

**Evidence of Impact**  
Case Studies

# **Creative Schools Builds Skills for the Future of Work**

**creative  
schools**

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building a state of creativity

# Creative Schools builds skills for the future of work

FORM's Creative Schools programs have been instrumental in nurturing the development of critical employability skills within children and young people, essential for succeeding in the ever-evolving modern world of work. The importance of developing these life skills are summed up by this statement by a Year 9 student from Bob Hawke College: *"I am learning the skills on the creative [habits of learning] wheel. These skills really matter. You never know when you are going to need them. You can use them in lots of different situations in life."*

The development of these future-focused life skills has been facilitated by the intentional focus in Creative Schools sessions on developing capabilities in, and reflecting on, the Creative Habits of Learning framework (often called the creative wheel by students) developed by Lucas, Spencer & Claxton. The impact on developing skills for the future has been observed by teachers, school leaders, creative practitioners, parents, and the students themselves, right across the age range from pre-primary to Year 10 students.

We've identified four skills clusters from the data which we go into in more detail below: Collaboration and Communication; Critical Thinking and Problem Solving; Creativity and Innovation; Resilience, Grit, Perseverance and Determination.

We also share a school leader's reflections on the importance and integrated nature of these skills clusters in Creative Schools, and a snapshot of a project focusing on these skills.



## Collaboration and Communication

In an increasingly interconnected world, the abilities to communicate clearly and work collaboratively and effectively in a team are crucial 21st-century skills. Through presentations and interactions with peers, students involved in Creative Schools classes improve their ability to articulate their thoughts and ideas clearly and persuasively. Collaboration and teamworking skills are also honed in Creative Schools sessions where the emphasis on group projects, problem-solving challenges, and shared experiences play a vital role in nurturing teamwork and collaboration skills among children. Children learn to leverage each other's strengths, communicate ideas, and collectively tackle complex challenges.

The future of work is marked by diverse, cross-functional teams, and individuals who can collaborate seamlessly are highly sought after. Creative Schools demonstrates the importance of working together in diverse groups, encouraging students to combine their unique strengths to tackle complex challenges.

**“I can see these skills like persistence and teamwork is important. I guess it is good to spend some time developing these skills.”**

Year 7 Student, Clarkson Community High School

**“Their enhanced collaboration skills definitely transfer to other learning areas.”**

Bronwyn Mattock, Year 4 Teacher, Willetton Primary School

**“Great project that helps children to discover their creativity, promotes teamwork and a sense of belonging to community.”**

Parent

**“They are getting a lot better, more confident to have a go. I can see the impact spilling over into other areas. In their recent public speaking competition they were getting confidence, not so hesitant.”**

Ashleigh Madeley, Year 6 Teacher, Manjimup Primary School

**“Creative Schools is really fun. We have to think more in these lessons. You're working with other people in Creative Schools. We are learning how to work with other people, even to work with people that you don't necessarily like. You need that.”**

Year 10 Student, Bob Hawke College





## Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

As the job landscape evolves, employers value critical thinking individuals who can analyse information, think independently, solve problems and make sound judgments. In Creative Schools projects student voice and agency are privileged with students being encouraged to question, analyse, and evaluate information, thereby honing their critical thinking skills. Many students have reported how Creative Schools lessons make them think more, deeper, and differently.

In Creative Schools participants highlight the development of critical thinking skills as students engage in problem-solving activities. With Creative Schools, students are learning to approach challenges with a fresh perspective, think critically, and adapt to unexpected obstacles, contributing to their overall ability to analyse and solve problems effectively.

**“Creative Schools is relaxing and frustrating and make you use your brain and learn a lot. It can be both relaxing and frustrating at the same time. It can be two things, because it doesn’t feel stressful, but we do have to use our brains to think. We are learning to think more than we would usually think.”**

Year 4 Student, Willetton Primary School

**“We get the chance to figure things out for ourselves in Creative Schools lessons. We get to come up with new ideas.”**

Year 4 Student, Callista Primary School

**“I feel like we are learning how to make us think more, think more deeply in Creative Schools.”**

Year 4 Student, Willetton Primary School

**“I think we learn to think more in Creative Schools lessons. It is making me think of the five creative habits. They are important in life for productive learning. I would say it has made me become more inquisitive.”**

Year 9 Student, Bob Hawke College

**“The biggest outcome is that they are learning to think for themselves. Normally we give them all the tools and the recipe for doing things. Here we are giving them the freedom to gain confidence to make their own decisions and think for themselves.”**

Bronwyn Mattock, Year 4 Teacher, Willetton Primary School



## Creativity and Innovation

In a world driven by rapid technological advancements, accelerated by recent progress in Generative Artificial Intelligence, creativity and innovation have become indispensable skills. The ability to think creatively and generate novel solutions is highly valued in workplaces that require adaptability and a forward-thinking approach.

Creative Schools sessions foster an environment of experimentation, ideation, and personal expression, which fuels the development of children's creative and innovative thinking capabilities. The emphasis on creativity helps to instil the capacity to generate ideas and solutions, encouraging innovation.

**“It’s amazing to see the children get excited about creativity, seeing them come up with their own ideas and seeing them work together. They have awesome ideas and I get inspired by them. I love listening to them. They have unique ideas. They’re so young and free they just say what comes to mind.”**

Tanya Rodin, Creative Practitioner, Pre-Primary, Camboon Primary School

**“We are learning and developing how to be creative. I want to be creative in life. I think it is really important.”**

Year 7 Student, Clarkson Community High School

**“I think it is great to participate in creative activities. Important too, especially for kids. I want my kids to want to learn, to try to find the ways to solve whatever the problems are, and to work with the others. Creative works help kids to achieve all these above.”**

Parent

**“They were worried about only giving the right answer at the beginning. There has been a huge change. Now they have so many ideas.”**

Amy Williams, Year 5 Teacher, Winthrop Primary School

**“The little ones have creativity as part of their being and I needed to remember this and then capture it before it was lost in the structures of school. I have learned from these little kids. Creativity needs to be nurtured and developed, not introduced as if we invented it!”**

Sue Waterhouse, Principal, Merriwa Primary School

## Resilience, Grit, Perseverance and Determination

Creative Schools sessions engage students in hands-on projects and open-ended challenges, which create opportunities to cultivate resilience, grit, perseverance and determination. Many Creative Schools projects involved challenges that require persistent effort to overcome, teaching children the value of perseverance, a crucial skill for personal growth and achievement that can significantly impact their future academic and professional endeavours. Similarly, grit, the ability to sustain effort and enthusiasm in the face of difficulties, is a trait highly valued in the modern workforce.

The future workforce is marked by constant change and evolving challenges. Individuals who can navigate uncertainties, learn from setbacks, and adapt to new circumstances are better positioned for success. By encouraging students to embrace challenges as opportunities for growth, the creative learning methodologies employed in Creative Schools classrooms prepare students for the dynamic nature of future workplaces.

In Creative Schools projects teachers, creative practitioners, parents and students themselves note that students develop a sense of grit and determination as they encounter challenges that required persistent effort.

**“The creative wheel is for the stuff we do like never give up in our work and doing teamwork and keep on trying your best and use your imagination. I am really good at never giving up.”**

Year 2 Student, Leda Primary School

**“I can see these skills like persistence and teamwork is important. I guess it is good to spend some time developing these skills.”**

Year 7 Student, Clarkson Community High School

**“My students with ADHD and ASD have developed persistence and resilience and are better at collaborating although they found many warmup activities extremely challenging.”**

Teacher

**“They were challenged, which promoted their problem-solving skills and they had to work together as a team which promoted their social and collaborative skills. They had to use their background knowledge and develop their research skills for their project, and they enjoyed choosing what they wanted to learn about.”**

Teacher



# five habits of learning

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## Creative Schools fosters interconnected capabilities

One school leader captures the interconnected nature of these skills clusters by identifying how all of these essential skills for future life have developed in young people involved in Creative Schools in their school:

**“Our school’s involvement in Creative Schools has had a profound and positive impact on the cultivation of General Capabilities, often still referred to as 21st-century skills. These essential skills encompass a range of abilities that go beyond traditional academic knowledge and are vital for success in today’s rapidly changing world. For instance, students engaged in Creative Schools have demonstrated remarkable teamwork and collaboration. They’ve had to work together in diverse groups, combining their unique strengths to tackle complex challenges. This collaborative spirit extended to problem-solving, where students learned to think critically and adapt to unexpected obstacles, fostering resilience and adaptability. Furthermore, the program placed a strong emphasis on creativity.**

**Students have been encouraged to think outside the box, innovate, and approach problems with a fresh perspective. They’ve developed the capacity to generate ideas and solutions, a skill that is increasingly valuable in a society that thrives on innovation. Another noteworthy aspect is communication. Through presentations and interactions with peers, students have improved their ability to articulate their thoughts and ideas clearly and persuasively. Also, Creative Schools has instilled a sense of grit and determination in our students. Many faced challenges that required persistent effort to overcome. They have learned the value of perseverance, which is essential not only for academic success but also for personal growth and achievement in any field.”**

School Leader Survey Response







## Creative Schools fosters interconnected capabilities

At **Clarkson Community High School** Humanities teacher, **Boru Badolicha** and creative practitioner **Miles Openshaw** recognised the importance of developing 21st century capabilities in their Year 7 students, not just for future employability prospects, but also to help them succeed in learning while at school.

Their Term 2 focus was on Economics, inviting students to explore ideas around “wants and needs” within the school and identify what could benefit from changes and upgrades. Students engaged in collaborative brainstorming sessions and planned for a “shark tank” scenario which would involve them developing persuasive arguments about their wants and needs, and presenting them to a panel of staff, students and parents.


This project sparked lively discussions and idea exchanges among the students, encouraging them to reflect on their school environment and stimulating their thinking about potential improvements. The competitive element of the “shark tank” concept added an entrepreneurial edge, showcasing how Creative Schools can bring curriculum content to life and infuse a vibrant spirit into learning.

For example, this project enabled a group of disengaged boys, renowned more for their athletic and their academic interest, to focus on aspects related to sports, such as hooks in changing rooms. It helped them to develop a sense of ownership and elevated their engagement and awareness.

However, the students still lacked the foundational skills and creative habits of learning—such as collaboration, persistence, inquisitiveness, imagination and discipline—that would enable them to succeed in the high school environment and also to navigate college, work, and life.

Boru and Miles decided to shift focus onto instilling teamwork and confidence in students, encouraging them to seek help from and collaborate with peers beyond their immediate social circles. The students recognised that these skills, integral to both classroom success and lifelong learning, matter not only academically but also socially and in sports and the arts.

Through this approach, Miles and Boru aimed to prepare the students for the real-world challenges of effective communication, collaboration, and leveraging diverse skills within a team—a fundamental aspect nurtured through Creative Schools.



## THE IMPACT OF CREATIVE SCHOOLS

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