



Unlocking Creativity & Self-Actualization in Twice-Exceptional Learners

Welcome! Together, we'll explore how fostering self-actualization can unleash extraordinary creativity in unique 2E minds.

I NEED A TIMEKEEPER BY SECTION PLEASE!!

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Why This Matters



Hidden Potential

Twice-exceptional learners possess unique creative abilities often masked by their challenges.



Beyond Labels

Creativity exists in all learners, not just those with traditional "gifted" labels.



Whole-Person Approach

Supporting 2e learners' creativity nurtures their complete development and wellbeing.

5 minutes

Broadening Our View of Creativity

Traditional View

Creativity limited to arts, music, and writing.

Focus on polished, final products.

Measured by standardized assessments.

Expanded View

Creativity in problem-solving, social interactions, and daily life.

Value in the creative process and thinking.

Recognized through diverse expressions unique to each learner.

How 2e Learners Express Creativity

Deep Dive Interests

Extraordinary knowledge and creative solutions within special interest areas.



Unique Communication

Novel ways of expressing ideas through unexpected mediums or approaches.



Problem Solving

Developing unconventional strategies to overcome personal challenges.

Divergent Thinking

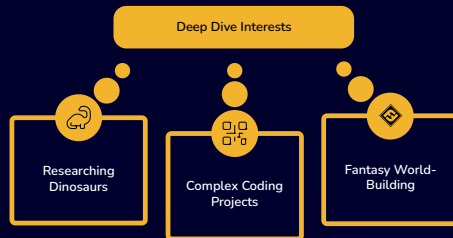
Making connections between seemingly unrelated concepts or disciplines.

5 minutes

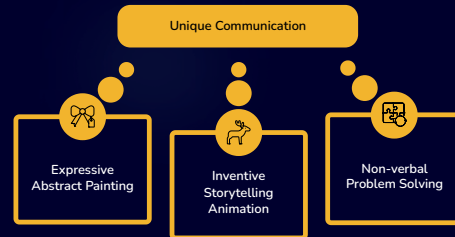
Brain Blitz: Creativity in Action

Grab scratch paper and, at your table, collaboratively (or alone) create a bubble map listing how you have seen twice-exceptional learners engage their unique creativity. REMEMBER TO CHOOSE ONE OF THE 4 AREAS.

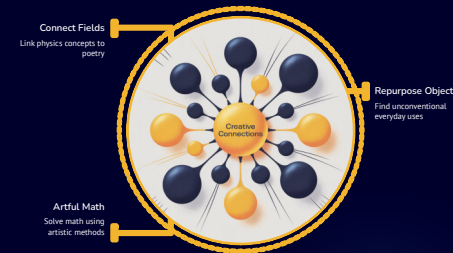
Deep Dive Interests



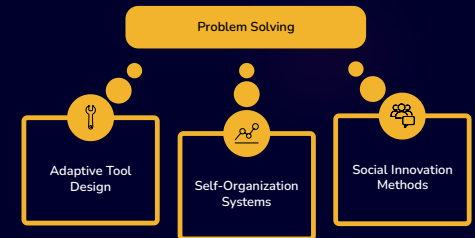
Unique Communication



Divergent Thinking



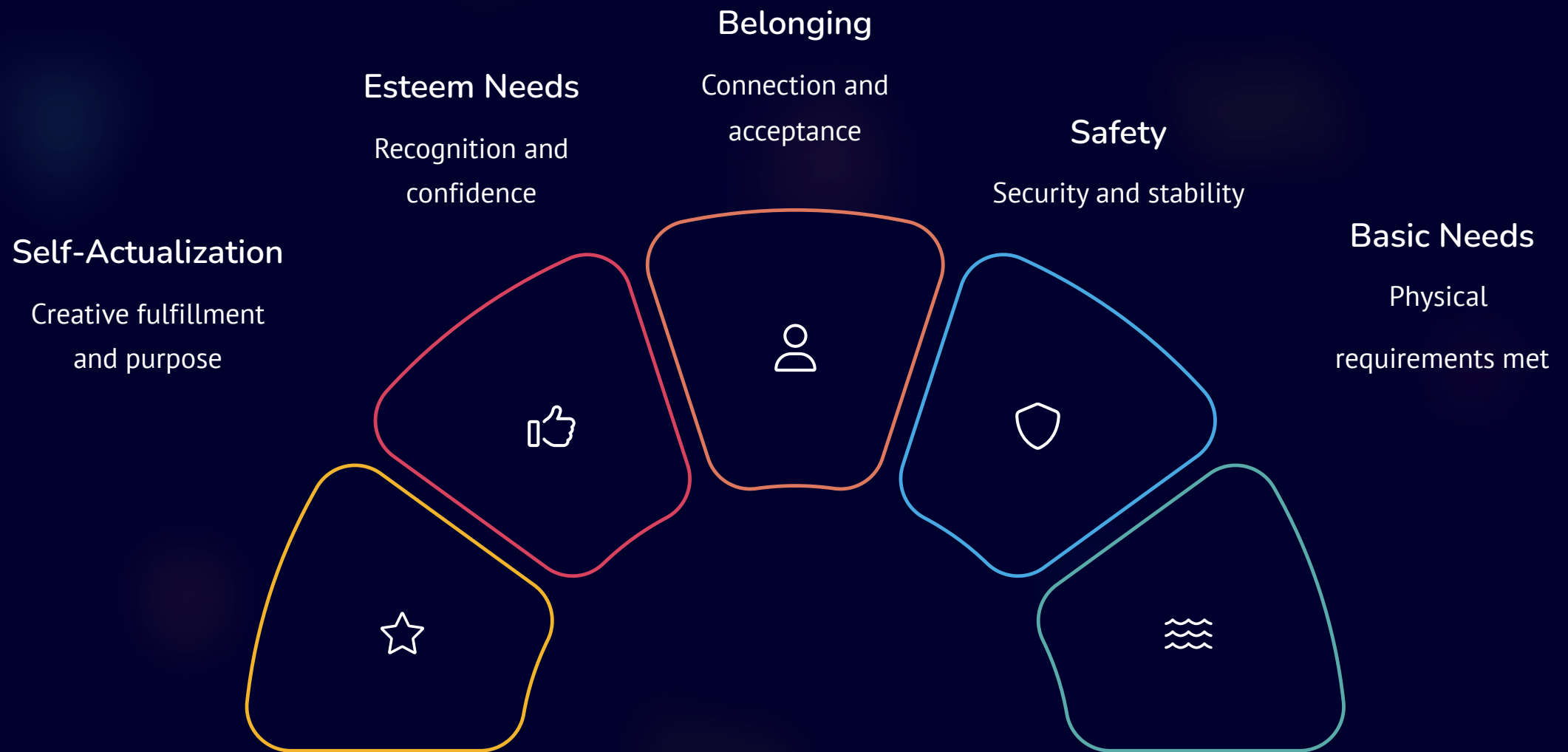
Problem Solving



8 minutes

How do these creative moments connect with Self-Actualization?

Maslow's View: Self-Actualization (Look Ma, No Pyramid!)





Characteristics of Self-Actualizing Creators

Childlike Wonder

Approaching the world with fresh eyes and **genuine curiosity**.

Asking "why" and "what if" **without self-consciousness**.

Spontaneity

Following **intuitive impulses rather than rigid plans**.

Comfortable with uncertainty and emerging ideas.

Integration of Opposites

Balancing logic with emotion, structure with freedom.

Finding **harmony between seemingly contradictory traits**.

Openness to Experience

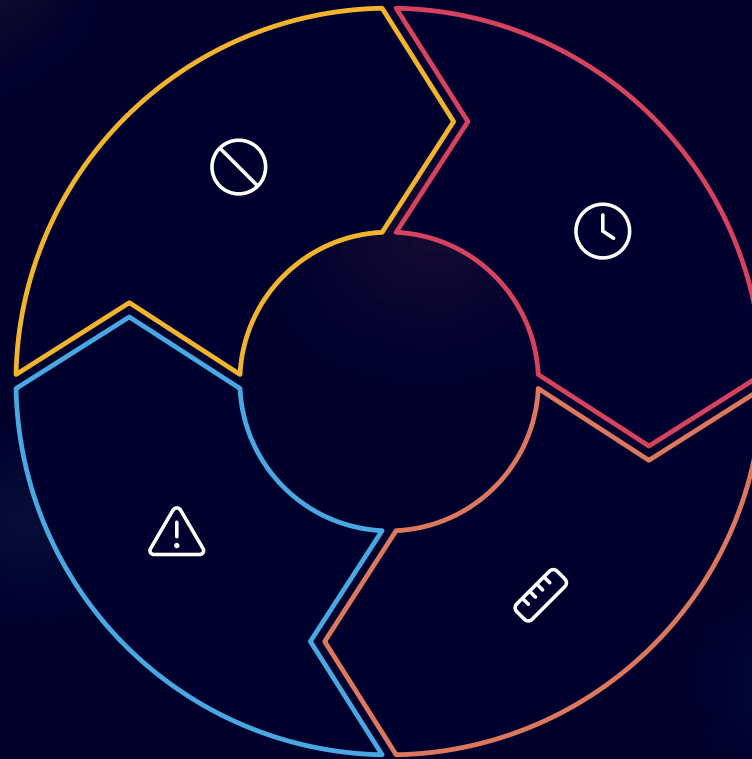
Embracing **new challenges without fear of failure**.

Seeking diverse inputs and perspectives.

Barriers to Creative Expression

Fear of Judgment
Worry about criticism blocks authentic expression

Sensory Overload
Environmental stressors deplete creative energy



Time Constraints
Rush to complete tasks limits deep exploration

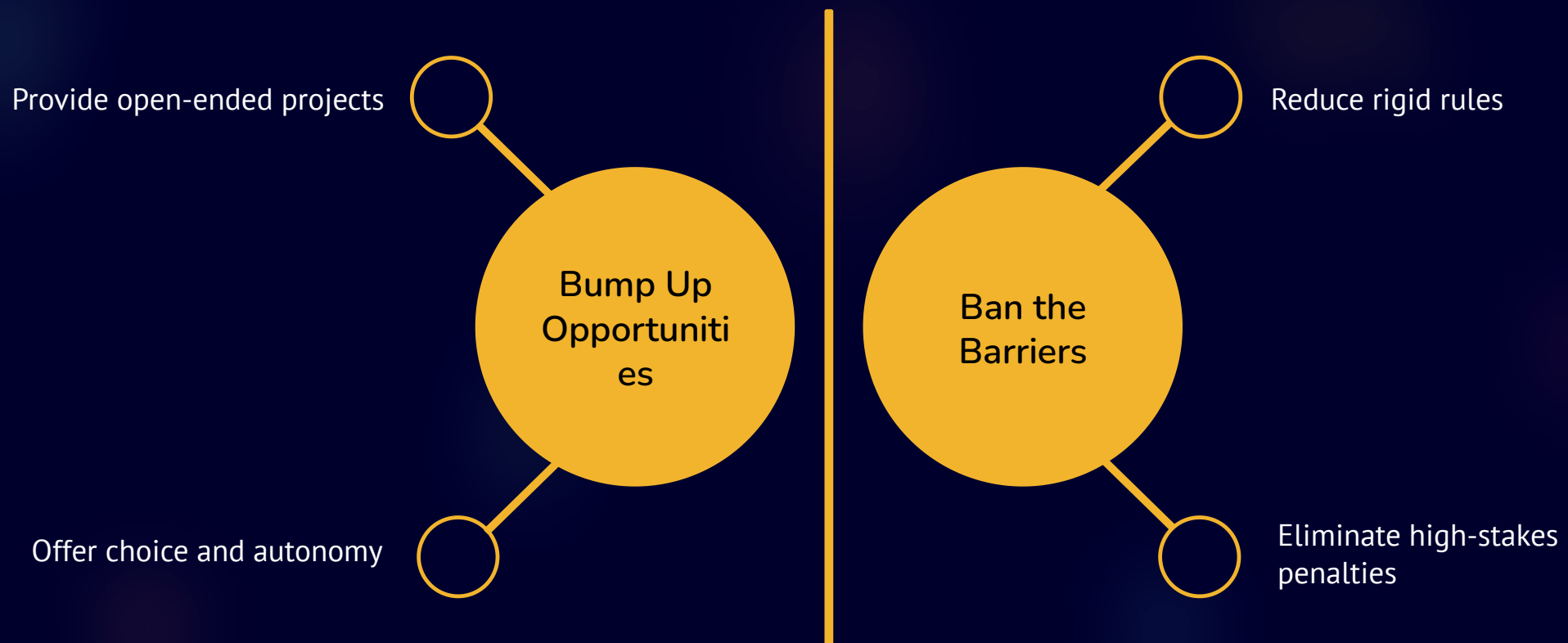
Rigid Expectations
Narrow definitions of success restrict possibilities

8 minutes

Brain Blitz: Bumping Pros and Banning Barriers

With a partner, pic one type of educational setting (Pod/Pull-Out/Small Group, Traditional Public, Non-Traditional or Specialized Public, Independent)

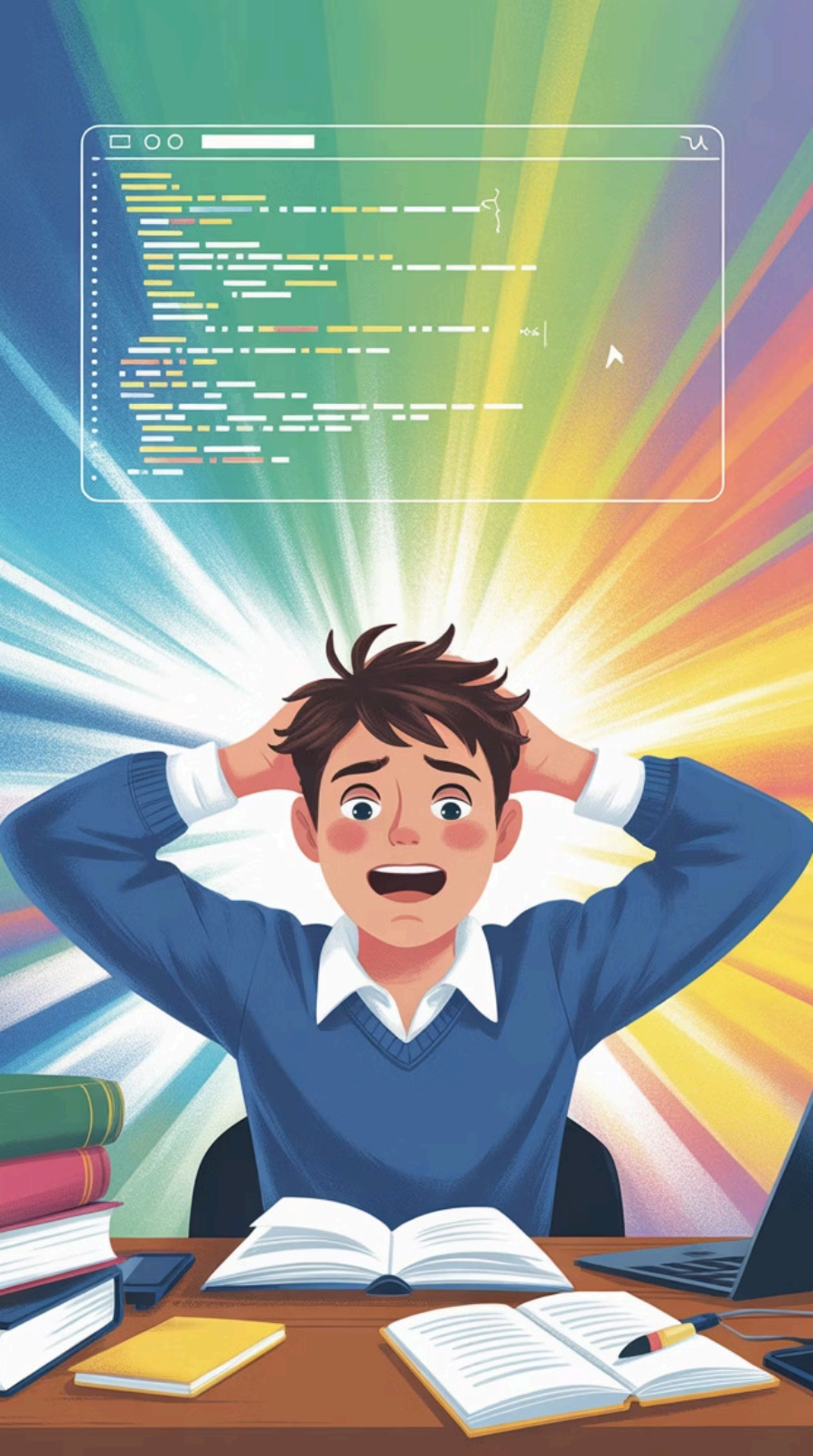
On a sheet of paper, label the chosen educational setting. Make a T-Chart. List ways that you can "Bump Up" the Opportunities for Self-Actualization in Creativity on one side, and ways that you can "Ban" or minimize the Barriers to Self-Actualization.



BONUS! Consider looking at different scales within your setting ie. individual child, class/cohort, program-wide, system wide.

BONUS BONUS! Does anyone want to consider creative self-actualization for the ADULTS in your given setting?

5 minutes



Overcoming Inner Conflicts



Acknowledge Dualities

Help students recognize their conflicting traits as complementary strengths.



Foster Self-Dialogue

Encourage reflection on internal barriers to creative expression. **BRAIN FOOD - What Reflective Elements do you Incorporate? Or what would you like to do?**



Model Neurodiversity Forward Thinking

Demonstrate embracing both strengths and challenges.



Celebrate Flow!

Recognize moments when students look like they are in FLOW.

5 min.

Creating Safe Creative Spaces



Establish psychological safety

Create judgment-free zones where mistakes are welcomed



Offer sensory accommodations

Provide options that meet diverse regulatory needs



Allow flexible timing

Remove arbitrary deadlines when possible



Value authentic expression

Celebrate unique approaches and perspectives



Strategies for Peak Experiences

1

Challenge-Skill Balance

Design activities that stretch abilities without overwhelming. Calibrate difficulty to individual capabilities.

2

Passion-Project Integration

Connect learning to special interests. Allow students to approach topics through their strengths.

3

Multi-Sensory Engagement

Incorporate various input channels. Provide options for processing and demonstrating knowledge.

4

Meaningful Context

Connect learning to real-world impact. Show how creative work serves authentic purposes.

5 minutes

Brain Blitz: Pick 1 and Make it Count!

By Table, choose:

Challenge-Skill Balance,

Passion-Project Integration,

Multi-Sensory Engagement,

or Meaningful Context.



Use post-its to contribute ideas from **YOUR OWN AREA OF EXPERTISE OR IMPACT** to generate strategies to creatively engage 2e learners. One Idea per Post-It Please!

5 minutes



Practical Creative Catalysts

Look to Synectics, Analogies, other Catalysts etc. Consider embedding them in all of your projects / PBLs to create long-term comfort with applying creative thinking!



Mind Mapping

Visual brainstorming that connects concepts in non-linear ways. Perfect for students who think associatively.



Possibility Thinking

"What if" scenarios that remove practical limitations. Encourages unconventional connections and solutions.



Passion Journals

Personal spaces to explore interests deeply. Combines research, reflection, and creative expression.



Role Reversal

Students become the experts and teachers. Shifts perspective and builds confidence in knowledge.

5 minutes



Organizational Supports

Administrative Commitment

Leadership recognizes and values creative expression in all forms.

Time and resources are allocated for creative exploration.

Collaborative Planning

Educators **work across disciplines to create integrated opportunities.**

Flexible Assessment

Multiple pathways to demonstrate learning are offered.

Creative products are valued alongside traditional measures.

Measuring Growth, Not Just Products

Traditional Assessment	Growth-Based Approach
Final product quality	Progress from starting point
Comparison to peers	Comparison to self
Standard rubrics	Personalized goals
Focus on correctness	Focus on process
External validation	Self-reflection

5 minutes



Brain Blitz: Decision-Makers - Activate!

Individually, use your notepad to come up with one way that change can occur in your system or a system you provide training or leadership for each Organizational Support category below:

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5 minutes

Your Next Steps

1

Observe

Watch for unique creative expressions you might be missing.

2

Adapt

Modify one learning activity to offer more creative pathways.

3

Connect

Share resources with colleagues to build supportive networks.

4

Reflect

Document the impact of creative opportunities on student engagement.

