

# STIMULATING CREATIVITY THROUGH DIVERGENT THINKING

*FIDM's Just for Educators Classroom Projects & Activities*



## **Objective:**

Creativity often requires coaxing. Very few creative thinkers are brimming with ideas all of the time. The ideas are often just under the surface of conscious thought and a little stimulus can bring them to the surface. This exercise will help students tap into their creative powers with techniques used by the most creative thinkers in the world. Students will use analogies, completion of sentence fragments, and “think tank” problem-solving strategies during the activity.

**Suggested for use in the following Departments:** *Art, Creative Writing, Drama*

### **Materials Needed:**

- o Pencil or pen
- o Paper

### **Activities:**

Students bring in a sample of an ad from a magazine that shows a connection of unlike thoughts. The teacher will begin the lesson with sentence fragments such as “Chalk is to a blackboard like \_\_\_\_\_.” Have students complete the sentence and give other examples. Continue this activity for at least six sentences. Students may challenge others’ analogies. Create a problem for the class to solve. Make the whole class members of a “Think Tank” and ask them to solve the problem with divergent thinking. The teacher may use problems listed on the classroom activity or use others of his/her choice.

### **Arizona State Standards:**

#### **• The Arts: Theatre:**

**Concept 1:** Collaboration:

**PO 101** Demonstrate respect for others’ opinions by respectfully listening while ideas are articulated.

#### **• Language Arts: Writing: Grade 11-12:**

**PO.1** Generate ideas through a variety of activities (e.g. brainstorming, notes and logs, graphic organizers, record of writing ideas and discussion, printed material, or other sources).

## **California State Standards:**

- **Visual and Performing Arts: Theatre:**

- 5.3 Communicate creative, design, and directorial choices to ensemble members using leadership skills, aesthetic judgment, or problem-solving skills.

- **English Language Arts: Word Analysis, Fluency and Systematic Vocabulary Development:**

- 1.3 Discern the meaning of analogies encountered, analyzing specific comparisons as well as relationships and inferences.

- **Writing Strategies; Organization and Focus:**

- 1.4 Enhance meaning by employing rhetorical devices, including the extended use of parallelism, repetition, and analogy; the incorporation of visual aids (graphs, tables, pictures) and the issuance of a call for action.

## **Washington State Standards:**

- **Essential Academic Learning Requirement – The Arts:**

- 2. The student demonstrates thinking skills using artistic processes.

- **Essential Academic Learning Requirement – Communication:**

- 2. The student uses communication skills and strategies to interact/work effectively with others

## **Warm-Up Exercise:**

Have each student bring in one ad from a magazine that shows a connection of “unlike” thoughts.



## **Project Guidelines:**

1. Teacher should begin with this sentence fragment, “Chalk is to a blackboard like \_\_\_\_\_.”
2. Students may need several examples of how this works:
  - a. *Chalk is to a blackboard like a desk is to a student.*
  - b. *Windows are to weather like a door is to an intruder.*
  - c. *Food is to the eye like perfume is to the nose.*
  - d. *Shoes are to the foot like bandages are to a cut.*
3. At the end of the sentence fragment, teacher should point to a student to complete the sentence. “Chalk is to a blackboard like words are to a page.” There is no right sentence. It is an exercise in relating like words.
4. After the student completes the sentence, that student makes up a fragment sentence and then points to another student to complete it.
5. At any time any student can challenge the analogy and the student that made the analogy must defend their position. If they cannot, they must create a new one.

6. This should go on for at least 6 sentences. The discovery comes when students see that unlike words to one person might have a connection to another person. This exercise illustrates the synergy of people thinking together. This type of thinking is the very core of a “Think Tank.”

### ***Possible Follow-up:***

Create a problem for the class to solve. Make the whole class members of a “Think Tank” and ask them to solve the problem with divergent thinking.

#### **Possible problems might be:**

- o Small size of hybrid cars
- o Keeping plants alive in a dark environment
- o Eliminating lockers at school
- o Healthy drive through food