



Educator's Guide

The Innovator: Creative Vision

Overview

This lesson introduces students to the idea of innovation as the process of creating and implementing new ideas of value. We will guide students through exploring their individual passion and learning to think at the “intersection” (described by Frans Johansson), or the connection between diverse domains. A key aspect of innovation is that ideas become realized, and we should emphasize to students that the true power of innovative ideas to change the world comes when those ideas are at work in the world.

Our role in this lesson is to expose students to examples of innovation and facilitate their exploration and development of their individual inspiration. We will also provide them with opportunities to practice connecting ideas from different domains. By the end of this lesson, students will have constructed a sense of innovation as a process and have a vision of how they will participate in this process.

Objectives

- Define innovation and understand the difference between creativity and innovation
- Describe the three behaviors practiced by innovators
- Practice innovative thinking

Learning Activities

- Background
- Journal, Think-Pair-Share, and Discussion Prompts
 1. Before you begin reading and learning more about innovation, define and describe the concept in your own words.
 2. Describe a moment from your everyday life when you did something innovative – found a way that was new and better.
 3. Why is diversity important for innovation?
 4. Do you consider yourself a creative person? Why or why not? How might you push your creativity further?
 5. Explain the single biggest “ah ha!” moment you had when reading the background materials.
 6. Look around you wherever you happen to be right now, and pick a random thing around the space. Briefly describe the thing and what it is for. Now think of a different task or purpose for that thing. Describe your innovation.
- Class Activity: IDEAS at the Intersection
 - Medium or large groups, 30-45 minutes.
 - Objective – illuminate connections between seemingly unrelated ideas and experience the innovative practice of applying an idea in a new way.



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- Materials – IDEAS at the Intersection worksheet (poster print or digital whiteboard/mural), global goals cards, intersection cards.
- Description – In advance of class, define the problem and select 2-4 of the intersection cards to go in each quadrant of the worksheet. To complete the activity, ask students to generate as many ideas as they can in each quadrant (one at a time). These ideas should describe a connection between the problem and the intersection card.
- Assessment – Students can be assessed on depth of participation, quantity of reasonable connections generated, and post-activity reflection.
- Variations & Extensions –
 - Smaller groups (3-5 students) could work on the same problem with different intersection cards; to share out, each group could pick their favorite connection or posters could be set up as a gallery walk.
 - Warm up thinking with a game of Ouisi (see “Other Resources”) before the activity.
 - Smaller groups of students (3-5) could work on a single quadrant and the whole class could participate in a “lightning round” of wildest ideas.

Rubrics

IDEAS at the Intersection Class Activity

	Keep working on it	Good stuff	Excellent!
Connections are innovative yet sensible.			
Connections are well described/explained.			
The connection directly serves to solve the problem.			
A sufficient number of connections were generated.			
The wildest ideas were really wild!			

Other Resources

- [Definitions of innovation](#) from “15 of the world’s leading innovation experts”. Pairs well with: prompt #1
- The Netflix show [Connected: The Hidden Science of Everything](#) is an entertaining and detailed exploration of some of the unexpected connections between seemingly unrelated topics. Pairs well with: background
- In this short video, Frans Johansson explains how [diversity drives innovation](#). Pairs well with: prompt #3
- This article provides [evidence that creativity can be taught](#). Pairs well with: prompt #4
- The game Ouisi is a collection of photo cards that can be endlessly combined in innovative connections. With a little bit of time, some interesting photos of your own, and a good printer, you or your students could easily create a similar game. Pairs well with: *IDEAS at the Intersection* activity