

# Creativity

Character... It starts with me!

## Vs. Underachievement

### ROBIN'S READING LIST

APRIL 2014

#### I WILL

- use my talents for good
- see things from more than one perspective
- use principles to solve problems
- learn all I can
- look for new ways to be a person of character

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The 49 Character Qualities are adapted from Character First materials and are used with permission.

## Approaching a need, a task, or an idea from a new perspective

Teacher Resource: **Character Building Day By Day** by Anne D. Mather & Louise B. Weldon

These stories show kids in true-to-life situations, faced with decisions or circumstances that reflect, change, or help form their character. The stories are designed to be read aloud, than discussed by the group. In addition to the stories, each of the character trait sections is introduced by a thumbnail description of the trait. Read Creativity, pages 78-83.

#### Pre – Grade 3:

**Hooray for Diffendoofer Day** by Dr. Seuss, Jack Prelutsky and Lane Smith

Started by Dr. Seuss, finished by Jack Prelutsky, and illustrated by Lane Smith, *Hooray for Diffendoofer Day!* is a joyous ode to individuality starring unsinkable teacher Miss Bonkers and the quirky Diffendoofer School (which must prove it has taught its students how to think--or have them sent to dreary Flobbertown). Included is an introduction by Dr. Seuss's longtime editor explaining how the book came to be and reproductions of Dr. Seuss's original pencil sketches and hand-printed notes for the book—a true find for all Seuss collectors! Jack Prelutsky and Lane Smith pay homage to the Good Doctor in their own distinctive ways, the result of which is the union of three one-of-a-kind voices in a brand-new, completely original book that is greater than the sum of its parts. For all of us who will never forget our school days and that special teacher, here is a book to give and to get.

**Elephants Can Paint Too!** by Katya Arnold

**I teach in two schools.**

**One is in the city.**

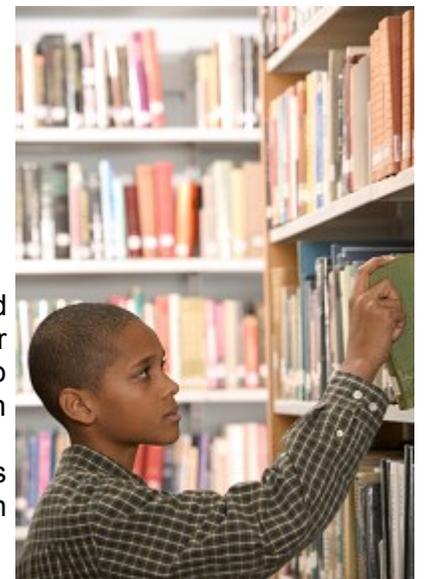
**The other is in the jungle.**

**Some of my students have hands.**

**Others have trunks.**

Elephants live in Asia. They eat three hundred pounds of food a day. They spray water out of their trunks. Even so, they are a lot like you. They like to eat cookies and hang out with their friends. They even like to paint pictures.

In this true story you'll learn about an amazing class of elephants that are taught to become artists by an amazing teacher.



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## **The Dot** by Peter Reynolds

Her teacher smiled. "Just make a mark and see where it takes you." Art class is over, but Vashti is sitting glued to her chair in front of a blank piece of paper. The words of her teacher are a gentle invitation to express herself. But Vashti can't draw - she's no artist. To prove her point, Vashti jabs at a blank sheet of paper to make an unremarkable and angry mark. "There!" she says.

That one little dot marks the beginning of Vashti's journey of surprise and self-discovery. That special moment is the core of Peter H. Reynolds's delicate fable about the creative spirit in all of us.

## **Apples to Oregon** by Deborah Hopkinson

When Papa decides to pull up roots and move from Iowa to Oregon, he can't bear to leave his precious apple trees behind, or his peaches, plums, grapes, cherries, and pears. Oh, and he takes his family along too. But the trail is cruel -- first there's a river to cross that's wider than Texas...and then there are hailstones as big as plums...and there's even a drought, sure to crisp the cherries. Those poor pippins! Luckily Delicious (the non edible apple of Daddy's eye) is strong -- as young 'uns raised on apples *are* -- and won't let anything stop her father's darling saps from tasting the sweet Oregon soil.

Here's a hilarious tall tale -- from the team that brought you *Fannie in the Kitchen* -- that's loosely based on the life of a real fruiting pioneer.

## **Grades 4-8:**

## **The Adventures of Hugo Cabret** by Brian Selznick

Orphan, clock keeper, and thief, Hugo lives in the walls of a busy Paris train station, where his survival depends on secrets and anonymity. But when his world suddenly interlocks with an eccentric, bookish girl and a bitter old man who runs a toy booth in the station, Hugo's undercover life, and his most precious secret, are put in jeopardy. A cryptic drawing, a treasured notebook, a stolen key, a mechanical man, and a hidden message from Hugo's dead father form the backbone of this intricate, tender, and spellbinding mystery.

## **The One and Only Ivan** by Kathleen Applegate

Having spent 27 years behind the glass walls of his enclosure in a shopping mall, Ivan has grown accustomed to humans watching him. He hardly ever thinks about his life in the jungle. Instead, Ivan occupies himself with television, his friends Stella and Bob, and painting. But when he meets Ruby, a baby elephant taken from the wild, he is forced to see their home, and his art, through new eyes.

## **Flora and Ulysses: The Illuminated Adventure** by Kate DiCamillo

It begins, as the best superhero stories do, with a tragic accident that has unexpected consequences. The squirrel never saw the vacuum cleaner coming, but self-described cynic Flora Belle Buckman, who has read every issue of the comic book *Terrible Things Can Happen to You!*, is the just the right person to step in and save him. What neither can predict is that Ulysses (the squirrel) has been born anew, with powers of strength, flight, and misspelled poetry — and that Flora will be changed too, as she discovers the possibility of hope and the promise of a capacious heart.



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## **Frindle** by Andrew Clements

He really just likes to liven things up at school -- and he's always had plenty of great ideas. When Nick learns some interesting information about how words are created, suddenly he's got the inspiration for his best plan ever...the frindle. Who says a pen has to be called a pen? Why not call it a frindle? Things begin innocently enough as Nick gets his friends to use the new word. Then other people in town start saying frindle. Soon the school is in an uproar, and Nick has become a local hero. His teacher wants Nick to put an end to all this nonsense, but the funny thing is frindle doesn't belong to Nick anymore. The new word is spreading across the country, and there's nothing Nick can do to stop it.

## **Edgar Allen's Official Crime Investigation Notebook** by Mary Amato

First Slurpy is fishnapped, then other things from Mrs. Blackwell's room start to disappear. Odder still, whoever is committing these crimes leaves a note written in poetry. Edgar has it all covered in his "crime investigation notebook"--but so does Patrick Chen, who has copied Edgar and is trying to solve the case first. Yet as Edgar keenly observes his surroundings, he notices many interesting things about his classmates. The more closely he watches two "suspects," the more he begins to think they might make pretty good friends.

## **Grades 9 – 12:**

## **Imagine: How Creativity Works** by Jonah Lehrer

Did you know that the most creative companies have centralized bathrooms? That brainstorming meetings are a terrible idea? That the color blue can help you double your creative output?

From the *New York Times* best-selling author of *How We Decide* comes a sparkling and revelatory look at the new science of creativity. Shattering the myth of muses, higher powers, even creative "types," Jonah Lehrer demonstrates that creativity is not a single gift possessed by the lucky few. It's a variety of distinct thought processes that we can all learn to use more effectively.

Lehrer reveals the importance of embracing the rut, thinking like a child, daydreaming productively, and adopting an outsider's perspective (travel helps). He unveils the optimal mix of old and new partners in any creative collaboration, and explains why criticism is essential to the process. Then he zooms out to show how we can make our neighborhoods more vibrant, our companies more productive, and our schools more effective.

You'll learn about Bob Dylan's writing habits and the drug addictions of poets. You'll meet a Manhattan bartender who thinks like a chemist, and an autistic surfer who invented an entirely new surfing move. You'll see why Elizabethan England experienced a creative explosion, and how Pixar's office space is designed to spark the next big leap in animation.

Collapsing the layers separating the neuron from the finished symphony, *Imagine* reveals the deep inventiveness of the human mind, and its essential role in our increasingly complex world.



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## **Creativity: Unleashing the Forces from Within** by Osho

As Osho points out in the foreword to this book, historically, the creative person has been all but forced to rebel against the society.

But nowadays, the situation has dramatically changed. In today's world, the ability to respond creatively to new challenges is demanded of everybody, from corporate CEOs to "soccer moms." Those whose toolbox for dealing with life includes only what they have learned in the past from their parents and their teachers are at a distinct disadvantage both in their relationships and in their careers. Making a switch from imitative and rule-bound behavior to creative innovation and flexibility requires a profound change in our attitudes about ourselves and our capabilities.

*Creativity* is a handbook for those who understand the need to bring more creativity, playfulness, and flexibility to their lives. It's a manual for thinking "outside the box"-and learning to live there as well.

## **Hey, Whipple, Squeeze This: A Guide to Creating Great Ads** by Luke Sullivan

In this second edition of the irreverent, celebrated *Hey Whipple, Squeeze This*, master copywriter Luke Sullivan looks at the history of advertising, from the good to the bad to the ugly. Updated to include two extended final chapters with in-depth prescriptions for building a career in advertising, this edition also features a real-world look at the day-to-day operations of today's ad agencies. Among the most disparaged campaigns in advertising history, the Mr. Whipple ads for Charmin toilet paper were also wildly successful. Sullivan explores the Whipple phenomenon, examining why bad ads sometimes work, why great ads sometimes fail, and how advertisers can learn to balance creative work with the mandate to sell products.

