

Staff Inset Resource

Teaching for Creativity

Supporting teachers to develop young people's creativity through a broad and diverse curriculum

**A NEW
DIRECTION**

We create **opportunity**

Foreword

“Creativity is intelligence having fun!” – Anonymous

This INSET resource to introduce teaching for creativity resources is above all, fun! Much like all our work with A New Direction! Trying out new things, taking risks, collaborating and playing with possibilities not only develops pedagogies and practices that cultivate creativity in young people but also generates a great deal of laughter in CPD sessions and in the classroom.

I often refer back to this quote in the Durham Commission on Creativity and Education 2019

“For me, creative thinking is one of the greatest skills that you can encourage children, anyone to have. Problem solving, resilience and being able to find solutions is basically the core of all kinds of careers; this is what we’re going to need in the future.”

Senior Leadership Team. Yorkshire & Humberside, LA-maintained School Primary quoted in Durham Commission on Creativity and Education 2019

When I’ve used this quote in training sessions staff can immediately see the bigger picture, that developing creativity skills is the responsibility of **all** teachers, not just the job of art, music and drama staff. Staff can also see that they have much to offer in terms of explicitly developing Bill Lucas’ Five Creative Habits of Mind, that are so well championed by A New Direction.

We are lucky here at St Marylebone that the arts, creative teaching, and teaching for creativity have so wholeheartedly been embraced. For over 25 years the school has championed the importance of the Arts. Initially through Arts College and Teaching School status and then through the Maths Hub initiative we have been able to work collaboratively with so many schools to share our enthusiasm and commitment.

In September 2021 we were delighted to become one of the eight [Creativity Collaboratives](#) working across England researching teaching for creativity. The three year pilot, funded by Arts Council England, through the National Heritage Lottery Fund and the Freelands Foundation, was one of the key recommendations of the Durham Commission. St Marylebone lead the [London Creativity Collaborative](#), working with 13 cross phase schools in 10 different London Boroughs and lead project evaluators at Durham University. Our research question focuses on how teacher research groups in and across schools can develop teachers’ understanding of teaching for creativity, as well as trialling activity in the classroom. We are also researching the role that a senior leadership team (SLT) plays in nurturing creativity in the schools.

At the end of the pilot in July 2024 we will have contributed to the overall evaluation report written by Durham as well as collating an online toolkit of resources that have developed teaching for creativity. The resources showcased here and many of A New Direction's resources will be shared and signposted as part of that toolkit.

Now that we have passed the midway point of the research pilot we can begin to see some key elements, vital for creativity to grow:

- Leadership in school is vital. Headteacher buy-in is essential but so is a member of SLT who can champion the approach and rally a group of keen staff to work collaboratively, develop resources, run whole staff INSET and get activities in the classroom started.
- Reflecting on trialled activities is essential, as is drawing on the extensive educational research that is available, such as Bill Lucas' Five Creative Habits of Mind.
- We've made good use of expertise across London. Working with our Expert partners: A New Direction, The National Theatre and V&A has enriched the collaborative work in and across schools. These links will be essential to embed creativity going forward.

As with all A New Direction teaching for creativity resources, this INSET session and the activities in it were tested out by teachers and SLT including myself and I can attest that they are a great resource for schools and teachers. They make use of a wide range of strategies, skilfully placed within sound and published educational research.

What teachers really love are activities and strategies that they can put into practice in their own classroom quickly. Teachers left the trial session inspired and re-energised, keen to try things out *tomorrow!* There can be no better CPD impact!

**Peter Jordan, Senior Deputy Headteacher,
St Marylebone CE School**

Introduction

This INSET resource is designed as a twilight or short professional development session for you to deliver with your staff to explore and embrace the value of the Teaching for Creativity pedagogies in the classroom and to develop the language and creativity of your pupils.

In a hands-on session, made up of practical, achievable, and engaging short-burst activities, teachers are able to quickly see routes into how to apply them as entry points across the curriculum and to cultivate the creative habits of their pupils to be imaginative, inquisitive, persistent, collaborative, and disciplined.

Teaching for Creativity comes from decades of research, now widely adopted into learning policies in more than 30 countries world-wide. Its rigorous body of knowledge suggests that when it's embedded in schools, attainment improves, and more importantly, it articulates key competencies for young people to thrive in an ever-complex world.

“Creativity in the classroom doesn’t happen by accident – we need to be deliberate and proactive in developing our pupils’ skills and habits. Now, more than ever, creative thinking is the key to the future.”

– Professor Bill Lucas, Chair of the Advisory Committee at the Global Institute of Creative Thinking



About A New Direction

A New Direction is a London-based not-for-profit organisation that generates opportunities for children and young people to develop their creativity. Like many others, we believe that creativity is an essential skill that can be taught. For it to be nurtured, young people need to be explicitly given as many opportunities as possible to develop creative skills and habits.



Author: Sarah Pimenta, visual arts practitioner

Editor: Erin Barnes

With thanks to the many teachers who contributed to the development of this resource in testing and consulting on the activities, and who shared the value for themselves and the staff they work with.

Staff Inset Session

Duration: 60 minutes (or 90 minutes with added option)

Resources

- Smartboard or screen to display the Teaching for Creativity Wheel [slide](#)
- Pens, coloured pens / pencils
- A stack of paper (ideally A3 size)
- Post-it notes / paper cut to roughly that size

Objectives

- To understand the value in cultivating pupils' creative skills and vocabulary
- To be able to apply a bank of creativity focused quick-burst activities
- To make connections for embedding activities into curricular planning

Introduction and Warm-up (15 minutes)

Welcome the group and introduce the focus on Teaching for Creativity.

'As teachers, we are creative professionals – we are imaginative, we are inquisitive, we are persistent, collaborative, and disciplined. These are key creative skills, and they can also be taught. Our focus today is Teaching for Creativity. In surfacing these abilities as hard currency in the classroom, we give our pupils the greatest opportunity to thrive as learners and in the world beyond school.'

Show the Teaching for Creativity wheel to underline the five creative skills for pupils: imaginative, inquisitive, persistent, collaborative, and disciplined.

Signpost the rigour in the pedagogies that underpin the decades of research and the further reading beyond this session (see page 12 for links).

'There are myths to be busted – that creativity relates to being artistic in some way or that creativity sits within the arts. Another is that only certain people are creative. In this short session we'll experience the creative process by jumping into a series of quick-burst practical activities that can sharpen the creativity of our pupils and be easily applied across all our teaching. In these creative activities there is no right or wrong – let's dive right in!'

Try out these two activities at a fast pace followed by a discussion reflecting on how they support the development of creative skills and learning.

It's on your Head!

Everyone takes a sheet of paper and a pencil or pen. Ask the group to call out a type of fruit. Choose one answer.

Everyone places their paper on top of their head and on your call, they all reach up and draw the chosen fruit. When complete, they put their drawing side-down on their table. Once the whole group has finished, invite them to reveal their drawings with each other.

Many will be surprised at what they drew, and you can encourage comments. You can move on or choose to repeat the activity with a new fruit or category (e.g. animal / plant) on the reverse of the same paper.

The Scribble Game

Everyone takes a clean sheet of paper and a coloured pencil or pen in hand. In five seconds, with eyes closed or open, the group scribbles all over their paper.

They swap their scribbles with the person sitting next to them. Each person examines the scribble in front of them to see what it looks like – they turn the paper to land on an image that emerges – a building, a weather formation, an animal etc.

Then in a different coloured pencil or pen, and using as few marks as possible, they draw in extra details to help others see what they see. For example, if they see the body of a woolly sheep in the scribble, they add four legs and ears.

Invite the group to take a few moments to share their results with each other.

Reflection – opening up creative pathways

'Creativity is intelligence having fun'

Ask for quick reflections from the group as to how they found those two quick starters and note that simple entry points like this can be extremely helpful in opening up creative pathways that can so often be blocked due to fear. They can be a great way to set up a more playful environment where teachers and students are more open to being curious and taking risks.

A Toolbox of Creativity Activities (20 minutes)

Now try these activities. Pace is everything with these activities to keep them flowing – try to keep each one to around 6-7 minutes.

1 – Nonsense and Consequences

Forming groups of three, each group folds an A3 sheet of paper into three even sections, like a fan. They open it up flat to begin to work in portrait view.

The first person in the group works in the top section. Hidden from view from the rest of the group, they draw the head and neck of a creature – human, bird, animal, fish, or fantasy.

When finished, they fold the section backwards, leaving only two little marks to show the ending of the neck and the rest of the blank section of paper.

When the first person in each group has finished, they pass their paper to the person on their left.

Using the two little marks as a starting point, this new person draws the torso of a creature – human, bird, animal, fish, or fantasy (remembering any arms, wings or fins they may want to add).

As before, they hide their work from their group, and then fold the finished section backwards, leaving just two lines to show where the torso section ends.

As before, when the whole group has finished, they all pass their paper to the person on their left.

Once again, the participants use the two lines as a starting point to draw the legs / fins / tail of a creature in this final section. As before, they hide their work ready to reveal the final creature when the whole group has finished.

On the count of 3, 2, 1, they each reveal the full creature and hold it up for everyone to see.

Share quick comments and signpost a fuller reflection will follow.

With more time in the classroom...

You could give everyone five minutes to think of a name and two sentences to describe the personality of their fantastical character.

Use bulldog clips and string, peg up the drawings to make a quick-win display.

2 – Twenty Circles¹

Each person draws 20 similar sized circles on an A3 sheet of paper.

Their challenge is to turn as many of their blank circles as possible into recognisable circular objects in just three minutes (e.g. pizza, wheel, globe, face etc.)

This is a race against time and the first person to complete calls out and waves their paper in the air. Stop after three minutes (it's typical that some won't be able to finish).

Compare the drawings.

Look at the similarities in ideas, and the innovative ones that revealed themselves.

How many people listened to the instructions and chose circular objects? Were there some who just drew inside a circular shape?

Has anyone combined circles to make one object (e.g. bicycle or snowman) and if yes, what kind of agility in thinking might this be illustrating?

3 – Lotus Flower Ideas Association

Copy the template in the Appendix onto a flipchart. This activity works well as a whole group response, or if preferred, individuals or pairs can work on A3 sheets of paper.

Ask someone to call out a simple theme or topic (e.g. Festivals). Write this into the centre circle.

Next, in the eight surrounding circles, write the first words that come into your head that relate to the key theme in the centre. There is no wrong answer, so no need to overthink.

Now, as you start to model the blossoming of ideas, using these new words, use the final round of eight circles to write words that connect to them.

Look at the results together and reflect on how this activity has generated and supported new, and perhaps surprising ideas.

For a 90-minute session

Visual Listening (30 minutes)

Split the group into equal teams of three to five people. Each person takes a pen and a stack of post it notes.

Each group will explore the same theme or topic. (e.g. identity).

They each nominate a timekeeper and will allow each person four minutes to talk on the theme.

Whilst each person is talking, the other group members listen and draw quick visual responses to what they are hearing. After each person has spoken, the rest of the group share what they heard with the speaker before moving on to the next person. With each new person, new responses are drawn, and the listeners feed back on what they have heard,

At the end of this activity all the post it notes are displayed together on a larger sheet of paper as illustrations of a collaborative response to a chosen theme.

In Discussion (10 minutes)

Bring the group back together for shared discussion and ask for people's thoughts on the activities. Each activity underlines key creative skills in the Teaching for Creativity wheel – can the group make the connections between these skills and the tasks?

Which activities illustrated being:

- Imaginative?
- Inquisitive?
- Persistent?
- Collaborative?
- Disciplined?

Look again at the Teaching for Creativity wheel and pick out some of the 'sub-habits' of these skills to reflect on further together.

*"These are, of course, the skills we want to cultivate in our pupils. What the Teaching for Creativity practice does is help us to be **intentional** about naming those vital skills, nurturing pupils to name them for themselves as skills, and giving them 'hard currency' value."*

- *How might you use these activities as entry-points into their curricular work?*
- *What ideas are being sparked?*
- *Are there pupils where these activities might particularly support / extend their learning?*
- *How does this help pupils' oracy and metacognition skills?*

Getting practical (10 mins)

The group now examines how to incorporate some of these activities into their immediate planning. You might want to put printed copies of some of the [Taster Cards](#) on each group's tables for further ideas.

Individually, they make notes for five minutes on what they will take forward from this short session in the week / month ahead or a particular topic plan that they are working on.

- *Where will you position one or more of the activities from today for immediate use?*
- *How might you start to incorporate the language of Teaching for Creativity in the classroom?*
- *Do some activities suit different scenarios? (e.g. after registration, straight after lunch, the end of a school day)*
- *How playful can you be with using these activities to maximise pupil engagement and learning?*

Bring the group back together and invite staff to share their ideas and plans.

Plenary (5 minutes)

"So much of the pedagogy that underpins Teaching for Creativity is just about excellent teaching and learning, and why we are in this profession. But so often these skills are tacit, have gone unnamed or been termed 'soft skills', when in fact they are essential life skills that can be taught and developed."

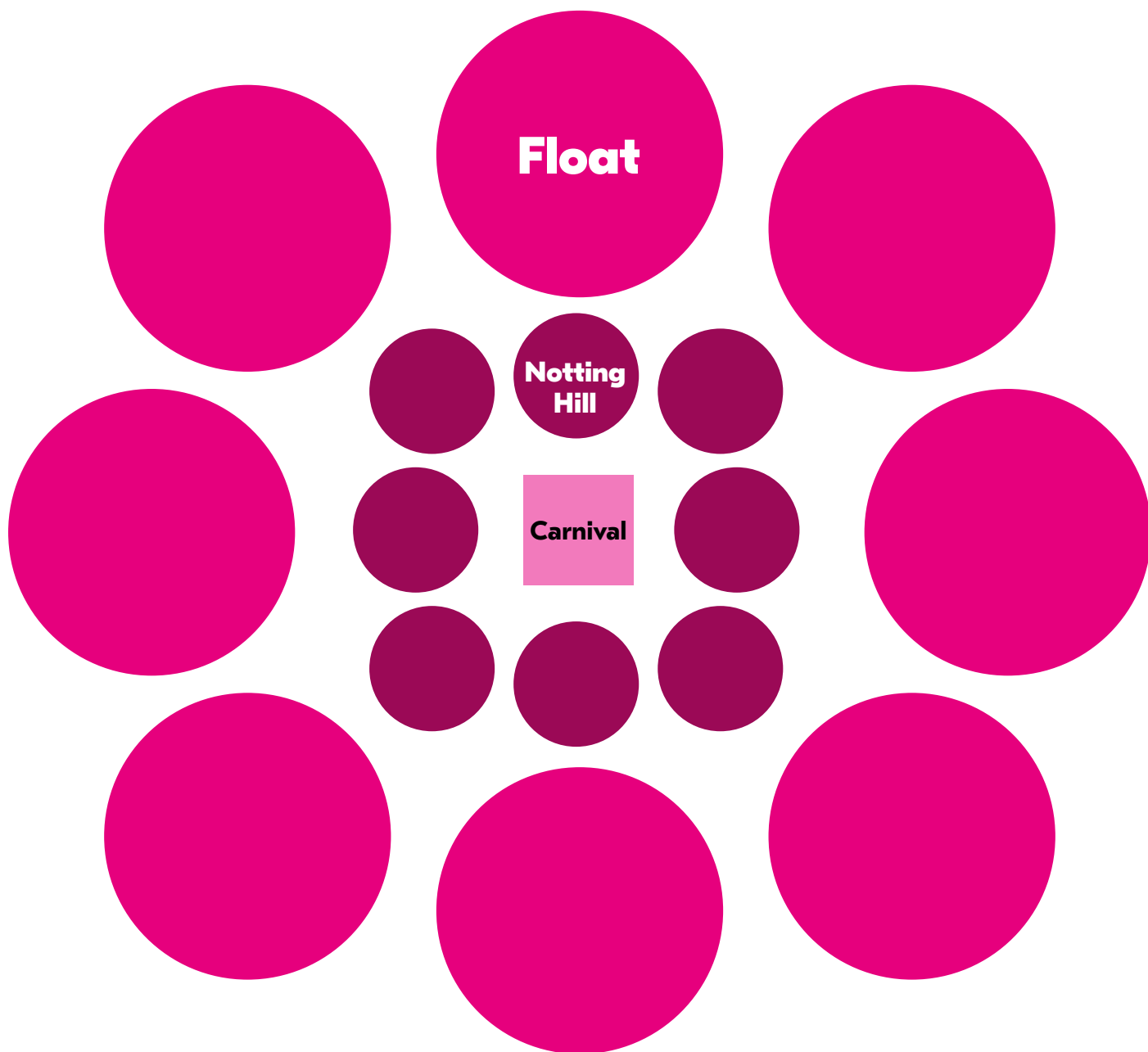
In shared discussion, reflect on the session together and signpost the classroom Taster Cards series and [lesson plans](#) from A New Direction for staff to take their exploration deeper.

Further resources and reading

- [Teaching for Creativity Taster cards](#)
- [Teaching for Creativity classroom resources](#)
- [Teaching for Creativity Webinar with Prof Bill Lucas and Alison Peacock, CEO Chartered College of Teaching](#)
- [Teaching Creative Thinking \(Pedagogy for a Changing World\) by Prof Bill Lucas & Ellen Spencer](#)
- [Creative Thinking In Schools Across the World \(Global Institute of Creative Thinking – GioCT\)](#)
- [St Marylebone's London Creativity Collaborative programme](#)

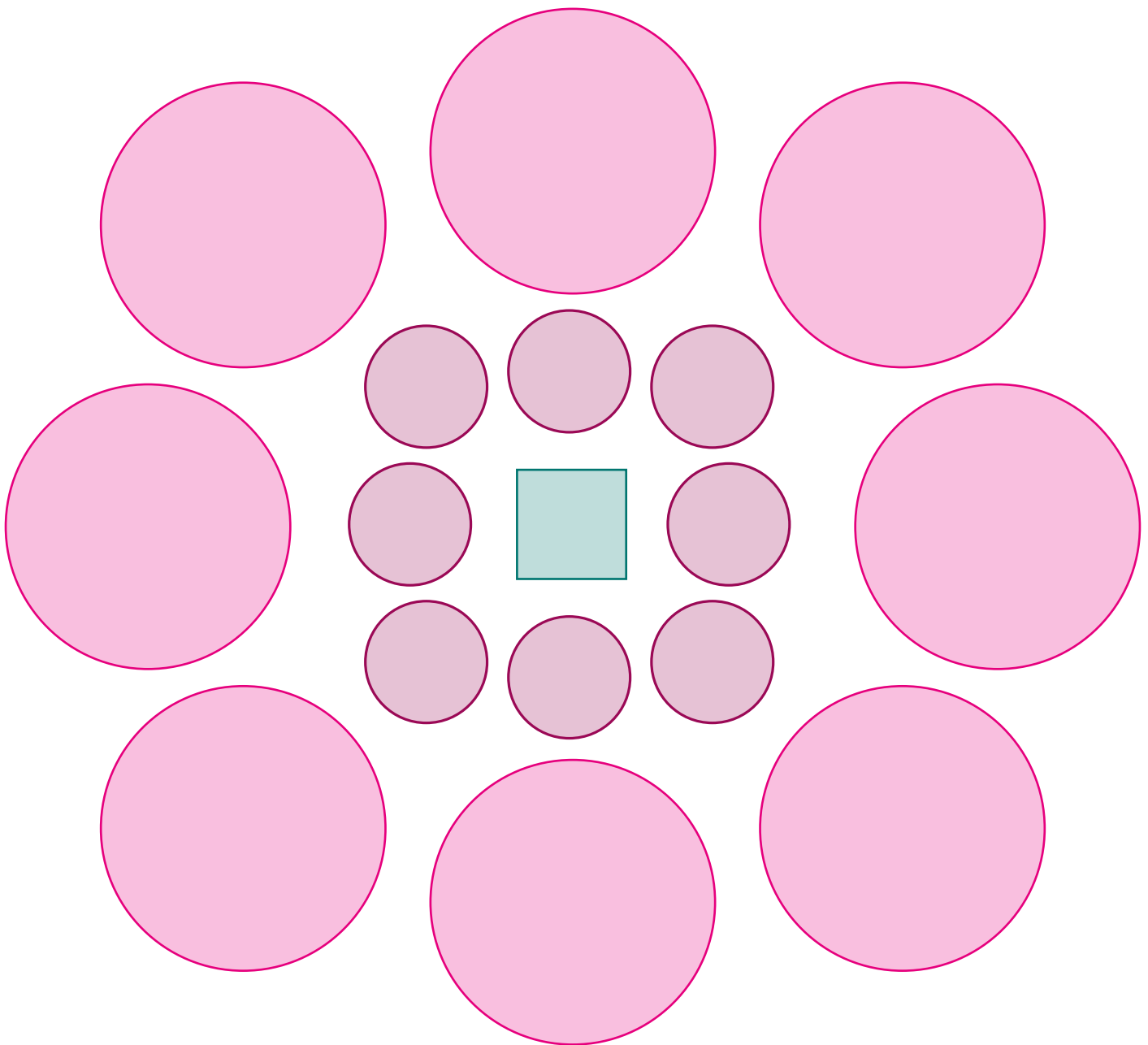
Appendix

Lotus Blossom – idea generation diagram for creative ideas – example



Appendix

Lotus Blossom – idea generation diagram for creative ideas – blank.



More From A New Direction

LookUp

Our online LookUp platform allows you to quickly and easily browse schools programmes, events, resources and opportunities from London's arts & cultural sector, and refine results based on Key Stage, artform and more:

lookup.anewdirection.org.uk

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