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# Pedagogy and possibility thinking in the early years

Teresa Cremin <sup>a</sup> ... Anna Craft <sup>c</sup>

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### Abstract

Connecting to current work in the area of creative pedagogies, this paper reports findings of an exploratory study that sought to identify what characterises possibility thinking in young children's learning experiences and how teachers' pedagogical practice fosters this critical aspect of creativity. It focuses in particular on pedagogy, seeking to demonstrate how approaches adopted facilitated children's possibility thinking. Possibility thinking has been conceptualised as being central to creative learning although its role, as manifest in the learning engagement of children and the pedagogical strategies of practitioners has not been fully illuminated. The co-participative research team involved in this study comprised staff in an early childhood centre, in an infant and a primary school, working collaboratively with three university-based researchers. The 12-month long segment of a longer study employed various data collection methods including video-stimulated review (VSR) to facilitate reflection, critical conversations, classroom observation, interviews and examination of planning documents. The paper illuminates the perspectives and embedded values that the teachers expressed whilst

articulates the perspectives and embedded values that the teachers expressed whilst reflecting upon their practice, and highlights common pedagogical themes, including the practice of ‘standing back’, profiling learner agency and creating time and space. Particular strategies were employed by each of the teachers. These approaches appeared to foster possibility thinking in young learners. In addition, the paper considers the development of the teachers’ thinking through the phases of the research process and presents a model for conceptualising a pedagogy of possibility thinking.



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## Keywords

Possibility thinking, Pedagogy, Early years, Creativity

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**Teresa Cremin** is Professor of Education at Canterbury Christ Church University, where she teaches and undertakes research and consultancy in the fields of literacy and creativity. Teresa was President of the United Kingdom Literacy Association (2001–2002) and is currently is Co-convener of BERA: SIG Creativity in Education and UKLA Publications Convenor. She is on the editorial boards of *Literacy* and the *Journal of Professional Learning and Creativity*.

**Pamela Burnard**, PhD is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge, UK where she coordinates and lectures on the MPhil in Educational Research and the MPhil in Arts, Culture and Education courses. She is co-editor of the *International Journal of Music Education*; Associate Editor of *Psychology of Music*, on the editorial boards for *Journal of Thinking Skills and Creativity*, *International Journal of Arts and Education*, *Asia-Pacific Journal of Arts Education*, amongst others. She publishes widely on creativity. She is Co-convenor of BERA: SIG Creativity in Education.

**Anna Craft** is Reader in Education, Director of the Open Creativity Centre at The Open University, and holds a visiting appointment at Harvard University. She teaches across the undergraduate and postgraduate spectrum, undertakes research and consultancy in the field of creativity in education, working with practitioners, policymakers and other researchers and has published widely on creativity. She is Founding Co-Editor of *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, on the editorial board of the *Korean Journal of Thinking and Problem-Solving*, and established and jointly coordinates the BERA Creativity SIG. For more information visit <http://opencreativity.open.ac.uk>.

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