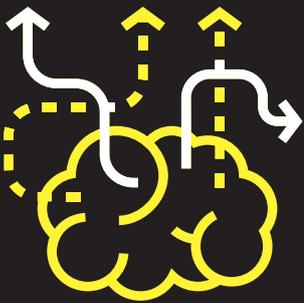




*Sources of Inspiration*

**THEME 2**



**BOOST YOUR**

**C@T!V!TY**

# Introduction for the teacher

*Almost all design proceeds by transforming, combining and adapting elements of previous designs, as well elements and aspects of other objects, images and phenomena. Everything can be a source of inspiration to a designer.*

Eckert, C. & Stacey, M. (2000). Sources of inspiration: A language of design. *Design Studies*, 21(5), 523-538.

## **AFTER COMPLETING THEME 2: SOURCES OF INSPIRATION, STUDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO**

- ***Explain and discuss the role of sources of inspiration in a creative process, including understand the importance of actively searching for inspiration, not just wait for a 'good idea'***
- ***Analyse and discuss the use of sources of inspiration in a given creative assignment***
- ***Search for, store and utilise sources of inspiration as a creative resource***

As with the persistent – but false – idea that creativity is only for an elite group of people, our understanding of inspiration has changed dramatically in recent times. Where inspiration was previously considered to be closely related to something divine or mystical, current research focuses on inspiration as a general human resource. The crucial thing is therefore to be aware of how sources of inspiration can be used in a concrete creative process, how and where to seek inspiration, and how to save your sources of inspiration so they can be easily accessed and used constructively in a creative process.

An improved understanding of the use of sources of inspiration is a key learning outcome when the aim is to get better at producing exciting and original solutions. Sources of inspiration play an important role in a creative process and will often determine the direction in which the creative process proceeds and what the final result will be. It may also create a sense of coownership and infectious engagement among the participants in a creative process if they all help each other to find sources of inspiration to bring them to a common goal. A source of inspiration can often kick off a new creative process, but can also be part of an ongoing process in which people have been assigned a task which has to be addressed, and which has defined a conceptual framework for the sources of inspiration to be looked for.

More or less anything can be a source of inspiration. In a creative process, particularly among creative professionals such as designers and architects, it is often an appropriate strategy to transform, combine and adapt elements from previous projects, e.g. selected parts of earlier designs, works of art, media, images, texts and phenomena, etc.

It is hard to explain why one motif in a picture is felt to be more inspiring than another, for example. It is therefore important to be aware that you can always find fresh sources of inspiration for your own creative practice, and to be sure to save what you find most interesting – even if you can't explain why, but simply rely on gut feeling.

Sources of inspiration can be found close to or far from the domain you typically work within. This can be more accurately categorised as inspirationseeking in a closely related domain, a different domain with some similarities, or a very different, non-traditional domain. These distances in inspiration seeking affect the creative process and results, which underlines the importance of searching both deeply and widely and of doing so systematically.

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## Activities

This section describes the different activities of which each theme may consist. Objects for analysis, cases and objectives can be removed according to the actual teaching situation. This ensures the best possible match to the normal teaching and general learning outcomes for the individual subject area.

The duration of the activities is indicative only and may (to some extent) be shortened or extended, and the individual teacher can assess whether the activities can best be carried out individually, in pairs or in groups.

Suggestions for the composition of activities to underpin each of the three themes, here called subject-specific Templates, are shown on pages 4-6. Activities A, C, D, E, and F could well be used as parts of one connected programme, while B (PRACTICAL EXERCISES) can either be used in conjunction with the other activities or can stand alone and be added to the course individually, if the teacher has time to spare in a lesson or wants to vary the general teaching by including one or more of these small creative exercises.

### **A** *Didactic and thematic introduction (10-20 min.)*

The teacher introduces the selected theme with the approx. ten integrated slides created for this theme. These slides run through the key learning outcomes to ensure a clear alignment of expectations between teacher and students, and present and elaborate on the theme via additional text and images. There are also slides with initial questions for reflection that students can work on individually, in groups and/or with the whole class. The purpose of these questions is to relate the theme to their daily lives, so they find the theme engaging and relevant.

### **B** *Practical exercises (5-60 min.)*

The CIBIS creativity training package contains a number of practical exercises, which use active learning to help students to achieve the best possible learning outcomes for each of the three themes. These exercises, which can be used individually or put together as part of the modular structure of the training package, are presented in the separate catalogue: PRACTICAL EXERCISES.

### **C** *Presentation (5-20 min.)*

Students present and share proposed solutions (models, poems, concepts, etc.) in a plenary session. The teacher facilitates this. This type of recapitulation is crucial to optimising learning outcomes both collectively and individually. Possible types of presentation might be:

- *Voluntary, where individual students who wish to do so present their creative solutions to the person next to them, in groups or in plenum*
- *Systematic, where the teacher directs the recap, so all students present either individually or in groups*
- *Written, with a view to submitting a small written exercise*
- *Written, with a view to reporting back as part of a more extended course-related assignment.*

## **D** Feedback session (5-30 min.)

The feedback should ideally mean that students are helped to ask questions about each other's results and discuss key elements of them, e.g. how, when and why they took which creative decisions, what types of ideas, sources of inspiration and constraints were present and why, and what they think about the results of a given task. Examples of types of feedback activities might be:

- *Individual peer feedback (5 min.)*
- *Group feedback (10 min.)*
- *Collective feedback (10 min.)*
- *Written feedback not submitted (10-15 min.)*
- *Written feedback to be submitted (25-30 min.)*

## **E** Concluding reflection (5-10 min.)

Students can usefully be involved in this final reflection by assessing for themselves what they have learnt from the day's teaching, and by presenting and documenting their views in the way they find best suited to the subject. This could take the form of a project blog, a slide show, general notes or part of a written assignment, etc. Examples of ways of approaching a concluding reflection might be:

- *Individually (written/digital)*
- *In pairs (oral/written/digital)*
- *In groups (oral/written/digital)*
- *Collectively (oral/written/digital)*

## **F** Documentation (5-30 min.)

In order to ensure cumulative learning, it is important that students document their experiences of each theme, so that they can return to these new insights in the course of the school year. This can be done in several ways, such as:

- *Taking photos with mobile phones and uploading to the class folder on a central server*
- *Formulation of preliminary questions in e.g. activity A (Didactic and thematic introduction) and/or B (Practical exercises). These questions can be answered by the students after the lesson in writing or orally in combination with e.g. activity E (Concluding reflection) and F (Documentation)*
- *These questions can, for example, be based on the questions for reflection given for each activity under C (Presentation)*
- *Creating a wiki, either physical (paper/noticeboard) or digital*
- *Sharing via IT solutions such as Google Docs, Evernote, Pinterest, OneNote Class Notebook or Google Classroom, etc.*

# Template 1

## *Design/Architecture, 90 min.*

This template is suitable as an introduction to a project where the students must generate ideas. Examples in the practical exercises can be changed to fit the given theme of the project.

See descriptions of the activities (A-F) in this document and go to the document: PRACTICAL EXERCISES to find detailed descriptions of the exercises (1-29) that are suggested in the following:

### **A** *Didactic and thematic introduction (10 min.)*

### **B** *Practical exercises (50 min.)*

**EXERCISE 23)** *Duck challenge*

**EXERCISE 6)** *Build to the future*

### **C** *Presentation (10 min.)*

### **D** *Feedback session (5 min.)*

C and D are mixed together. After each student presentation the other students will give a short feedback. Optionally, each group could have a pre-chosen feedback group.

### **E** *Concluding reflection (10 min.)*

### **F** *Documentation*

3 minutes introduction by the teacher. The questions that was presented in A will be answered by the students in writing as homework and added to their portfolio.

# Template 2

## Innovation, 75 min.

This template is suitable as an introduction to a project where the students must generate ideas. Examples in the practical exercises can be changed to fit the given theme of the project.

See descriptions of the activities (A-F) in this document and go to the document: PRACTICAL EXERCISES to find detailed descriptions of the exercises (1-29) that are suggested in the following:

### A Didactic and thematic introduction (10 min.)

### B Practical exercises (50 min.)

#### **EXERCISE 25)** Framing the project with inspiration search

After the exercise, the task for the students is to come up with an idea for a new app, using the inspiration sources they found during the exercise

### F Documentation

The students make sure that they save the inspiration sources they found together with the notes and sketches they made)

### C Presentation (10 min.)

The students will work on the project during the semester and will present their final results by the end of the semester.

### D Feedback session (5 min.)

C and D are mixed together. After each student presentation the other students will give a short feedback. Optionally, each group could have a pre-chosen feedback group.

## Template 3

### Language teaching, 75 min.

This template is suitable as an introduction to a project where the students must generate ideas. Examples in the practical exercises can be changed to fit the given theme of the project.

See descriptions of the activities (A-F) in this document and go to the document: PRACTICAL EXERCISES to find detailed descriptions of the exercises (1-29) that are suggested in the following:

#### A Didactic and thematic introduction (5 min.)

#### B Practical exercises (30 min.)

**EXERCISE 22)** Mapping out the domain for inspiration

#### C Presentation (10 min.)

The students presents their collages for each other.

#### D Feedback session (5 min.)

## Further reading

### Sources of inspiration

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