

# DISCUSSION GROUP

EVERY LAST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH

HINTS & TIPS - EXCHANGING IDEAS - SHARING BEST PRACTICE

Discussion Group Meetings allow participants to share their knowledge and expertise on a particular topic regarding *Chess in Education*. Educators can learn from each other and gain new insights through different perspectives and experiences.



MEETING NOTES

26th April 2023

## DISCUSSION GROUP MEETING

26th April 17:00 pm  
London time



## CHES & CREATIVITY

Beatrice Rapaccini (Italy)

Chess as a platform to foster innovation  
and encourage imaginative thinking.



Every last  
Wednesday  
of the month

REGISTER AND  
JOIN THE  
DISCUSSION

## CHES & LITERACY

Victoria Winifred (USA)

How chess can be used to promote literacy by giving  
chess instruction rich in vocabulary.

Chess in Education  
[www.chessplus.net](http://www.chessplus.net)



## Welcome

To keep the valuable conversation going, we invited two of the great speakers from the London Chess Conference 2023 to share their knowledge.

**Victoria Winifred** was born in Brooklyn, and authored the award-winning middle-grade chess mythological fantasy, “The Princess, the Knight, and the Lost God.” A teacher since 2006, her classroom was a workshop model for Columbia University’s literacy project for ten years. She connects academics with chess, and floods classrooms with the game to the delight and scholastic success of her students. A member of SCBWI and the Author’s Guild of Tennessee, she continues to write chess fiction for kids.

**Beatrice Rapaccini** is a passionate teacher who promotes creative learning. She has developed innovative approaches to teaching chess in kindergarten and primary school that encourage students to think creatively. Beatrice is also a facilitator for the MOOC Learning Creative Learning offered by the Lifelong Kindergarten, MIT Media Lab. Currently, on leave in Sweden, Beatrice is continuing her work as a STEAM teacher trainer, helping educators integrate creative thinking into their curricula. In addition, she is also a strong advocate for promoting women’s participation in STEM fields. She participates in projects and designed workshops focused on this topic.

# Chess & Literacy



## VICTORIA WINIFRED

**1** Chess and Literacy

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking and Listening
- Language

What standards of literacy do you feel need the most attention in your student population?  
How have you addressed these in the past for success?

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### Julian Clissold:

I have been a teacher for forty years. I taught literacy to children from age 6 to 18. I also taught adults in Literacy programmes. The importance of using a vehicle like chess (it could be other things) is that it balances the technical aspects of learning to read and integrates it with motivational imperatives. It also gets you past the blockages imposed on learning from the ver emphasis on the technical dimensions to being able to read

Too much literacy is focussed on phonics, decoding and insufficient on sense and meaning.

The key balance is between the acts of reading/writing when presented as technical decoding activities. That is now very over emphasised in UK teaching of reading at the moment - see some OFSTED reports - whereas reading is a form of language and thought (your own (US) Chomsky underlined this. Chess is an ideal vehicle for language growth and development that supports reading and writing. I get children to show their games to other children and explain what and why they made their moves. You need to get them using language before they render this in writing. We make this a regular diversion to our chess evenings.



# Literacy Discussion

## Oliver Conran

There may be some stigma among chess coaches about using non-traditional methods, that may be common to teachers, but if they open their minds to it I think they can benefit a lot from it.

To John's point, If the company has done a good job of putting across the message of educational chess being a great tool for improving kids performance across disciplines then it shouldn't be an issue 😊

For young kids, a chess class, taught specifically with the intent of improving chess skill, can be intense and quite draining. Using some "lighter" activities is usually OK with the parents

## Ryan Blackwood

Chess in Chess in Education is about the benefits of chess and how chess can be use as a tool to strengthen educational concepts and learning strategies. While chess in after school programs is more about getting better at playing chess and competitive chess.

## Crissia Graham

We have to exercise equity

## Hari Neolcleous

Victoria we've just started reading your book, beautifully written for older primary students. I'm slowly building a chess book corner, reading extracts in different schools...

## Uğur Menteş

Some writers approach their works as a matter of designs and patterns; For example Vladimir Nabokov would write down a lot of separate texts and then put them together as if it is a puzzle to complete, this is how he wrote a lot of masterpiece novels. Chess can be also used in creative writing courses and literature by being familiar with pattern recognition and combination.

Reading	Writing	Speaking/ Listening	Language
Key Ideas and Details	Text Types and Purposes	Comprehension and Collaboration	Conventions of Standard English
Craft and Structure	Production and Distribution of Writing	Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas	Knowledge of Language
Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	Research to Build and Present Knowledge		Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity	Range of Writing		

*Note. From Common Core State Standards for English/Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies,*

# Chess & Creativity

***"Most striking at first is this appearance of sudden illumination, a manifest sign of long, unconscious prior work."***  
***H. Poincaré***

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## Definition of creativity



- Creativity is the interaction among aptitude, process, and environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both **novel and useful as defined within a social context.**

*Plucker et al. (2004)*

- Creativity is when trying to do something new, **surprising** and of value." *M. Boden*



# Creativity Discussion

## Victoria Winifred

Beatrice, you are right, there are many similarities in our observations. Much of what you are sharing reminds me of Bloom's Taxonomy, Howard Gardner's recognition of giftedness. Another element in that Venn diagram might be "task commitment" which is a sign of a gifted creative mind. Also, elaboration is very important in literacy as well. So much to say! :) Open ended questions are my favorite!

## Oliver Conran

You can have students devise their own puzzles

## Hari Neolcleous

I interweave chess with other strategy games and the opportunities for creative thinking are great, for primary children

## Ryan Blackwood

Often times you can have mate in 1 on multiple squares and we ask students to look at all their options. They are all different and it is important to all them to express themselves and own ideas on the board. We do use different ways to get to the same position in chess, this is call transposition

## Uğur Menteş

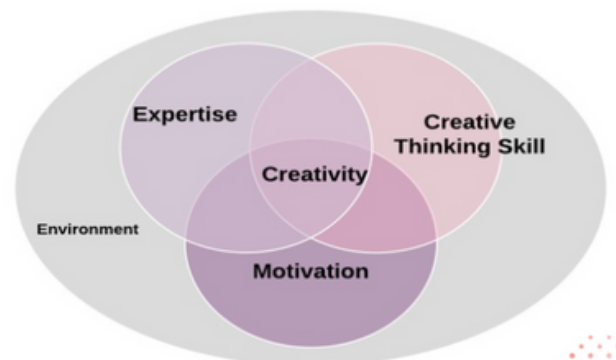
I think chess is like quantum mechanic and classical Newton physics that we use both in the universe according to physical conditions and circumstance; Like using quantum mechanic at the opening and middle phases as there might be multi options, but there are certain conditions that there are absolute answers as John pointed out



**Sir Ken Robinson: Do schools kill creativity?**

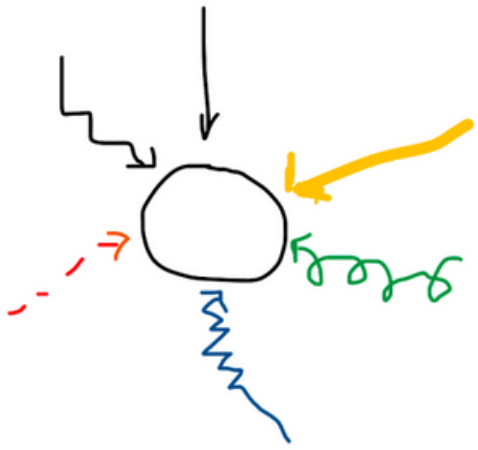
Sir Ken Robinson makes an entertaining and profoundly moving case for creating an education system that nurtures (rather than undermines) creativity.

TED




## Is creativity transferable?

# Creativity Discussion



*It is better to solve one problem  
five different ways,  
than to solve five problems  
one way.*

G. Polya



[Zotero public group with resources in chess and creativity by Beatrice](#)



# What is your idea of creativity? Who is a creative person?

## Recourses

What is your idea of creativity?  
Who is a creative person?

Frame 2



What people think of creativity

- ARTISTS
- SCIENTISTS
- BUSINESS LEADERS
- INVENTORS

What is your idea of creativity?

- THE ARTS
- SCIENCE
- BUSINESS
- INVENTION

Does chess develop Creativity?

Frame 3



CREATIVITY IN CHESS

How can we measure creativity?

Frame 4



Example Creative Thinking Skills

Alternative Use Test

- Fluency - the number of alternative uses
- Flexibility - the range of ideas
- Originality - how unique those ideas are
- Elaboration - level of detail and development of the idea

How to teach chess for creativity?

Frame 5



Fluency, Flexibility, Originality, Elaboration

Model for how we can teach chess for creativity

What other elements we can observe?

Frame 6



How does time influence creativity?

Is creativity transferable?

## Resources

Resources



# Next Discussion Group Meeting

## Wednesday, 31st May 2023

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DO YOU WANT TO SHARE  
YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND  
EXPERTISE?



**CONTACT US!**

**training@chessplus.net**