

How School Killed Creativity.

Early childhood is a time of enormous creativity. Between five and seven years of age, people score higher on creativity tests than they will at any other age. At age 44, they score the lowest. Rather depressing.

It's also interesting that, according to research, you laughed about 113 times per day as a young child and you get down to only 11 times per day during middle age. Many students of creativity have linked creativity to humor, or vice versa. How many times a day do *you* laugh?

If you want to know why school is so detrimental to creativity, ask everyone in your next meeting to write down the school rules they remember. If those rules indeed stifle creative thinking, you must challenge the offending rules and create new guidelines that promote interaction.

Archaic School Rules

The teacher is always right.
There's only one right answer.
Keep eyes on your own paper.
Raise your hand.
Evaluate by grades.
Stay on the subject.
Work alone.
Stop daydreaming.

Guidelines for Creativity

Solicit opinions from those actually doing the work.
There are several right answers.
Collaborate and share ideas.
Ask introverts "What do you think."
Don't measure everything.
Allow for divergent thinking.
Form self-directed teams.
Envision problems as solved and work backwards.