

Generating Ideas

Background

When ideas aren't flowing, sometimes it is possible to use a random generation method to "kickstart" the creative process. The idea of this is to get over the fear and mental paralysis that a blank page can bring. The chunk on generating ideas contains software that make makes a creative plan – it is called the Ideas Hothouse.

Ideas Hothouse – online material

The Ideas Hothouse was specially created for this pack.

It is a four-stage tool for making creative plans based on the metaphor of a growing plant and its need for care. The four stages are as follows:

Sowing – planting the seeds of ideas

Nurturing – feeding the seedlings

Thinning – removing the weaker ideas

Showing – displaying the finished ideas

Learners are asked to choose one card from six for each stage of the process. They drag each card they choose across to the selection area on the right of the screen. When they have chosen 4 cards, they can read their plan by clicking on the cards or print it out.

The plan can recommend make recommendations along the lines of the following:

Sowing – break your routine – try different activities to generate ideas

Nurturing – get a new brain – try to think in the manner of someone you admire – get inside their head.

Thinning – bring in a comedian – ask advice from a sarcastic and critical friend.

Showing – start selling – talk positively about your idea whenever you mention it.

Learners can then apply this advice to a creative project of their own choice – or they can repeat the process if the plan doesn't suit.

Supporting Learners

There are several points you should stress to learners:

-Ideally they should have some kind of project in mind before they sit down to use the plan generator – for work, study or leisure.

-This online pack of cards is intended to help learners generate ideas and formulate a plan. It is not intended to be a form of fortune telling and the plan that is generated should not be considered as written in "tablets of stone".

-Learners can play with the plan generator until they get an ideal plan or pick and choose parts of plans as they appear until they form a plan that they think will work.

They should then keep a note of plan and use it for inspiration as they work through their project.

Additional Material

No further material has been produced at this stage for Generating Ideas. Learners can use the generator to apply to a range of projects and go back to it as required.

If your learners like the idea of random generators, you could use some of the websites listed below.

If you would like to use a paper version of a random word generator, you could print off the list of words (236) from Charles Cave's website:

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/charles57/Creative/Techniques/random.htm>

and put them in a bag for learners to select.

Websites

Random Input – Charles Cave on Edward de Bono

<http://members.optusnet.com.au/~charles57/Creative/Techniques/random.htm>

Random Word Generator

<http://www.infinn.com/randomword.html>

Another Random Word Generator

<http://www.brainstorming.co.uk/onlinetools/websoftware.html>

Random Picture Generator

<http://www.brainstorming.co.uk/onlinetools/websoftware.html>

Random Websites

<http://www.brainstorming.co.uk/tutorials/randomwebsitetutorial.html>

Books and Card Decks

Creative Whack Pack

By Roger van Oech (Cards and book)

U.S. Games Systems, 1998

Thinkpak (Cards)

By Michael Michalko

Ten Speed Press, 1994