



## 9 Creative Task Styles

Here are some creative approaches that can provide some inspiration when adapting or creating tasks. As you work together to adapt the activities provided, use some of the examples below as a springboard to transform the activity into a meaningful and creative task.

Task	Example
1. Flipping it!	<p>We are often used to thinking about what things are, rather than what they are not. For example, if I ask you to describe a medal, you'd tell me it was round, metallic, and hard. To flip something, you describe what it isn't, for example, now tell me something that is square, cotton and soft. By doing this, students consider attributes that are not visible.</p> <p>Another example includes providing the answer and students provide the question.</p> <p>This encourages curiosity and helps students feel more comfortable in dealing with ambiguity.</p>
2. Reversal thinking	<p>Similar to flipping it, reversal thinking (e.g., do ghosts believe in us?) encourages students to look at a problem in a different way and come up with innovative solutions.</p> <p>Example: How do we make sure that fewer people take the car to their work?' becomes 'How do we make sure that fewer cars take people to their work?'</p> <p>From this, students come up with interesting solutions that they might not have thought about before (this was where the idea of carpooling came from).</p> <p>This encourages curiosity and helps students feel more comfortable in dealing with ambiguity.</p>
3. Bending, blending, and breaking	<p>These are techniques that we can use with objects or images to distort them or look at them in a different way. For example:</p> <p>Bending – making an image/object a different size or shape from the original (enlarging an orange to the size of a watermelon and making it pink)</p>



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	<p>Blending – combining two or more sources in new ways (putting two things together that ordinarily are not found together) – (putting an image of a whale inside a plastic bag)</p> <p>Breaking – something whole is taken apart and something new is assembled out of the fragments (taking apart a clock and using the pieces to build a skateboard).</p>
4. Alternative uses	<p>This is where students take everyday objects and suggest different and novel uses for them. This really gets students observing. What they do next, is up to you!</p>
5. Yes, and...	<p>This is where students expand on arguments or situations by agreeing to what their partner just said and adding a new piece of information, no matter how weird and whacky. It is an improvisation (drama) technique that can be used in speaking activities. An alternative is 'yes, but.' This provides a content constraint.</p> <p>Example: Did you see the news about the guinea pig who can snorkel? Yes, and he can hold his breath under water for 5 seconds. Yes, and I can't even swim! Yes, and ..... etc.</p>
6. Five words or less	<p>This is where students create whole sentences or whole texts where each sentence is 5 words or less. This provides a structural constraint.</p> <p>Example: I met the President. At a party! She shook my hand! My hand. I was so nervous....etc.</p>



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<p>7. Six ways to...</p>	<p>Students take an objective/goal and think of six ways in which this can be achieved, for example, six ways to tame a crocodile, six ways to make a pizza, six ways to get to school without using petrol.</p> <p>This encourages a focus on the process of thinking, rather than the product.</p>
<p>8. Hidden prompts</p>	<p>Students are given a task and its objectives, for example, they are asked to write a letter of complaint but have to choose the parameters without seeing (they choose a number to generate a product, and another number to generate the problem) etc. They must then work to blend all of this information so that it becomes coherent. This is a content constraint.</p>
<p>9. Feeling and being</p>	<p>Students are asked to choose a colour, an object, a person, an animal etc. Based on prompts, they are asked to feel and be this colour, object, person, animal. This encourages students to observe the world around them closely and encourages critical thinking and empathy. Again, what you do with their ideas is up to you!</p>



## 5-step approach to design creative thinking tasks

