

Millar, G. (2010). *The power of creativity: Results of the 50-year follow up to the Torrance Longitudinal Study of Creative Behavior*. Bensenville, IL: Scholastic Testing.

Appendix E

Description of Creative Factors and Creative Strengths

RATIONAL FACTORS

These factors have largely resulted from the work of J. P. Guilford and represent a rational view of the creative process. These factors include fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration.

Creative Factor A

- Produce and Consider Many Alternatives. (Or: Think of lots and different kinds of ideas.)

Description

This factor actually involves two creative elements: fluency and flexibility. Fluency is simply the production of a number of ideas. Flexibility has to do with an individual's ability to shift mental categories or to produce and consider ideas and alternatives that are categorically different from one another.

Creative Factor B

- Be Original. (Or: Be inventive!)

Description

Originality is the ability to produce ideas that are different and unique. It requires looking beyond the obvious and mundane to the novel and inventive. Rarity and unusualness of response characterize this factor.

Creative Factor C

- Elaborate. (Or: Add some extras.)

Description

The addition of detail to an idea, plan, or drawing is elaboration. It involves the embellishment of whatever is being produced. It is the "flesh" that rounds out the "skeleton" of an idea.

SUPRARATIONAL FACTORS

Creative Strengths

Torrance and his associates developed a set of factors that fall outside the realm of pure reason. These factors move creativity toward the further reaches of creative potential and are termed creative strengths. Torrance's tests utilize these factors in the scoring scheme.

Creative Strength #1

- Highlight the Essence. (Or: Get to the heart of the matter.)

Description

This ability requires a whole range of subskills from simplification and clarification to condensation and summarization. It involves a process of distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant material. The ultimate goal of highlighting the essence is to identify the dominant problem or idea.

Creative Strength #2

- Keep Open. (Or: Don't take the easiest way out.)

Description

In order to prevent premature closure, an individual must resist the natural impulse to accept the first idea or solution that comes to mind. Deferment of judgment until a problem is fully understood and a number of solutions have been explored is crucial to avoiding premature closure.

Creative Strength #3

- Be Aware of Emotions. (Or: Know and express your feelings.)

Description

Feelings affect thinking and creative production. Emotional commitment is required and emotional factors play a role in the achievement of a genuine breakthrough or "aha." Many ideas and solutions related to a problem originate in emotions. Although the most meaningful creative insight will arise in conjunction with knowledge and persistence, without the ability to tap the emotions, it may not occur at all.

Creative Strength #4

- Put Your Ideas in Context. (Or: Get the big picture).

Description

Ideas do not function in isolation from other ideas. This creative strength is the ability to see the relationship between and recognize the large-scale implications of ideas and events.

Creative Strength #5

- Combine and Synthesize. (Or: Get it together.)

Description

This strength is an ability to bind an array of ideas and factors together to develop a new idea. The new idea is more than the sum of the parts that make it up. The parts may be very diverse, and the process of connecting and joining them in a novel and pleasing combination is the essence of this creative strength.

Creative Strength #6

- Visualize It Richly and Colorfully. (Or: See things in all their splendor.)

Description

Creative production demands an ability to visualize concepts, ideas, processes, and plans. The visualizations need not be original but are of necessity vivid, distinct, intense, and colorful. The image produced often appeals to and stimulates more than one of the sense modalities.

Creative Strength #7

- Fantasize. (Or: Use your imagination.)

Description

Fantasizing is the ability to go beyond what is real into the realm of imagination. The ability to extend one's thoughts beyond concrete reality and, just for a while, to believe the impossible possible is the essence of fantasy. It is an ability that can wither quickly under the pressure to conform and face up to reality.

Creative Strength #8

- Enrich Imagery. (Or: Feel it, smell it, touch it, taste it, hear it.)

Description

Imagery is enriched when more than one sense modality is incorporated in the experience. Idea flow appears to be increased when an individual is kinesthetically and auditorally active.

Creative Strength #9

- Have an Unusual Visual Perspective. (Or: See things from a different angle.)

Description

An unusual visual perspective is achieved when an individual perceives an object, person, or event in a different and new light. A creative individual may look at everyday objects and see something novel and exciting. This ability is one of the single most effective predictors of adult creative achievement.

Creative Strength #10

- Have an Internal Visual Perspective. (Or: Don't judge a book by its cover!)

Description

An internal visual perspective is attained by examining inner elements of an object, problem, or idea. An interest in what makes a machine "tick" or determining the core components of an idea is an internal visual perspective. This ability involves looking beyond exteriors to hidden possibilities.

Creative Strength #11

- Breakthrough — Extend the Boundaries. (Or: Break habit thinking.)

Description

Breaking away from an image or idea to go beyond its boundaries is what is meant by breakthrough. It requires looking past the problems or images themselves to the systems that they function in and around. It involves removing barriers imposed by habit and tradition and reformulating the problem or solution.

Creative Strength #12

- Have a Sense of Humor. (Or: Laugh a little.)

Description

Humor involves an ability to see incongruities, to combine ideas or images in an unusual way, or to surprise. The most important component of this strength is not necessarily the ability to produce humor but to see and pick up on the humor in situations, events, and images. The ability to see humor, or to be humorous, requires a certain detachment that is similar to the critical perspective necessary to look at problems and situations in a creative way.

Creative Strength #13

- Decentrism — Glimpse Infinity. (Or: Get out your crystal ball.)

Description

Decentrism simply means a concern for things outside of the self. It involves a concern for the future and a willingness to adapt to changes that the future holds and to be a part in shaping the future. An acceptance of the uncertainty of the future and remaining open to it is an important component of this creative strength.
