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Module 5: Boosting online teaching creativity and learners' engagement through artistic activities

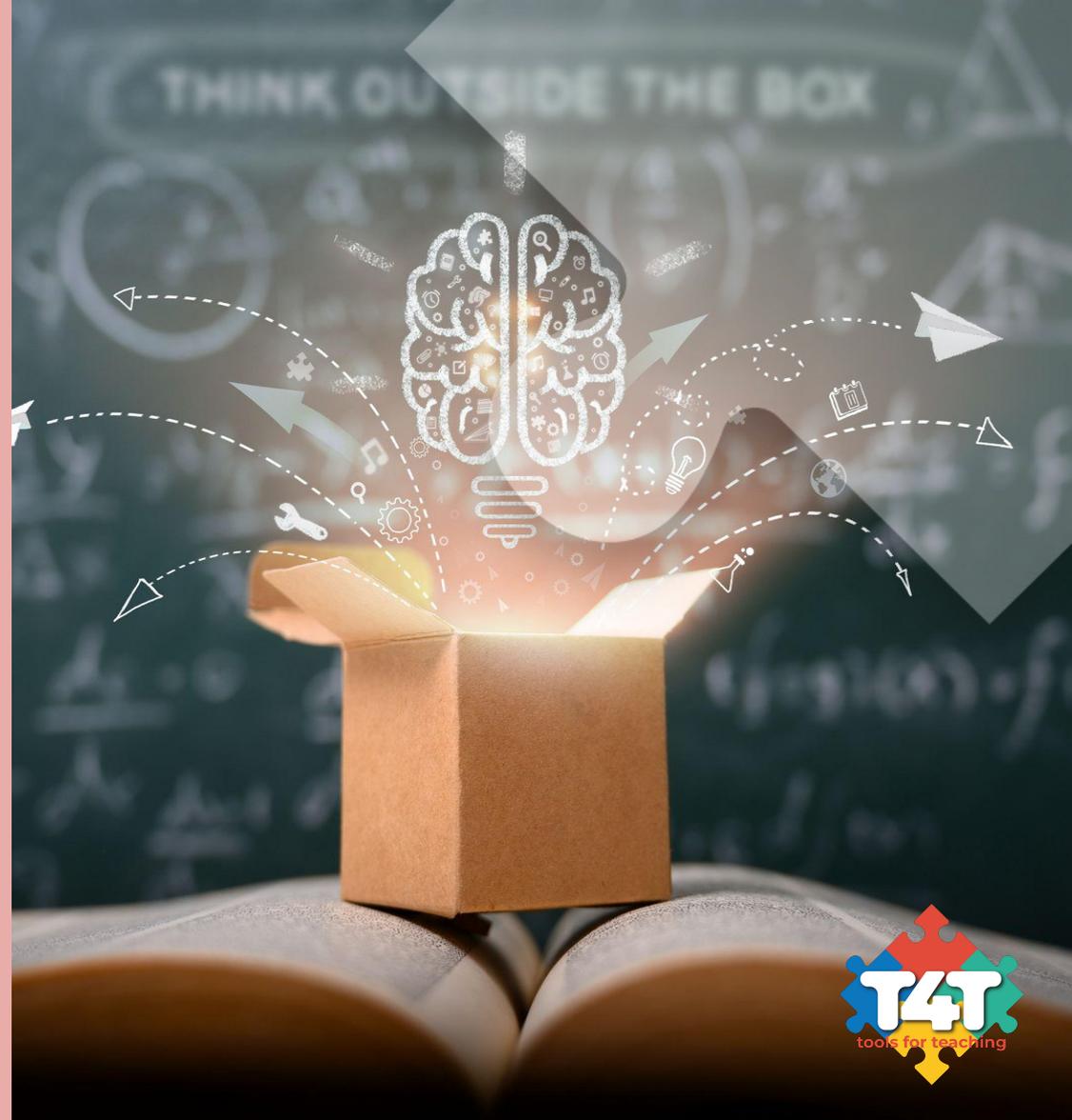
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About the project

T4T - Tools4Teaching in Digital Education Settings project focuses on supporting adult educators and formal, non-formal and informal training providers to effectively shift towards digital education and to provide the same level of learners' interaction and 'human-like' experience, as in the physical environment. **The overall objective** is to strengthen the capacity of adult educators and training professionals to build and sustain effective group dynamics in digital education settings, so as to better engage their online learners.



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Module objectives

In this module, e-educators will:

- Learn about the basic principles of maintaining creativity online and will gain insight on how to develop and nurture their own creative teaching by using different forms of arts
- Receive some helpful tips on how to keep students' online engagement through creative virtual activities
- Gain access to practical examples of collaborative online art, music, dance and theatre activities will be presented, thus serving as an inspiration to e-educators, tutors and training professionals, who could easily adapt them to their teaching practices and domains.



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Module outcomes

After going through the module, adult educators will:

- Learn what the basic principles of online creativity are and how to maintain it in online and blended learning environments.
- Know how to apply online artistic activities for building and maintaining effective group dynamics.
- Be able to develop and nurture their own artistic skills and creative teaching by using art, music, dance and theatre techniques.
- Build their competences on how to keep students' online engagement through creative virtual experiences.
- Become familiar with suitable practical examples of collaborative online art, music, dance and theatre activities, which afterwards can easily adapt and transfer to their own online teaching sessions and lessons.



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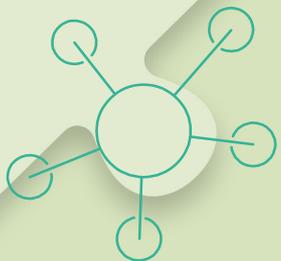


1st section: Online Creativity – Definition and Basic Principles



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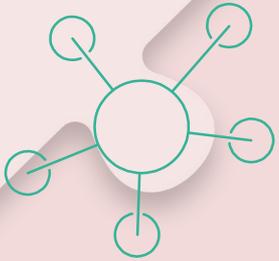
What is creativity?

- This is *“the use of imagination or original ideas to create something new or different”*.
- Usually it is associated with artists, painters, writers, poets, actors, musicians and other individuals who create artworks on a daily basis.
- However, it is important in every aspect of our lives, and *everybody is somehow creative in their work, especially educators who need to constantly inspire, engage and motivate their students.*



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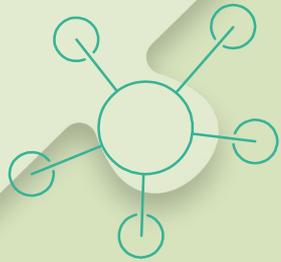
The creative process:

- Is cyclical and nonlinear.
- Is linked with experimentation and self-challenges.
- Needs safe and supportive learning environments, in which learners can free their imagination, challenge themselves, struggle a bit, and re-imagine while completing the task.



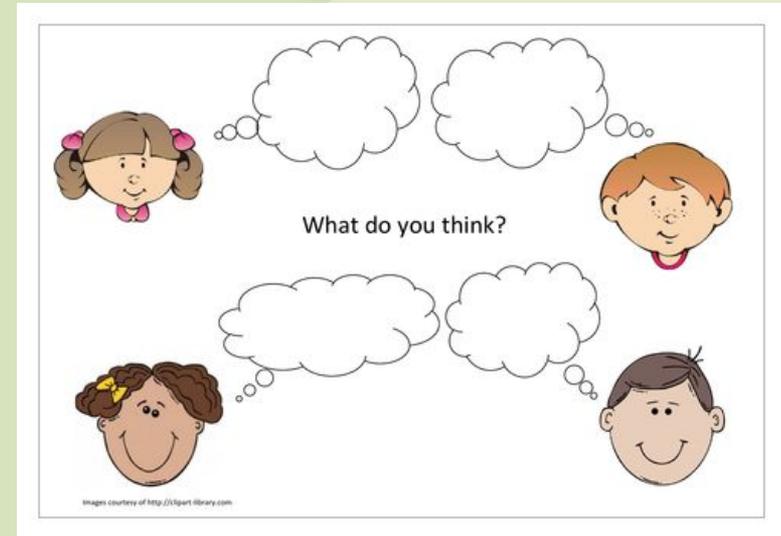
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How to nurture the creative learning environment?

- By using online **visual riddles** or **shared online boards**, where teachers and students can make **simple line drawings**.
- By including **concept cartooning** through which learners can discuss and review the studied material or can draw/sketch/design virtual visual metaphors to capture the essence of the presented information or to explore alternative ideas about a specific topic.



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Practical Exercise: How to use the creative process in virtual classrooms?

- **Planning stage**: E-educators ask their students to document how they get ready for the artistic activity, for example through taking photos or recordings or by making initial sketches of their ideas and sharing them on a collaborative virtual board.
- **Creating stage**: E-educators ask their students to keep a learning diary of the process and to make photos or recordings of their progress. At the end of the stage, ask them to share their draft products on a collaborative virtual board or run a common online session, where they can present the results from the creative activity.
- **Reflecting and refining stage**: E-educators ask their students to review their diaries and progress and to think about the entire process.



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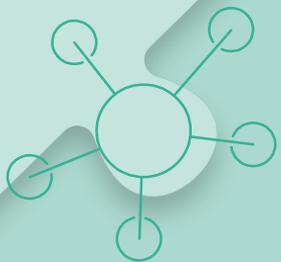


2nd section: Keeping Students' Online Engagement through Creative Virtual Activities – Some Helpful Tips and Examples



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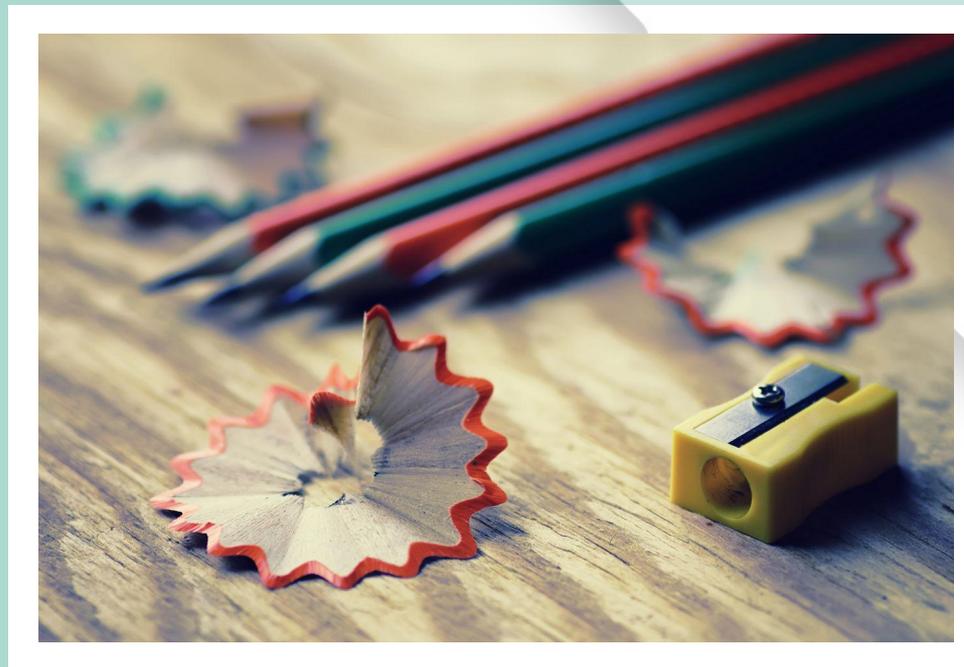




Creative online boosts

These are *quick one-off exercises based on artistic activities that engage students in fun experiences as part of the session content or in between lessons.*

They are also based on the principles of experimentation, exploration and self-challenge and allow creative use of unconventional art media.



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What should e-educators keep in mind when organising creative boosts for engaging their online students?

The outcome of the drawing exercise could be **some sort of an amateurish sketch on a loose-leaf piece of paper** or just **a few lines on the shared online board**.

Discovering **suitable materials at home** or adjusting to a shared online collaborative tool **might take longer** than in the face-to-face learning settings.

Give **freedom to online students** to choose the materials they will use and to approach the creative task as they prefer.

Allow enough time for your students to shift their moods from the serious learning content to the creative exercise.

And last but not least – **make it all fun!**



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Easy examples of online creative boosts

- **Creating common online comic strips.**
- **Telling stories with online storyboards.**
- **Writing or performing a poem or singing a song.**
- **Creating a common digital soundboard.**



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3rd section: Developing and Nurturing Educators' Online Creativity and Artistic Skills – Some Ideas and Insights



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How could educators develop their own online creativity?

- ❑ Find what actually inspires you.
- ❑ Do not be afraid of going outside your comfort zone
- ❑ Change your daily routine when planning and running your online lessons and training sessions
- ❑ Be open minded and look for inspiration everywhere

And last but not least – **make it all fun!**



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How could e-educators nurture their own creativity and artistic skills?

Keep your curiosity and make your online lesson planning a creative experience.

Experiment with new teaching approaches and creativity boosting tools, including mobile applications and collaborative software solutions.

Express your creative side.

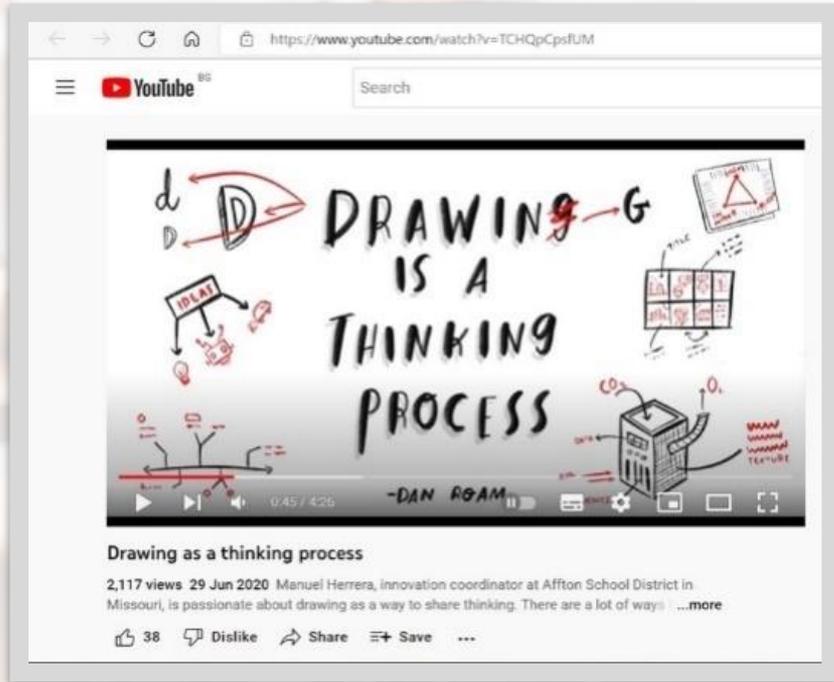
Develop your artistic skills but also embrace the limits you have.



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Online creative insight - Drawing as a thinking process



When using drawings, doodles and simple shapes (squares, circles, triangles, lines, slashes, arches, and dots) in the thinking and educational process, it is **not about art, but about thinking and showing your ideas** to others!

And this is an approach which every educator can easily do in their virtual or hybrid classroom.



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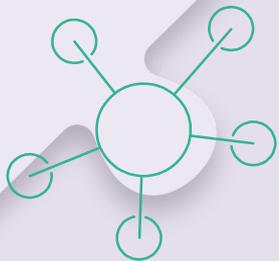


4th section: Practical Examples of Collaborative Online Artistic Activities



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Collaborative art...

... nurtures the creative flow of participants and teaches them to appreciate each other's similarities and differences in a supportive atmosphere of teamwork.

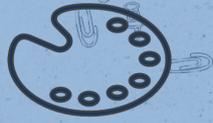
.... focuses on cooperation rather than competition and balances individual talents of each learner with the common goal of the entire group.



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Some ideas for collaborative online artistic activities



- Alternate paint & 3-D crafts ideas

- Sixty-Second Sketch

- Draw in response to music

- Jig zone

- Street Art



- Music memory

- BBC Instrument Matchup

- Inside The Orchestra



- Carnival Walks

- Virtual Theatre



- The emoji dance

- Balancing the book dance

- Freeze Dance



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Thank you!

