEW training to enable key personnel to offer in-house use of the VIEW assessment. Contact Dr. Don Treffinger at the Center for additional information, or to schedule a program for your group.

Destination ImagiNation, Inc., and the SciFi Channel Collaborate to Creative *Visions for Tomorrow*

Project OUTREACH®, a program of Destination ImagiNation, Inc., has collaborated with the SciFi Channel to develop an innovative new curriculum for the *Visions for Tomorrow* campaign. Through this broad-reaching initiative, both organizations seek to engage students, parents, schools, businesses, and other community groups in authentic local service projects that, collectively, will make the world a better place for all. The *Visions for Tomorrow* campaign (http://www.scifi.com/visions.html) builds on the premise that individuals can have a significant impact on the future. Through a variety of activities, *Visions for Tomorrow* will engage participants in constructing a bold, optimistic, and innovative vision of tomorrow.

The agenda for the 2007 curriculum is Energy. The projectOUTREACH® curriculum involves a coordinated set of online and printed activities to guide students, families, and communities

in approaching many energy-related issues and challenges cooperatively and creatively. The activities incorporate a variety of our practical generating and focusing tools, involving real-world, energy-related topics. The curriculum includes three strands.

The first strand is, *What If?* This strand focuses on exploring energy use in the past, present, and future. The *Committed to Conservation* strand deals with energy conservation and ways that individually and collectively we might conserve and use energy more efficiently. Finally, the *Energy Counts* strand provides engaging quantitative exercises and activities relating to both individual and collective energy consumption.

To obtain your free copy of the Visions for Tomorrow Community Curriculum 2007 Agenda: Energy, go to: http://www.shopdi.org/index.php?main_page=programs_product_info&cPath=29&products_id=371.

Learn more about this project and a related team challenge by visiting: http://projectoutreach.net/pages/vft.html. Learn more about the Destination ImagiNation, Inc., community of programs by visiting: www.destinationimagination.org.

National Association for Gifted Children Conference

Plan now to attend the National Association for Gifted Children Conference in Minneapolis, November 7-11, 2007. The program features keynote presentations by Garrison Keillor and creativity researcher, Dean Keith Simonton. There will also be a special "reunion" panel of participants from E. Paul Torrance's historic longitudinal study of creativity. Several members of the Center for Creative Learning team, including Dr. Don Treffinger, Dr. Ed Selby, and Dr. Pat Schoonover will also present programs on CPS, problem-solving style, and on the Levels of Service Approach to Talent Development.

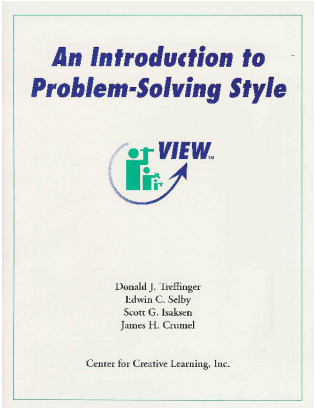
University of Georgia Creativity Conference in Costa Rica

Dr. Bonnie Cramond, of the University of Georgia, announces the First International CREATE Conference ("Costa Rican Educational Adventure in Creativity Theory and Empiricism"). This conference will be held January 3-8, 2008, at the UGA Costa Rica Ecolodge- San Luis and Research Station. The conference will be sponsored by the Torrance Center of the University of Georgia. The facilities are located on the edge of the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. Proposals for presentations are due September 28, 2007. For additional information, email: CREATE08@uga.edu or visit the conference website at http://www.coe.uga.edu/epit/programs/.

ANNOUNCING A NEW PUBLICATION

An Introduction To Problem-Solving Style

By Donald J. Treffinger, Edwin C. Selby, Scott G. Isaksen & James H. Crumel



If you've been reading Creative Learning Today for awhile, you are already familiar with our work on VIEW: An Assessment of Problem Solving Style, and you may well be aware that the assessment tool is based on an extensive theoretical foundation as well as statistical evidence. Many people have told us that they— and others with whom they work— would appreciate a resource that would help explain the concept of problem-solving style (separately from the assessment instrument). This booklet responds to that need, providing a concise, practical overview of problem-solving style. It outlines the nature of problem-solving style (based on extensive theory and research), explaining in clear, non-technical language what problem-solving styles are— and are not— and describes three problem-solving style dimensions and six styles. Drawing on the authors' extensive work on the rationale and foundation for their work, the book explains the important and unique personal characteristics and implications, benefits, and risks of each style. In addition, the book discusses: the implications of style for effective problem solving; the importance of style for group composition, teamwork, and enhancing work relationships; and, the unique ways the three style dimensions interact with each other. This book is a valuable resource for building self-understanding and for all teams, groups, or organizations that are concerned with effective leadership, teamwork, solving problems, and managing change. (2007; 34 pp., paperbound). Order #1045. Single copies are available for $12.00, although discounts are available for quantity purchases.

Purpose of CLT

Editor: Dr. Don Treffinger
Purpose: To share new ideas and practical strategies for productive thinking, and talent development, and learning style; information about and reviews of new resources; and opportunities for networking among our readers.

Creative Learning Today is published on an occasional basis and distributed electronically without cost to interested readers.

Direct all inquiries and changes of email address to don@creativelearning.com

Creative Learning Today,
ISSN #0895-9234.

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Each of these books regularly sells for $24.95, but this special offer will allow *Creative Learning Today* readers to obtain them at a 50% discount, or $12.50 each, plus shipping. The offer applies to orders received by September 30, 2007, and applies "while supplies last" of each title.

Send your order to the Center for Creative Learning, 4921 Ringwood Meadow, Sarasota, FL 34235, or fax it to 941-342-0064. We accept MasterCard, VISA, or American Express credit cards. Specify the title, *Thinking With Standards,* and the number of copies of each level that you wish to order (elementary, middle, or secondary).