

1ST MAKER SPACE

CREATIVITY TRAINING 1:3



E. Paul Torrance, in the mid-80s. Torrance spent most of his career studying and encouraging students' creativity.
Photo: University of Georgia

Testing Creativity

Three Tests for Assessing Creativity

By Arlon Bayliss Artist, Designer, Educator, Creativity Consultant - 1st Maker Space: www.1stmakerspace.com

Creativity in it's various forms can not only be defined, it can also be measured. Educational researchers have been working on this since the early 60's. The 3 most popular instruments for measurement or assessment are The Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking, The Wallach and Kogan Creativity Test, and Guilford's Alternative Uses Task.

Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (1962) These two test versions are currently the most commonly used.

TTCT measures thinking creatively with images and is appropriate at all levels, kindergarten through adult. It uses three picture-based exercises to assess five mental characteristics:

- fluency
- resistance to premature closure
- elaboration
- abstractness of titles
- originality

Streamlined scoring provides standardized scores for the mental characteristics listed above as well as for the following creative strengths:

- emotional expressiveness
- internal visualization
- storytelling articulateness
- extending or breaking boundaries
- movement or action
- humor
- expressiveness of titles
- richness of imagery
- synthesis of incomplete figures
- colorfulness of imagery
- synthesis of lines or circles
- fantasy
- unusual visualization

Verbal TTCT measures thinking creatively with words. It is appropriate for first graders through adults and uses six word-based exercises to assess three mental characteristics:

- fluency
- flexibility
- originality

These exercises provide opportunities to ask questions, to improve products, and to "just suppose."

Example: What might this be?



Response:

- a smooshed spider*
- a star*
- a set of mini blinds caught in a tornado*

Scoring

Scoring the TTCT requires a "Manual for Scoring and Interpreting Results", obtainable from the [Torrance Center](http://www.torrancecenter.com), or from [Scholastic Testing Service](http://www.scholastic.com). The manual includes national norms, scores, and national percentiles for each age level.

Administration

Administrators of Torrance tests should have experience giving and interpreting tests, e.g. teachers, counselors, school staff, or college faculty. Researchers and graduate students working under supervising faculty members also qualify.

To order visit:

<http://www.ststesting.com/2005gifttct.html>.

The Torrance Center also offers training workshops.

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Wallach and Kogan Creativity Test (1965)

In Wallach and Kogan's assessment of creativity, examinees are asked to come up with many possible items that are in a general group. Examples would be: round things, or things that make noise.

Example: *Name things with wheels*

Response:
a car
a truck
a train
a go cart
your mind

This test is scored using four components:

Fluency

The number of responses is calculated. In the above example, the score would be 5.

Flexibility

The number of different categories is calculated. The above example would score 2; the first four are all methods of transportation but "wheel turning in your mind" is a different category from transportation, we could name it "metaphors".

Originality

Each response is compared to the total amount of responses from all of the people given the test. Responses that were given by only 5% of the group are *unusual* (1 point). Responses that were given by only 1% of the group are *unique* (2 points). Higher total scores indicate an aptitude for original thinking.

Elaboration

The amount of detail is assessed. For example, "a car" = 0, whereas "a car racing down the street" = 1. An additional point would be given if the examinee noted where the car was going.

Administration

Wallach and Kogan's test may be administered by anyone - no special training is required. Materials can be created by the examiner and individually administered to the examinees, or shown to examinees for a group activity assessment. Typically the test is administered in a classroom setting. Interestingly, responses given by the examinees in the first few minutes are usually their *least* creative.

Guilford's Alternative Uses Task (1967)

In this test examinees are asked to list as many possible uses for a common item such as a brick, a paperclip, or a newspaper.

Example: *Name all the possible uses of a brick*

Response:
a paperweight
a doorstep
to throw threw a window
to use as a weapon
to hit my sister on the head with
a mock coffin at a Barbie funeral

Scoring uses the same components and rubric as Wallach and Kogan's test:

Fluency

The number of responses totaled. The above example would score 6.

Flexibility

The number of different categories is calculated. In this case there are five different categories ("weapon" and "hit sister" are from the same general idea of weapon).

Originality

Each response is compared to the total amount of responses from everyone given the test. Responses that were given by only 5% of the group are *unusual* (1 point). Responses that were given by only 1% of the group are *unique* (2 points). Higher total scores indicate an aptitude for original thinking.

Elaboration

The amount of detail is assessed. E.g. "a doorstep" = 0 points, whereas "a door stop to prevent a door slamming shut in a strong wind" would score 2, (1 for explanation of door slamming, plus 1 for further detail about the wind).

Administration

As with Wallach and Kogan's test, anyone can administer this test. Materials can be developed by the examiner and either individually administered to the examinees or distributed for group assessment. Again like Wallach and Kogan's, this test is administered in a classroom setting and here again, responses given by examinees in the first few minutes are often their *least* creative.

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