

4 Reconnecting

1 Read the article about creativity. Then read the comments. Which comments agree with the message of the article? Underline the relevant parts of the article.

- 1 'I've drawn and painted all my life. I don't think I've changed much.'
- 2 'I definitely need to find the answers to problems in the job I'm doing now!'
- 3 'When we were little, we were happy playing in the street all day with nothing.'
- 4 'We had a music teacher all through school, as far as I remember.'
- 5 'I often get my best ideas when I'm making my lunch, and have to run back to my computer.'
- 6 'I don't know why, but I have more ideas when I make notes by hand.'



1 Stop what you're doing for a moment and think back to ten, twenty (or more) years ago – basically, to when you were a child. What were you doing? Drawing a picture? Playing with sand? Acting out an imaginary adventure with your friends? And now answer these questions: when was the last time you did any of those things? Do you think you are less creative now than you were as a child? And does it matter? Well, there are plenty of experts who think that it does.

One of their main arguments is that creativity is an important job skill these days and will be even more essential in the future. Traditional jobs are fast disappearing or becoming automated and employers are demanding different skills. Things like problem solving, critical thinking and collaboration are all based on creativity. And in fact, creativity was seen as one of the key skills of leadership in a survey of business people. If, as it seems, we are losing our ability to be creative as we grow up, will we be less prepared for the workplace?

Of course, children are naturally creative in their play and their thinking. They're curious about the world, asking questions all the time and expressing themselves spontaneously. They use their imagination to turn a cardboard box into a castle, a mop into a motorbike or a blanket into the base camp at Everest. They don't stop to evaluate or judge their thoughts and ideas. So what happens to us as we grow up? What stops us being so free and creative?

Some people blame school, suggesting that education systems focus too much on exams. Many schools simply don't give time to creative subjects such as music and art. At the same time, there's too much focus on tasks that have a 'correct' answer rather than encouraging original thought.

If all this sounds very familiar to you, don't worry!

There are many ways to reboot your creativity.

Some of them are simple tricks that you probably already know, such as walking around for a few minutes when you are mentally stuck. Another useful technique is to take a pen and brainstorm your ideas onto a blank sheet of paper, perhaps in the form of a mind map. Remember, though, that this works best when you write down *everything* that comes into your mind – don't reject, judge or even organize your thoughts too much. And while you've got a pen in your hand, try the thirty circles test. Draw thirty circles and then see how many different objects you can turn the circles into in just three minutes. It really forces you to think creatively!

Finally, there are things you can add to your daily routine, such as allowing yourself to be bored, meditating or doing relaxation activities. Research has shown that being bored and letting your mind wander helps our brain to explore new ideas. Making changes to your routine, your favourite hobbies, the places you visit, the chair you sit in – all these changes mean that your brain has to process something new or different. New ideas and solutions will surely follow.

Grammar

Reported speech and reporting verbs

1 Complete the sentences about twin brothers. Use the words in brackets. Add prepositions where necessary.

- 1 My brother always claimed _____ (be) better at sports than me.
- 2 He often refused _____ (speak) to me.
- 3 He once accused _____ (me / break) his bike.
- 4 He never asked _____ (me / play) computer games with him.
- 5 My parents blamed _____ (me / cause) problems.
- 6 My brother denied _____ (tell) lies to my parents about me.
- 7 When we were eighteen, he apologized _____ (be) so horrible.

2 Complete the paragraph about a long lost sister. Use reporting verbs and the correct pattern.

A few years ago, my partner ¹ _____ (persuade / me / contact) my long lost sister. At first, my partner ² _____ (recommend / write) a short letter to her. I wasn't sure about this idea, but I ³ _____ (agree / try). My sister ⁴ _____ (invite / me / come) to her house. I ⁵ _____ (ask / her / suggest) a more neutral place, so she ⁶ _____ (offer / meet) me in a café in the centre of my city. At the time, I ⁷ _____ (not admit / feel) nervous about it all. However, after our first meeting, we ⁸ _____ (promise / meet) more often.

- 3 Read the direct speech. Complete the reported speech with the correct verb pattern. There is one extra verb. Then find and underline five changes to reference words.

change	for / not call	go
make	Nikki / put	Rosa / come

- 1 R: 'Hi Nikki, it's Rosa. I'm sorry I haven't called recently.'
Rosa apologized _____ for a while.
- 2 N: 'No problem! Do you want to come round this Friday?'
Nikki invited _____ to her house that Friday.

- 3 R: 'Sure! Friday is great. I can be there about eight.'
Rosa agreed _____ to Nikki's home.
- 4 N: 'Don't worry about food. I'll make supper for us.'
Nikki offered _____ supper for them.
- 5 R: 'Lovely. Don't forget to put me in your diary!'
Rosa reminded _____ her in her diary.

- 4 Complete the story about being stuck on an island with the correct form of the verbs. Add prepositions where necessary.

cause help hire not leave pay sort out

Once, we got stuck on the island of Miyajima in Japan. The ferry had an accident and it was the only connection to the mainland. The ferry company apologized immediately for ¹_____ to schedule. They promised ²_____ the problem as soon as they could. They blamed the bad weather ³_____ delays. We asked the travel agency ⁴_____ us, and they recommended ⁵_____ a private boat, but we refused ⁶_____ any more money. Luckily, we had a great time while we waited for the ferry service to be reconnected.

Pronunciation

Using stress for emphasis (2)

- 1  42 Listen to the sentences and underline the word which is stressed. Which question is being answered, A or B?

- 1 The ferry had an accident.
A: What had an accident?
B: What happened to the ferry?
- 2 The bad weather caused long delays.
A: What caused the delays?
B: What did the bad weather cause?
- 3 The travel agency recommended a hotel.
A: Who recommended a hotel?
B: What did the travel agency recommend?
- 4 We spent ten days in Miyajima.
A: Where did you spend ten days?
B: How long did you spend in Miyajima?

Listening

- 1  43 Listen to four people speaking. Write the number of the speaker next to the summary of their story. There is one extra summary.

- a Staying in touch across the miles and the years is possible.
- b Fame doesn't travel.

- c A man reconnected with someone who had saved his life.
- d Old school friends use social media to share their families' lives.
- e Age differences seem much more significant to you when you're younger.

- 2  43 Listen again. Complete the notes with no more than three words and/or a number.

Story 1

- 1 The temperature at the scene of the accident was _____.
- 2 The driver gave the man a coat and a _____.

Story 2

- 3 Students contacted their _____.
- 4 They met _____ years after the students had left school.

Story 3

- 5 The man's family is from _____.
- 6 The brother told people he was _____.

Story 4

- 7 How often did the pen pals write?

- 8 How long have they been pen pals?

Vocabulary

Verbs for relationships

- 1 Choose the correct option to complete the sentences.

- 1 A: I didn't know you had a brother in Karachi.
B: Yeah, well I don't *lose touch* / *keep in touch* with him, really.

- 2 A: Do you *catch up* / *get along well* with your neighbours?

B: Oh, yes. Everyone's friendly in our street.

- 3 A: I'm going to a school reunion at the weekend with people I haven't seen in years.

B: Do you feel nervous about *keeping in close contact* / *reconnecting* with them?

- 4 A: How did your first day at work go?

B: It was good – my new colleagues and I really *hit it off* / *stuck together*.

- 5 A: I'm going to miss everyone when the course ends next month.

B: I know. I hope I don't *get along well* / *lose touch* with them all.

- 6 A: This is a photo of when we used to meet every Sunday for lunch.

B: It's nice to *hit it off* / *keep in close contact* with your family, isn't it?

- 7 A: I'll be back from my holidays on Saturday.

B: Great, let's meet and *catch up* / *keep in touch*.

- 2 Complete the sentences with the correct form of these verbs. Sometimes more than one verb is possible.

catch up	hit it off
keep in touch	lose touch
reconnect	stick together

- 1 After I went on social media, I _____ with a lot of old friends.
- 2 When I moved away from home, I only _____ with a few of my good friends.

- 3 My best friend and I met on our first day at school. We _____ immediately.

- 4 My family and I have been through a lot of problems, but we always _____ and support each other.

- 5 _____ with people makes me feel sad, but sometimes I think it's for a reason.

Focus on

Transitive and intransitive phrasal verbs

1 Read the sentence and say if it is correct (C) or if a word is missing (M). Add the missing word in the correct place.

- 1 Sometimes, you meet someone and hit it off immediately. _____
- 2 They've not spoken for years – they don't get with each other. _____
- 3 Keeping in touch people is not always easy. _____
- 4 Family and friends should stick together. _____
- 5 There's nothing better than catching up old friends. _____
- 6 If we lose touch, I will regret it. _____
- 7 Going home and reconnecting with your roots is important. _____
- 8 Social media helps people to keep in close contact. _____

3 Rewrite the sentences adding *with* to make the verb transitive.

- 1 My neighbour and I get along well.

- 2 My college friends and I lost touch.

- 3 I promised my old teacher I would keep in touch.

- 4 At their first meeting, the new and old members of the team hit it off.

- 5 The party will be a chance for all the cousins to reconnect.

Writing

1 Which option is not possible in the sentence?

- 1 The boy ran *happily* / *loudly* / *quickly* to be with his group of friends, shouting their names.
- 2 I was almost ready to give up when *slowly* / *luckily* / *unexpectedly* I saw a car coming towards me.
- 3 The girl collapsed *in delight* / *in pain* / *in shock*, not understanding anything that had just happened.
- 4 The man turned and stared *angrily* / *rapidly* / *silently* at the crowd, holding his camera.
- 5 Shaking *with cold* / *with fear* / *with hope*, we walked across the icy bridge.
- 6 Our parents drove off *without a doubt* / *without a sound* / *without a word* as we watched, standing at the window.

3 Rewrite the reported sentences as direct speech.

- 1 The driver offered to take us to a different hotel.

- 2 The girl claimed she didn't know my name.

- 3 My friend smiled and reminded me to keep the photos.

- 4 The boy looked at me and asked if I needed help.

- 5 I took his hand and apologized for not recognizing him.

- 6 We shook hands and agreed to meet the next day.
