

ONE OF TWO DOZEN TIPS

Adapted from – Teaching for Creativity: Two Dozen Tips, by Robert Sternberg and Wendy M. Williams
http://www.cdl.org/resource-library/articles/teaching_creativity.php

- 1. Model Creativity** - The most powerful way to develop creativity in your students is to be a role model. Children develop creativity not when you tell them to, but when you show them.
- 2. Build Self-Efficacy** - The main limitation on what students can do is what they think they can do. All students have the capacity to be creators and to experience the joy associated with making something new.
- 3. Question Assumptions** - We all have assumptions. Creative people question those assumptions and eventually lead others to do the same.
- 4. Define and Redefine Problems** - Promote creative performance by encouraging your students to define and redefine problems and projects. Encourage creative thinking by having students choose their own topics for papers or presentations, choose their own ways of solving problems, and sometimes choose again if they discover that their selection was a mistake.
- 5. Encourage Idea Generation** - Once the problem is defined or redefined, it is time for students to generate ideas and solutions. The environment for generating ideas must be relatively free of criticism.
- 6. Cross-Fertilize Ideas** - Stimulate creativity by helping students to think across subjects and disciplines. Creative ideas and insights often result from integrating material across subject areas, not from memorizing and reciting material.
- 7. Allow Time for Creative Thinking** - Ours is a society in a hurry. Most creative insights, however, do not happen in a rush. We need time to understand a problem and to toss it around.
- 8. Instruct and Assess Creatively** - If you give only multiple-choice tests, students quickly learn the type of thinking that you value, no matter what you say. If you want to encourage creativity, you need to include at least some opportunities for creative thought in assignments and tests.
- 9. Reward Creative Ideas and Products** - It is not enough to talk about the value of creativity. Reward creative efforts. For example, assign a project and remind students that you are looking for them to demonstrate their knowledge, analytical and writing skills, and creativity.
- 10. Encourage Sensible Risks** - Creative people take risks and defy the crowd by buying low and selling high. But there are sensible-and less sensible-reasons to defy the crowd. Creative people take sensible risks and produce ideas that others ultimately admire and respect as trend setting. To help students learn to take sensible risks, encourage them to take some intellectual risks with courses, activities, and teachers-to develop a sense of how to assess risks.
- 11. Tolerate Ambiguity** - People like things to be in black and white. A creative idea tends to come in bits and pieces and develops over time. But the period in which the idea is developing tends to be uncomfortable. Without time or the ability to tolerate ambiguity, you may jump to a less than optimal solution.
- 12. Encourage Creative Collaboration** - Creative performance often is viewed as a solitary occupations. In reality, people often work in groups. Collaboration can spur creativity. Encourage your students to collaborate with creative people because we all learn by example.