Connecting the Dots: Applying Creative Thinking Strategies to Expand Agricultural Research

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Creativity is Perspective

Photo 1: Candle stand and two faces.

Photo 2: Woman’s face and Man playing saxophone.
Creativity is Perspective

Photo 1: Young lady looking away & lady looking down.

Photo 2: Old man looking right and man on horse.
Your turn!
Creativity Crisis
What is creativity?

× Is a process (Torrance, 1995).

“Creativity defies precise definition...Creativity is almost infinite. It involves every sense – sight, smell, hearing, feeling, taste and even perhaps the extrasensory. Much of it is unseen, nonverbal and unconscious. Therefore, even if we had a precise concept of creativity, I am certain we would have difficulty putting it into words.” -- Paul Torrance
Teaching Creative Thinkers

- Abstract thinking—improves innovative & critical thinking.
- Connect & make relationships between objects, phrases, concepts, or ideas.
Creativity in Scientific Writing

- Scientific-writing course in Summer 2018.
- Creativing thinking strategies:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drawing Connections</th>
<th>Connecting Dots</th>
<th>Outlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="connect.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="dots.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="outlines.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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</tbody>
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Making Connections

- As the course progressed, challenges became more difficult.
- Students had to seek solutions and defend connections.
- Agriculture—Course—Writing—Paper—Section
Application to Agriculture
Creativity in Scientific Writing

- P01 - “This abstraction represents our job as agricultural communicators. Often the content is there, we just need to find how to *make the picture pretty*.”
Creativity in Scientific Writing

× P03 - “I thought science was hard. I just realized I wasn’t looking at it through a lens I understood. I needed to find the connection.”
Creativity in Scientific Writing

- P02 - “Writing is not as intimidating as it used to be. We are connectors.

  We make connections in content, in people, and in the world.”
Creativity in Scientific Writing

- P01 - “This was the best class I have taken. Ever. Thank you for facilitating our learning beyond the classroom.”
Application

- Scientific writing does not need to be scary.
- Connections increase creativity and build confidence.
- Seek ways to create connections.
Creative Musings

1. You are creative.
2. Creativity is work.
3. You must go through the motions.
4. Your brain is not a computer.
5. There is no one right answer.
6. Learn to think unconventionally.
“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 connected experiences they’ve had and synthesized new things.”

~Steve Jobs~
Questions?

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Thank you!