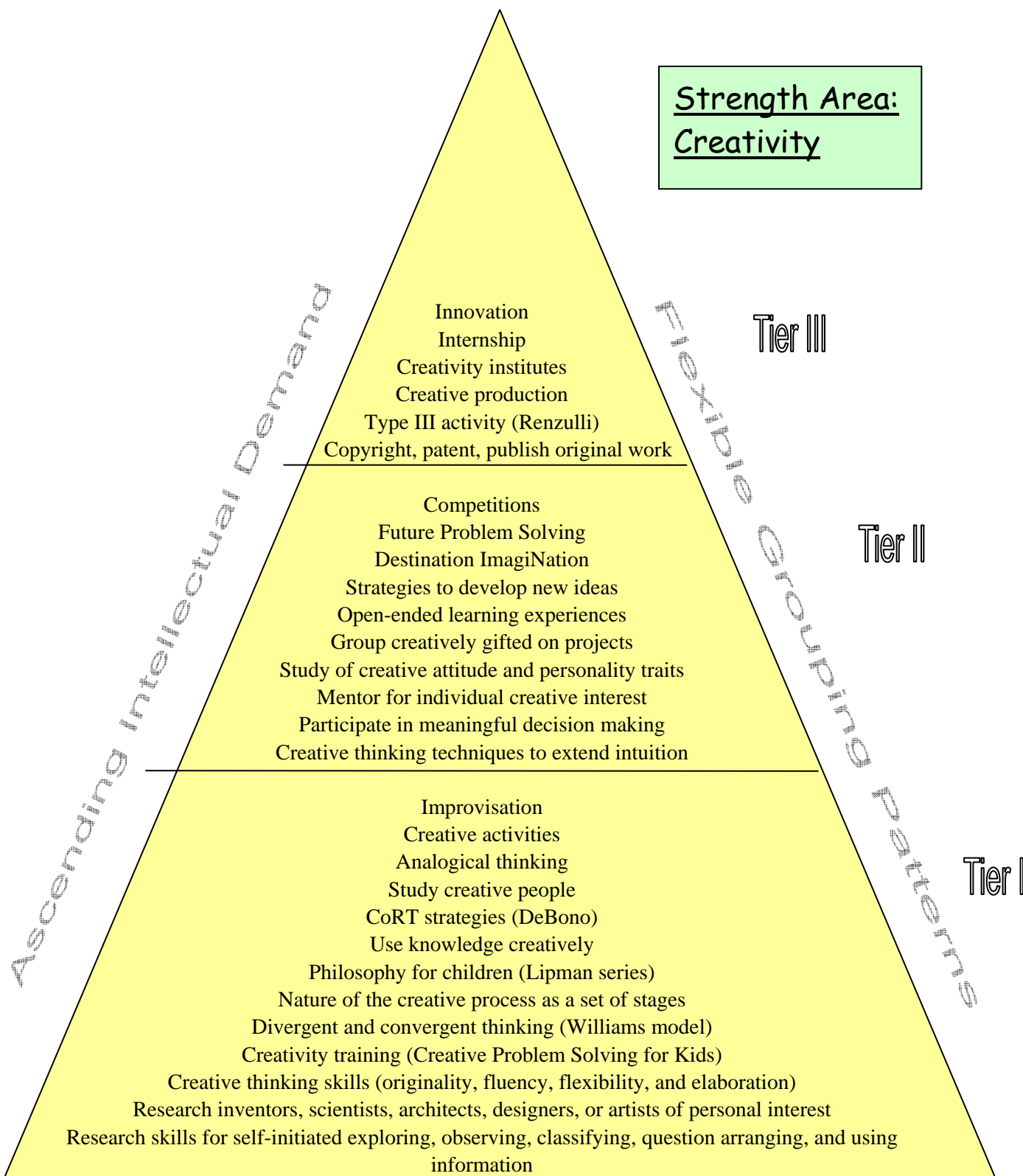


Strength Area:
Creativity



Frequently Asked Questions

What can I do to enhance creativity in my classroom?

- Provide a private place for creative work to be done.
- Provide materials (e.g. musical instruments, sketch books, scientific instruments).
- Encourage self-expression and display the students' creative work.
- Create a creative atmosphere with good music, books, and pictures.
- Do your own creative work.
- Value the unusual, the divergent, and the creative work of others.
- Provide special classes.
- Emphasize that talent is only a small part of creative production and that discipline and practice are important.
- Get creativity training.
- Reduce anxiety in classroom, especially that created by the teachers.
- Nurture individuation and differences within the class.
- Provide situations that present incompleteness and openness.
- Allow and encourage lots of questions.
- Emphasize self-initiated exploring, observing, questioning, feeling, classifying, recording, translating, inferring, testing inferences, and communication.
- Help the student learn by mistakes.
- Reinforce creativity, but do not place too high a reward on it, as this makes creative behavior "high stakes" and increases anxiety.
- Give opportunities to investigate ideas of successful, eminent people who used the creative process.

What are some blocks to creativity?

- Expectation of judging and evaluating.
- Constantly being watched or observed while working on a creative project.
- Creating a competitive atmosphere.
- Conforming to others' expectations.
- Anxiety.
- Perfectionism.
- Reward systems.
- Authoritarianism.
- External locus of control.
- Trying to be creative.
- Requiring the one right answer.

Can creativity be taught?

We can teach some of the aspects and skills of creative behavior. We can model creative acts and attitudes. We can provide safe places for creativity to be expressed, and value its expression. We can take the risk of sharing our own creativity. Six real-life results of creativity training in elementary and high schools were reported by Torrance (1985). The results were increased satisfaction; evidence that academic achievement is not affected by creative performance; writing more creatively in different genres (one student even wrote a novel); growth in personality and the acquisition of a healthy self-concept; improvement in attitudes toward mathematics; and an openness to pursue creative choices.