

Put Your Creative Hat On!

Creativity for Teachers

Georgi Toma

Teaching and Learning
Coordinator Graduate
Programs / Teacher

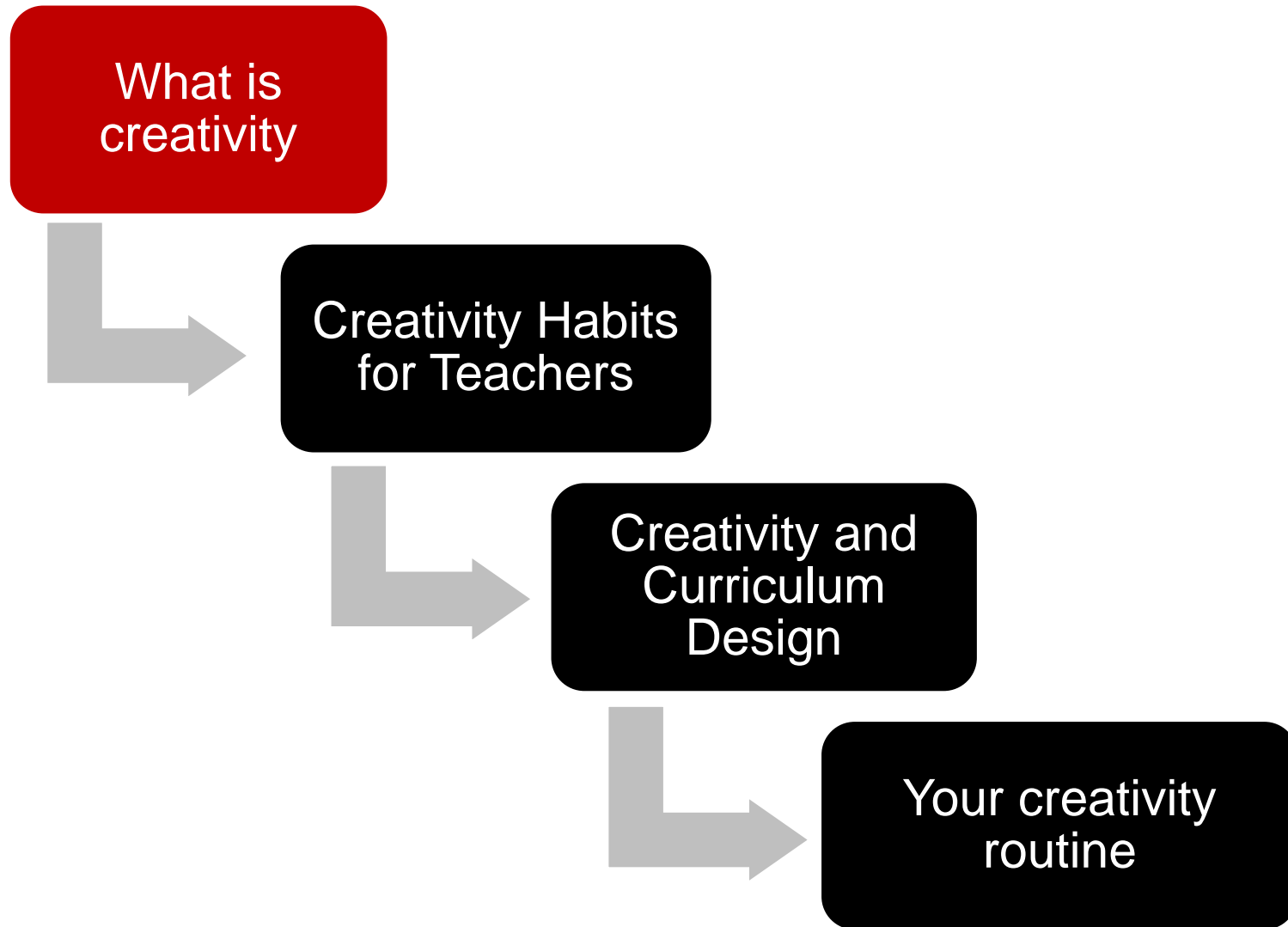
georgiana.toma@Sydney.edu.au

The Centre for
English Teaching



In this workshop you will have the opportunity to:

- Gain an increased understanding of what creativity is according to the latest research
- Gain an increased awareness of habits that can help foster creativity
- Reflect on the implications of creativity research on curriculum development
- Reflect on your own personalized creative routine



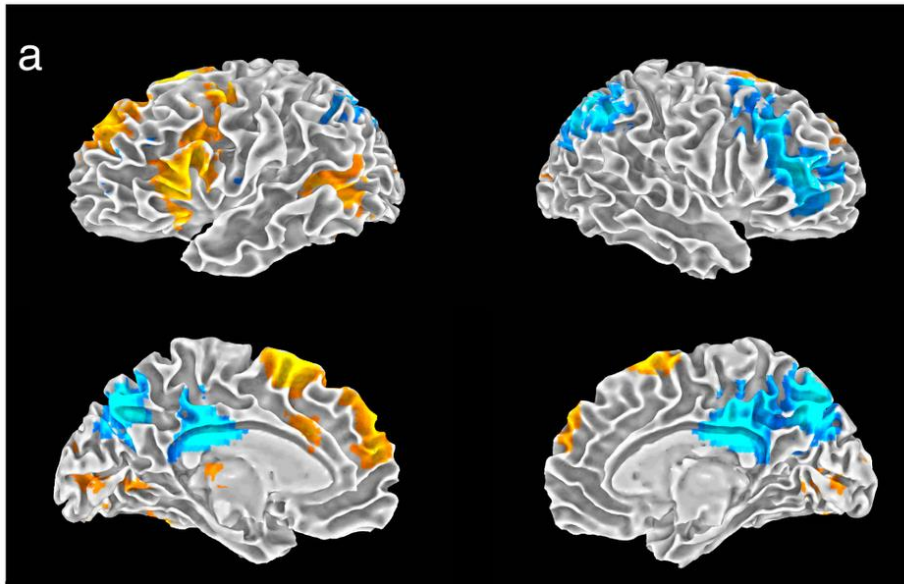
1. How would you define a 'creative idea'?
2. Is creativity innate or is it a skill?
3. How creative are you on a scale from 1 to 10?
(1- being bad at drawing in school;
10 – being Albert Einstein or Steve Jobs)

The 4 myths of creativity

- The right brain hemisphere is the seat of creativity
- Scientists are smart, artists are creative
- Creativity means having wacky ideas that no one else had before you
- Creativity means creating something from scratch

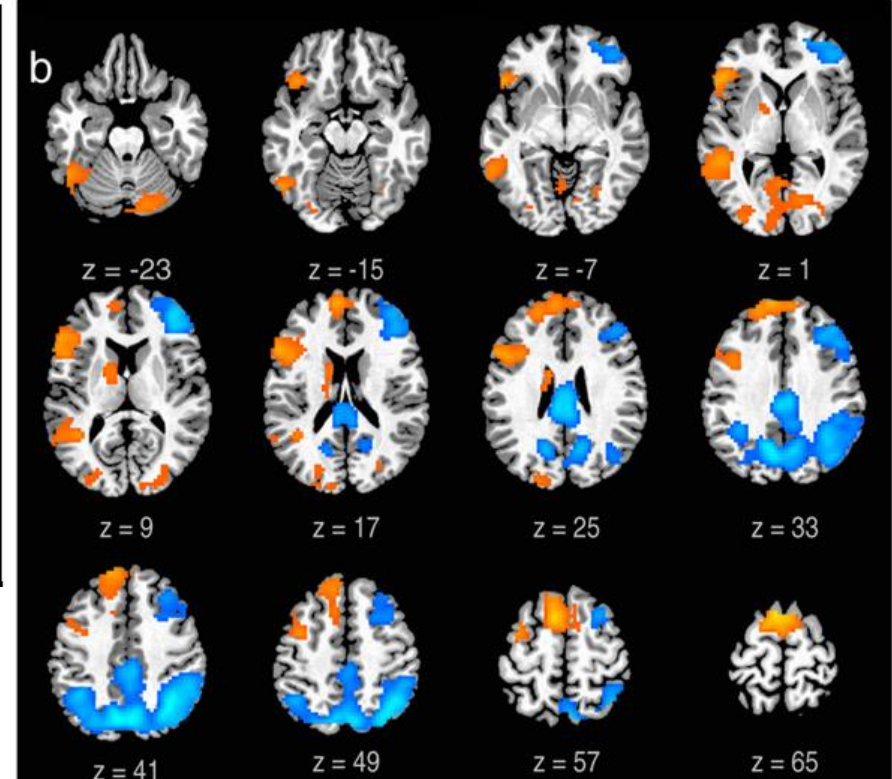


Our Brain on Creativity



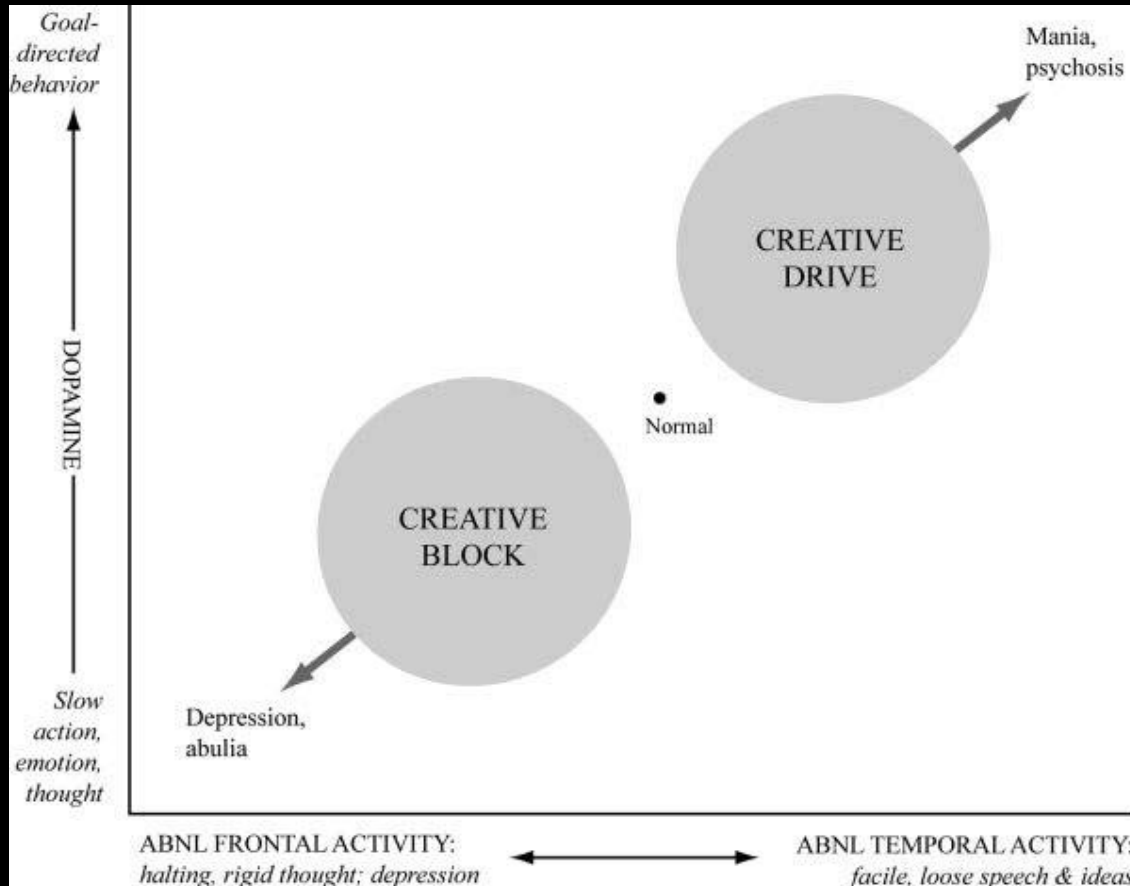
Less activity – especially in the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex (our area for planning, memory, organization, and regulation)

More activity – especially in the medial prefrontal cortex (our area to learn associations between context, events, and emotional responses)





Our Brain on Creativity

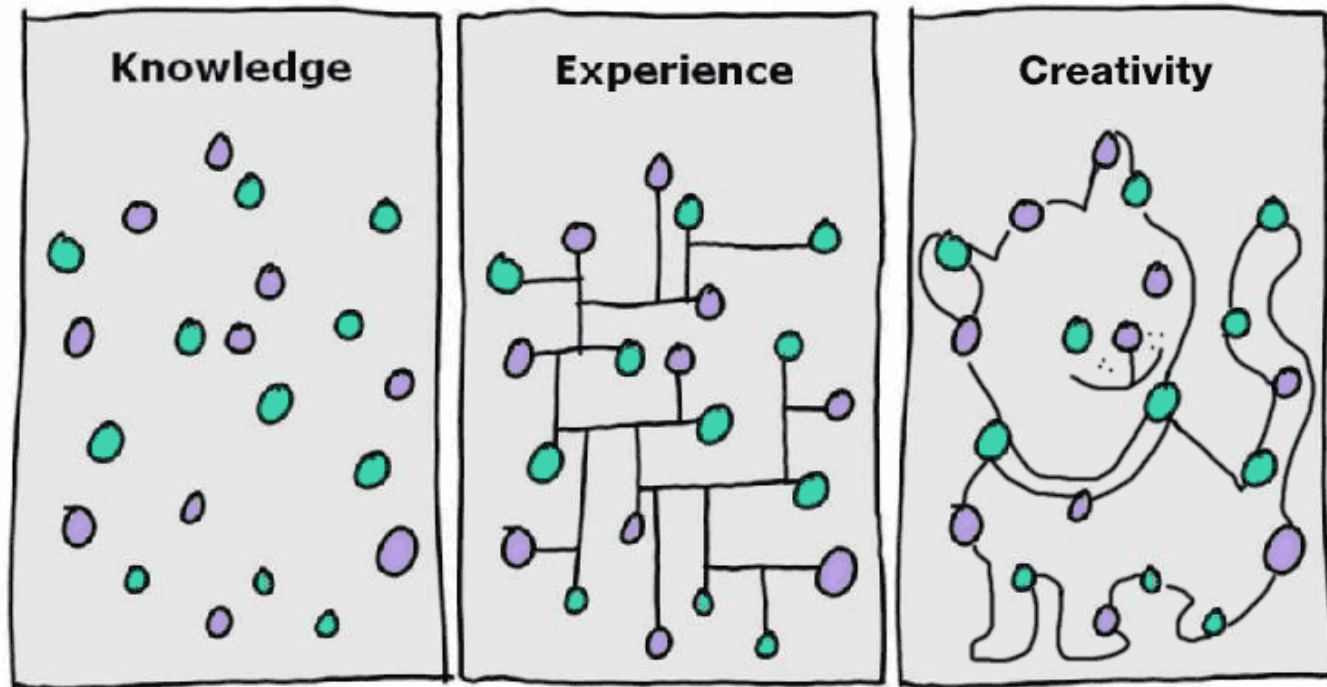


“(...) dopamine influences novelty seeking and creative drive. (...) Creative drive is not identical to skill—the latter depends more on neocortical association areas. However, drive correlates better with successful creative output than skill does.”

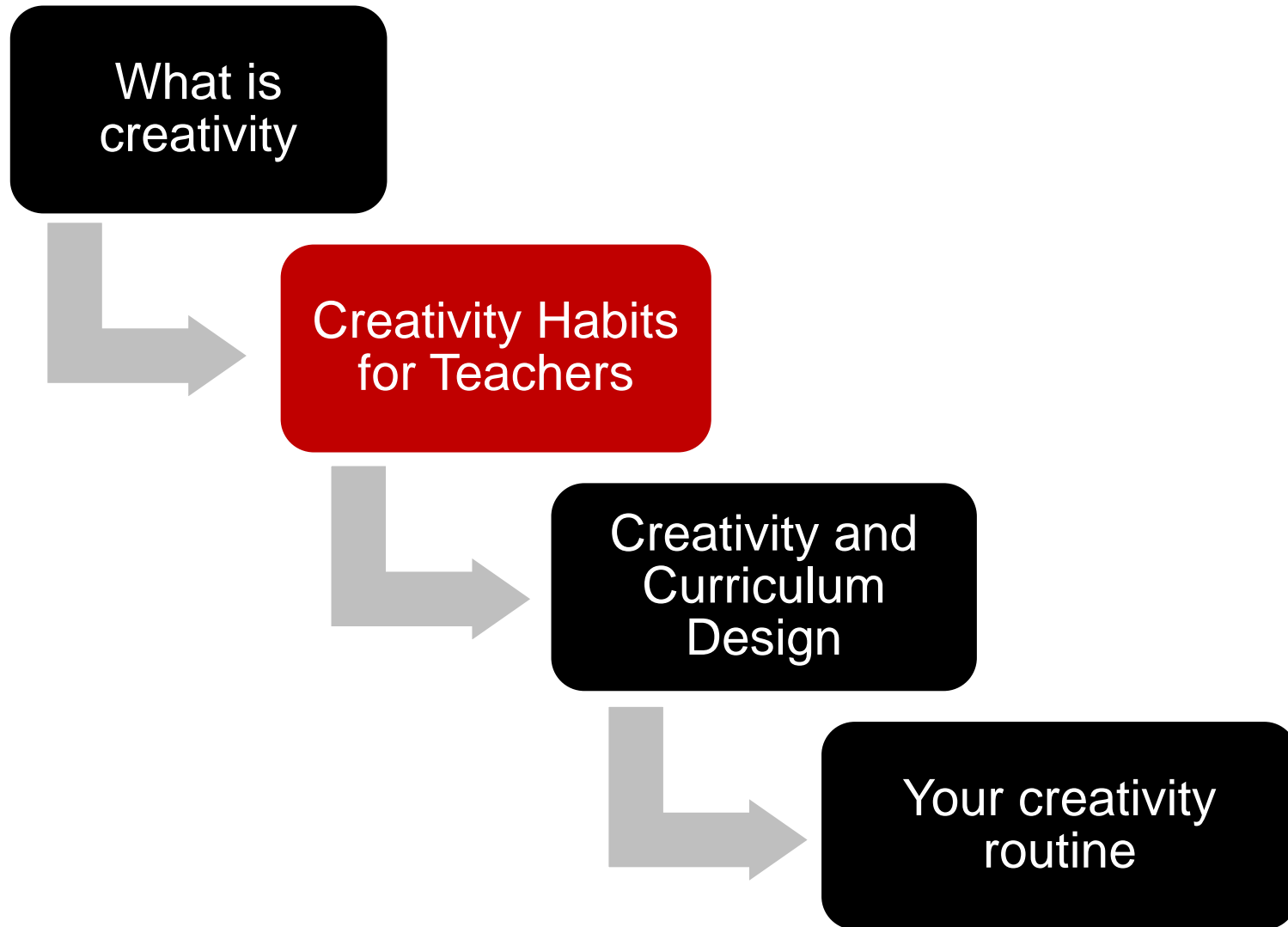
Creativity is just **connecting things**. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to **connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things**. And the reason they were able to do that was that they've **had more experiences** or they have **thought** more about their experiences than other people.

Steve Jobs

Creativity – Underpinnings



- **Creativity** – making novel associations between events, ideas, experiences and emotions
- **Science of creativity** – executive brain functions relaxed; de-focused attention; no-censorship; pleasure





Creativity Habits for Teachers



Can we really talk about creativity habits? We know that most people have creative ideas in the shower. Or other random places.





Premise



executive brain functions
relaxed; de-focused attention;
no-censorship; pleasure



making novel associations
between events, ideas,
experiences and emotions

Task: Taking into account the above underpinnings of creativity,
what can we do to tap into it on a daily basis?



1. Trying and failing is better than never trying at all

The Creativity Spectrum

Nothing

Something

Excellence



Creativity Habits for Teachers

2. Make time for curiosity.





Creativity Habits for Teachers

3. Keep a notebook with you at all times, even in the shower





4. Embrace constraints



Austin Kleon

@austinkleon



Six word memoir: "King size bed acquired. Marriage saved."

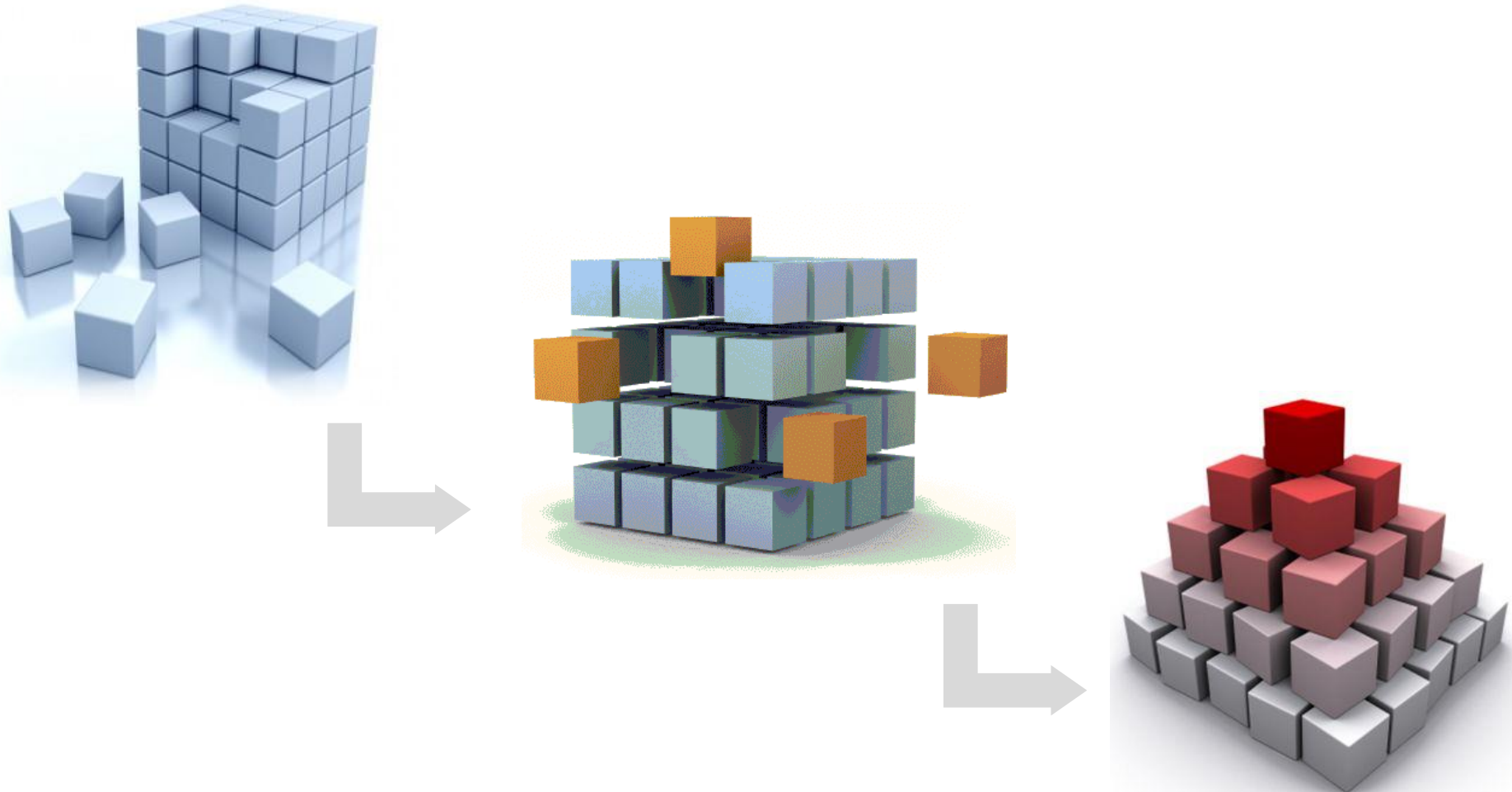
7:23 AM - 23 Aug 2014

12 RETWEETS **42** FAVORITES





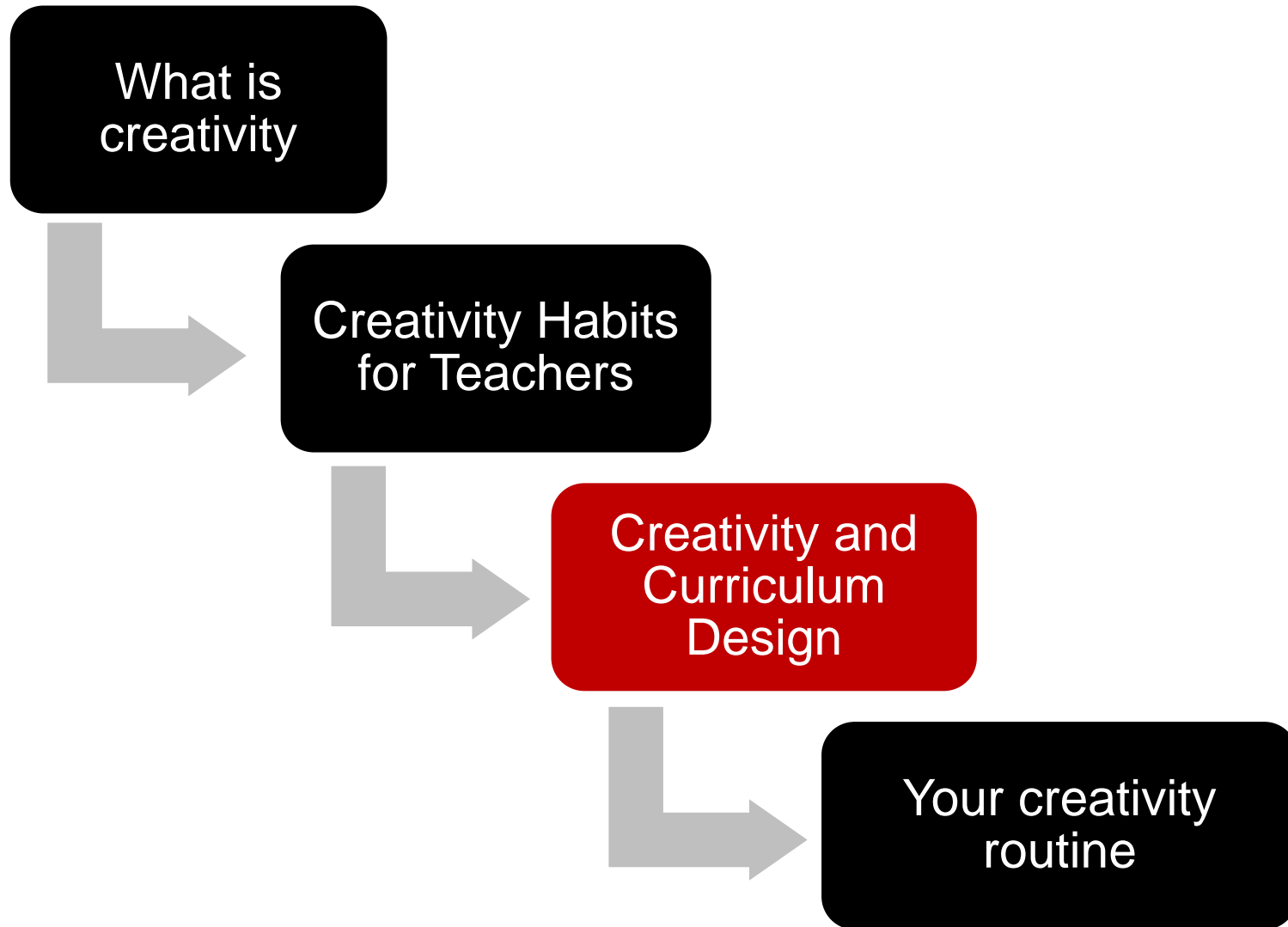
5. It's the remix! Combine ideas in novel ways





6. Plan disengagement and distraction: The outer – inner technique

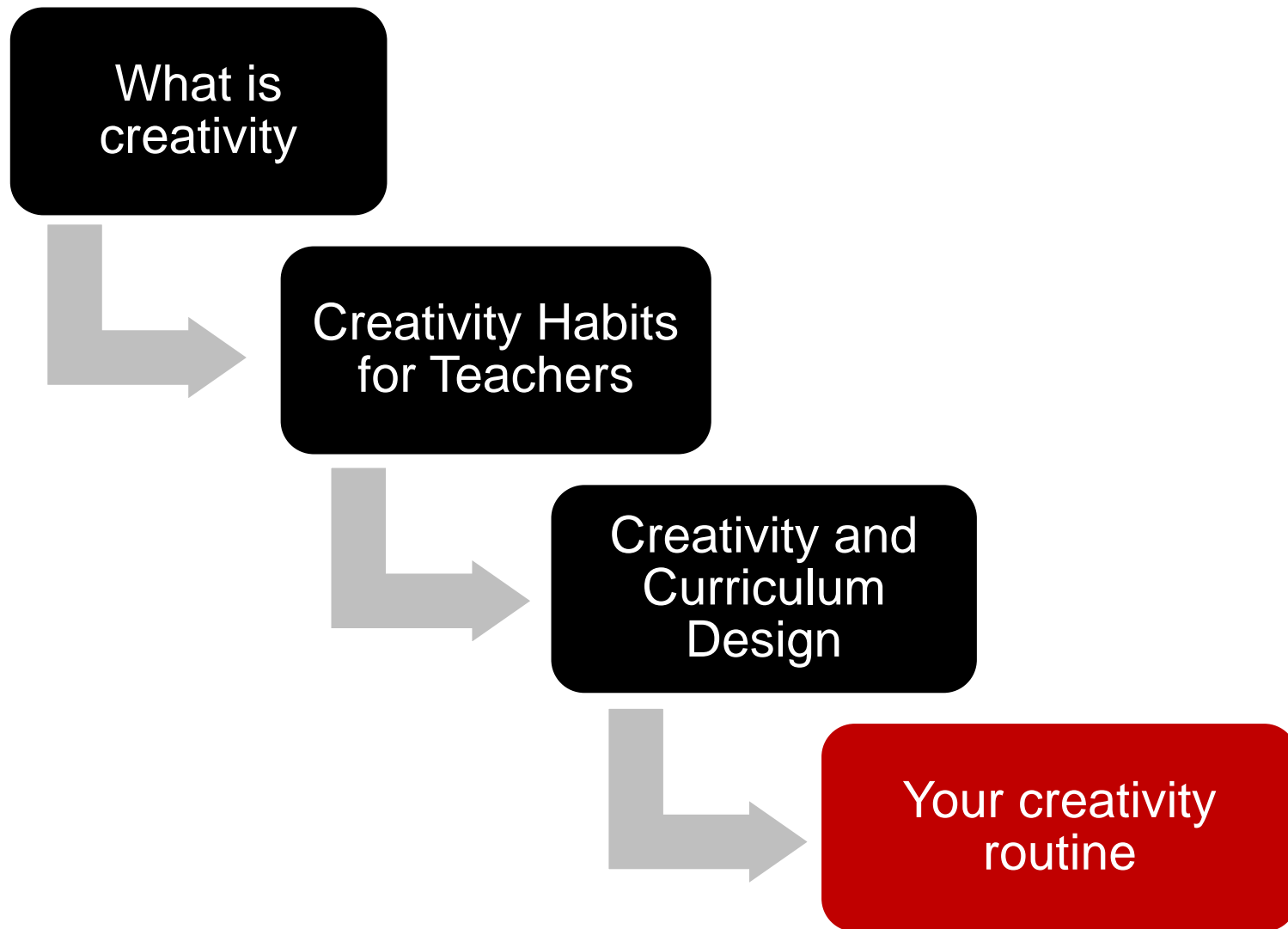




Task. Put the theory into practice.

Design an **engaging and creative** lesson. These are your constraints:

- Topic: genre analysis of discussion essay on offshoring
- Analysis options:
 - Group 1: Generic structure;
 - Group 2: Rhetorical structure;
 - Group 3: Cohesion;
 - Group 4: Academic style / register
- Target students: direct entry course students from China with an IELTS 7 requirement





Your Creativity Routine

How are you going to incorporate creativity habits into your teaching or curriculum development routine?





ANY
QUESTIONS
?

- Flaherty, A. W. (2005). FRONTOTEMPORAL AND DOPAMINERGIC CONTROL OF IDEA GENERATION AND CREATIVE DRIVE. *The Journal of Comparative Neurology*, 493(1), 147–153. doi:10.1002/cne.20768
- Lee, K. (2014). What I Wish I Knew About Creativity When I Was 20. Retrieved October 2, 2014
- Liu, S., Chow, H. M., Xu, Y., Erkinen, M. G., Swett, K. E., Eagle, M. W., ... Braun, A. R. (2012). Neural Correlates of Lyrical Improvisation: An fMRI Study of Freestyle Rap. *Scientific Reports*, 2. doi:10.1038/srep00834
- Widrich, L. (2013). Why We Have Our Best Ideas in the Shower: The Science of Creativity. *The Buffer Blog*. Retrieved October 2, 2014
- Wolf, G. (1996, February). Steve Jobs: The Next Insanely Great Thing. *Wired*, 2(4).