

FOSTERING CREATIVITY

GUESS WHO??

At age three he took an avid interest in music and was already able to detect a note that was slightly off pitch. At age five he wrote short piano pieces and at age seven he wrote his first Sonatas. At age eight he wrote his first symphony. Who was he? (WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART)

As a baby, she entertained her family by dancing to any music she heard. At age six, she collected a group of babies in the neighborhood and taught them to wave their arms, as if they were enrolled in a school of dance. Pretending to be sixteen when she was only ten, she organized and led dance classes in the homes of wealthy Californians. Who was she? (ISADORA DUNCAN--THE ORIGINATOR OF MODERN DANCE)

Not all children will grow up to be Mozart, Duncan, Shakespeare, or Einstein. However, there are some steps a parent might take to strengthen and help develop a child's creativity.

1. Relax the controls. Children need some freedom to develop creativity. Constant adult supervision and control do not allow the child to use spontaneity and self confidence. These allow the child's creative spirit to develop.
2. Inspire perseverance. Children need to learn how to see a product through to completion. By encouraging perseverance, children learn to try new approaches to achieve their desired results. Albert Einstein claimed that he actually had no specific talent, that is was just his "obsession and dogged endurance" that helped him arrive at his world-changing ideas.
3. Tolerate differences. Creative children will most likely not fall into social norms. They will want to know the basis for rules, why and how things work, and if there is a different way to do things. Highly creative children are often viewed as unconventional because of their atypical methods of thinking. Do not insist that all children fit the mold of others.
4. Be the child's advocate. Because these creative children do not fit the mold and think atypically, they may not always be viewed positively by teachers and peers. Help the child to deal with negative opinions of others through positive self esteem and personal satisfaction in their creative work.
5. Provide a creative and stimulating environment, with lots of tools for creative work. Let the children experience and view other people's creative work and allow them the opportunity for their own creative skills and abilities to develop.

Divide the class into small groups. Give each group an ordinary item (brick, scissors, hammer, etc.) and allow them to list as many uses as possible for that item. Instruct them to think beyond the ordinary and be creative. Have each group share their ideas with the class.