

Title: **Never mind the text, where do the ideas come from?
Creative approaches to writing using movement, colour and sound**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Use a range of creative , multi-sensory techniques to support the student writing process
- Have a better understanding of how to introduce creative pedagogies onto a range of taught programmes
- Work more effectively with staff teams teaching in traditional, “ non-creative” disciplines
- Gain an overview of some of the theoretical approaches to the understanding of creativity in higher education settings

Session Outline

Key issues to be addressed are:

- Creativity in curriculum design
- Experiential learning
- Learning, teaching and developing through games and play

This session will enable you to explore a range of creative, multi-sensory activities designed to encourage and support the student writing process on university programmes. The importance of developing students’ creative abilities is recognised by many employers (Dewett & Gruys, 2007) as well as by the students themselves (McCorkle, Payan, Reardon & Kling, 2007). It is also believed that universities can play an important role in developing students’ creative abilities (Vance, 2007). Some institutions run whole modules based on creative thinking (Nickerson, 1999), but this session will simply focus on creative activities that can be used in any discipline area to enhance the writing process.

Practitioners from three very different disciplines (Education; Creative Writing and Dance) will take you through a journey of colour, movement and sound, as they explore different ways to plan a session, design a module or engage a group of reluctant learners. We will look at ways to enhance our own creative capacity, through discussing the use of creative learning opportunities that can be offered alongside more traditional classroom activities. We will also consider how some of our more innovative and engaging assessment practices can have a direct effect on students’ experiences of learning, and demonstrate a range of ideas and assignments (Middlemas, 2010) that you may be able to introduce in your own settings.

Livingston (2010:59) argues that 21st century universities need to “establish a new experiential paradigm centred on cultivating creativity” and believes that academics need to start moving away from “traditional pedagogies and courses of study that leave little or no room for new experiences”. Is he right? Come along and find out!

Session Activities and Approximate Timing

Introduction

The importance of being creative. How can creative, multi-sensory approaches be used to support the writing process for students? Where does creativity fit into the curriculum? Why does creativity matter? (Interactive discussion and activities, 10 minutes)

Presentation

Creativity in unexpected places: trainee doctors writing poetry about death and bereavement; poetry at Auschwitz written by undergraduate students on a history visit; psychology students making an entertaining DVD on ethics guidelines (Sharing examples of creative assessments, 15 minutes)

Creativity and the process of writing

Encouraging the creative writing process with students. Techniques to try with your own students and staff.. We'll look at some of Louise's “creative tools” in a short Creative Writing activity: freewriting, close observation, creative visualisation, starting points. (Writing Activity, 15 minutes)

Creative learning through sound and movement

Indian dance workshop with Suparna - physical experiences and their impact on the creative writing process. Dancing with words. (Dance workshop, 15 minutes)

Art and design workshop

Let's make a mess! Bridget will encourage you to think about the use of colour, photos and graphics as part of the writing process. Mindmapping your ideas; planning your projects. What do we mean by “text”? (Art activities, 15 minutes)

Plenary (20 minutes)

The value of creative activities in the university curriculum – issues for practitioners:

- Assessment and marking criteria
- Guidelines for staff and students
- Creative pedagogies for taught programmes
- Working with programme teams
- Reflecting on your own learning and teaching practices

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