



Keep It Positive. Keep It Simple. Keep It Real.



Un-Challenge Day Nine

Critical Keys #9: Create

Creative people take risks and frequently push the boundaries of their perceived limits. Creativity is considered to be the most advanced level of thinking, and creative people are often intrinsically motivated by challenges, problems, and artistic endeavors. Every student has creative potential if the capacity is developed.

20 MINUTE ACTIVITY

Design Your Own...Obstacle Course

You could really fill in this statement with any activity that your kids would like to call their own. Maybe they hate the rules for board games ~ have them design their own board game. Perhaps they think the chore system at your house is unfair ~ have them design their own.

Obstacle courses are great for summer fun! Everyone in the family can design an obstacle or two that can be put together to make a course. You could challenge your children to make the most interesting obstacle or the most challenging.

You need:

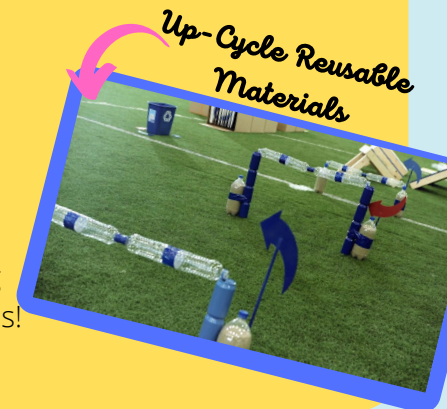
- Stuff - literally anything goes
- An outside space (School parking lots are usually empty in the summer. Parks are a great choice as well!)

A Couple Ideas for Obstacles:

- Pool noodles are great for a variety of obstacles like a ground crawl or ring toss. [Here is link with great ideas.](#) Your kids will probably have better ideas!
- Pull out any sports equipment you may have and encourage kids to "use it differently".



Pool Noodles are Super Versatile!



Up-Cycle Reusable Materials

DAILY DOINGS

Everyday: How many ways...

When looking for different solutions to everyday problems, try to brainstorm as many ways as possible to solve the problem instead of stopping at the first idea. Or, shake up a daily routine that has gotten stale. "Let's redesign your room.

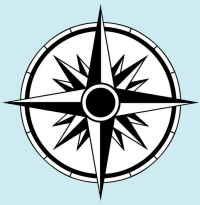
How many different ways could we arrange your space?" Have kids think "outside the box" and then help them evaluate their possible solutions.

Common Parenting Challenge: My kids don't "play" anymore.

As kids get older, their interests mature and we may find them "playing" less and less. Look for opportunities in which there can be play time ~ babysitting, hanging out with younger neighbors or family may be two such chances. Older kids will often play when the "have to" (with an eye roll even though they really love it).

Creative conversations can be the next step for older kids. Asking things like "what do you think would happen if..." or "what would your perfect ____ look like" encourages kids to think creatively.





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CREATIVITY ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

There are not nationally recognized academic standards for creativity. Rather creativity should be incorporated into all of the academic standards as a way of thinking.

Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes by applying existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes and creating original works as a means of personal or group expression

PRE-K - 2ND HOME CONNECTIONS

Younger students don't always know exactly how different objects are used. Embrace this! They may have a creative way to use an object that we had never thought about.

Additionally, imaginary play is the cornerstone of creative thinking. Encourage your child to make up imaginary worlds, run their own restaurant, and develop interesting conversations with a variety of characters.

3RD- 8TH HOME CONNECTIONS

As our kids grow older, they spend less and less time with imaginary play. If you have the opportunity, team your older child up with a younger student to see if they will still engage. I was lucky enough to "catch" my freshman in high school playing dolls with her 5th grade cousin. It was a great example of the need students still have to play even with they are older. Other creative outlets for older students can come through their interests and activities ~ home dance parties and family art projects. Be sure to check out rock painting on the Bonus Activity Page

Activity Extensions & Alternatives:

The home magazine, *Real Simple*, has a section called New Uses for Old Things. You could play this as a game. Choose a simple household item. Your children create a new use for it! Here is the Hall of Fame ideas from *Real Simple*. Again, you can challenge your kids to come up with the most unique idea or most practical. I just saw a slinky used as a pencil holder!

Along this same theme is the concept of Up-Cycling. Up-Cycling means to take an item destined for the trash and make it into something better than it was. I've used this many times in the classroom with amazing results. Check these out!



Picture Frame

Doll Wardrobe

