

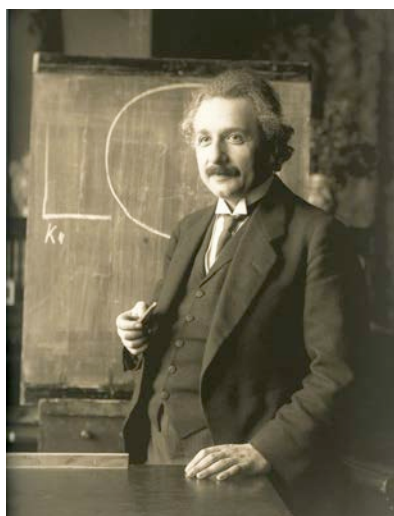
Palmarium

The Classical Academy exists to assist parents in their mission to develop exemplary citizens equipped with analytical thinking skills, virtuous character, and a passion for learning, all built upon a solid foundation of knowledge.



Reflections on Creativity

..... Assorted Quotes



Albert Einstein
(1877-1955)

It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge. *Albert Einstein.*

Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect the experiences they've had and synthesize new things. *Steve Jobs (1955-2011)*

Every child is an artist, the problem is staying an artist when you grow up. *Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)*

Anxiety is the handmaiden of creativity. *T.S. Eliot (1888-1965)*

The world is but a canvas to the imagination. *Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)*

You see things; and you say, 'Why?' But I dream things that never were; and I say, 'Why not?'. *George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)*

But out of limitations comes creativity. *Debbie Allen (1950-)*

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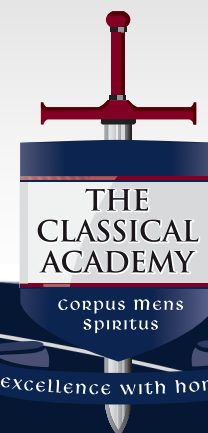
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- Whole Person Focused
 - Relationship Based
 - Classically Oriented
 - Idea Centered

COLORING OUTSIDE THE LINES

by Laurie McIntyre (Executive Assistant to the President)

Creativity is a wild mind and a disciplined eye. – Dorothy Parker

I am a creative person. I love creating things just for the sake of creating them – my friends call me “artsy-fartsy.” I’m a glitter-gluing, creative writing, imaginative wonder (or so I think!). I thought this article would be a slam dunk and would be in itself a bastion of creativity, but...will it? I don’t know yet. Before sitting down to write, I would have thought I had a good grasp on the definition of



creativity, after all Creativity is my second-highest character trait. Soon into my research though, I found that maybe I was a little too confident. Character Strengths and Virtues, by Christopher Peterson and Martin E.P. Seligman, explains that creativity has two parts. First is the ability to “produce ideas or behaviors that are recognizably original.” Well of course, right?! Who doesn’t know that? Upon further reflection though, that’s really just the definition of originality. If originality alone doesn’t define creativity, what completes the

definition? Again, according to Peterson and Seligman, together with originality, you must have adaptability, which contributes positively “to that person’s life or to the lives of others.” I thought to myself, “What does that mean? How does that apply?” Let’s figure it out... [continued on next page]



CHARACTER STRENGTHS CLASSIFICATIONS and

Character Strengths and Virtues, Peterson and entails two essential components. First, a creative recognizably original. The individual must be capable of or unusual. However, originality alone does not signify arises the necessity of the second component. The behaviors or ideas must be not only original but also adaptive. To be adaptive the individual’s originality must make a positive contribution to that person’s life or to the lives of others. . . . Most of our daily activities that we carry out habitually are highly adaptive without containing an ounce of originality. . . . [C]reativity itself varies across individuals. At one extreme are those individuals who rarely if ever come up with an original idea, and when they do, that idea seldom works. At the other extreme are those persons who become highly recognized for their exceptional creativity, such as great scientists, poets, composers, and painters (Gardner, 1993a). Such extreme originality is sometimes referred to as Big C creativity (Simonton, 2000). Somewhere between these two extremes are those who manifest what might be considered little c or everyday creativity – what we refer to as ingenuity. Such persons are able to generate creative solutions to the various problems they encounter at both home and work, but their creativity does not result in products that make a substantial impression on others beyond their immediate circle . . .” (110).

Peterson, C., & Park, N. (2009). Classifying and measuring strengths of character. In S. J. Lopez & C. R. Snyder (Eds), *Oxford handbook of positive psychology*, 2nd edition (pp. 25-33). New York: Oxford University Press. www.viacharacter.org

Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press and Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. www.viacharacter.org

DEFINITIONS: In their chapter on CREATIVITY in Seligman write: “As an individual difference, creativity person must produce ideas of behaviors that are generating ideas or behaviors that are novel, surprising, that a person possesses creative ability. . . . Hence



CREATIVITY: Originality; adaptive; ingenuity
CURIOSITY: Interest; novelty-seeking; exploration; openness to experience
JUDGMENT: Critical thinking; thinking things through; open-minded
LOVE OF LEARNING: Mastering new skills & topics; systematically adding to knowledge
PERSPECTIVE: Wisdom; providing wise counsel; taking the big picture view

COLORING OUTSIDE THE LINES *[continued]*

Merriam-Webster defines originality as “the quality or state of being original; freshness of aspect, design or style; and the power of independent thought or constructive imagination” and adaptability as “capable of being or becoming adapted.” For me that didn’t really clear up anything and, instead, made me more confused.

I’ve spoken to several people about creativity in the past month or two. Some of those people are extremely creative, work in creative fields, and have a distinct opinion on creativity and what is or is not creative. Then there are the people who do not feel they are creative – who literally told me, “I don’t have a creative bone in my body.” Is this true? Do they really not have any creativity? I dug deeper.



Trying to convince someone who believes they are not creative that they can learn creativity is kind of like trying to convince someone (ME!) who believes she is not good at math or art (again, ME!) that she can learn these skills. In my discussions, I found that people don’t think they’re creative because they can’t draw, paint, design buildings, or write poems, stories, songs or music. Is that all people believe creativity consists of? Do we not recognize the value of creative thinking?

So, when I look at the definition and how people perceive creativity, I wonder how I score so highly in it. Then I thought about how I think. I am almost always the person who thinks in ‘what if’ and ‘have you thought about’ statements. What if we do this task a new way? What if we explain this differently? What would happen if we make this decision? Have you thought about what will happen if this decision is made? Have you thought about trying this approach? Have you thought about the ramifications of...? What if, what if, what if; have you thought about, have you thought about, have you thought about... I’m a broken record. I can feel people cringe when I start a sentence in one of those two ways. However, when I do, it’s me being creative. Can this be taught to others? I believe it can.

Like math or art, creativity and creative thinking are ideas and activities that can be practiced. You don’t learn your multiplication facts by chance, right? You have to practice, and practice, and practice some more to really hone those skills. Most people don’t pick up a paintbrush for the first time and create a work of art. Instead, they take lessons, make mistakes, learn to color inside the lines, and use all that they’ve learned to create masterpieces. But, can you only create a masterpiece if you color inside the lines? Are some people more naturally talented in math, art, or creativity? Certainly! But, in a way, creativity is what happens when you learn to color outside the lines. Unlocking your ability to find truth, beauty, and goodness outside the generally prescribed

COLORING OUTSIDE THE LINES *[continued]*

comfort zone – or color outside the lines. Acting and thinking creatively can be done by anyone. Next time you find yourself thinking, ‘we’ve always done it this way, but I wish we could try...’, do it! Try it! Take a leap of faith! Practice creativity! Allow yourself to experience the freedom of creativity. You will never know if there is a better way to do something, say something, or learn something unless you take the time to color outside the lines. You’ll find that you will learn new ways to do old things. Don’t worry about the people who cringe every time you say “what if” or “have you thought about...” – they too can learn to be creative. Maybe your “creative bone” will be the teeniest, tiniest bone – like the stapes, that itty bitty, stirrup-shaped bone in your middle ear, but don’t be one of those people who think they don’t have a creative bone in their body. Embrace creativity, and if you happen to have one of those new-fangled adult coloring books, color outside the lines once in a while – it’s where the magic happens.

Creativity is intelligence having fun. – Albert Einstein



Winter in Colorado . . .



Sunrise over Pikes Peak and the Greenland Ranch in Douglas County, Colorado, on a cold January morning

photo by Justin Peterson, High School Assistant Principal

FUNDRAISER AT EAST ELEMENTARY FOR ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Earlier this school year, East Elementary students participated in their annual service run. Coach Zane Leaf (2011 TCA Grad) recently shared at a board meeting that students raised money by receiving pledges for running laps around the East field and campus. The students really enjoyed the competition, and two fifth-grade students ran the most laps - 22! The students raised just over \$7,400 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. East Elementary picked St. Jude's as its beneficiary since one of their students, Sixth Grader Kaylee Chavez, was treated for cancer at St. Jude's last year.

In December 2014, Kaylee was diagnosed with a very aggressive brain tumor, which turned out to be metastatic cancer that had spread into her brain and spine. Kaylee's family moved to Memphis, TN so she could be treated at St. Jude's. St. Jude Children's Hospital knows exactly what steps need to be taken to best treat and care for not only the patient but also the family. The Chavez family lived in Memphis for close to a year and were taken care of in all aspects the entire time. They did not have to pay for anything while there. Kaylee is now cancer free and back at East being a student. St. Jude is on a mission to find a cure for childhood cancer. TCA East Elementary's donation went to this cause and shows another example of our students living out TCA's Creed, "Striving to be our best, do our best, and give our best to the world..."



DONATE - TCA -



Strengthening OUR Core

← CLICK HERE

Dr. Scott Poland

Parenting in Challenging Times



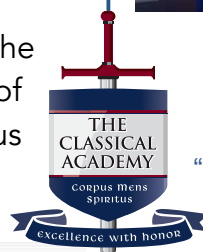
In October, Dr. Scott Poland, nationally recognized expert on youth suicide, school crisis, and prevention addressed the TCA community on the topic "Parenting in Challenging Times." Click the following link

to view the video of his presentation: <http://tcatitans.org/cms/One.aspx?portalId=765275&pageId=6493618>

The presentation slides can also be found on our website:

<http://tcatitans.org/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=6432400>

Each month I plan to highlight one of the slides from his presentation in this section of the PALMARIUM. This month's focus **Recommendations for Parent**



Recommendations for parents

- Bring back the family meal
- Don't let technology steal your child
- Avoid setting their room up to be a kingdom
- Know where your child is and know their friends and their parents—Network
- Support the school and let your child experience consequences

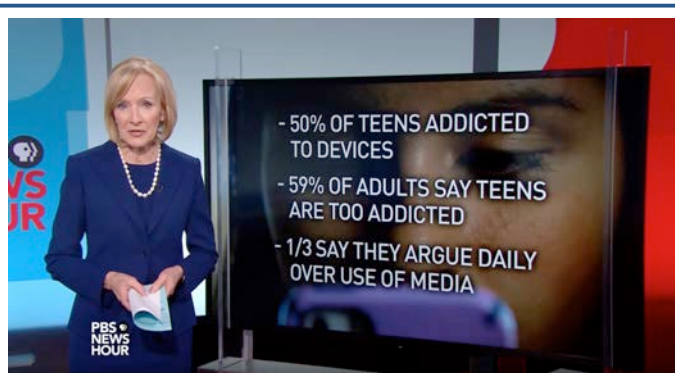
Upcoming TCA Board Meetings

Monday, February 13 @ 6:00 pm

Monday, March 13 @ 6:00 pm

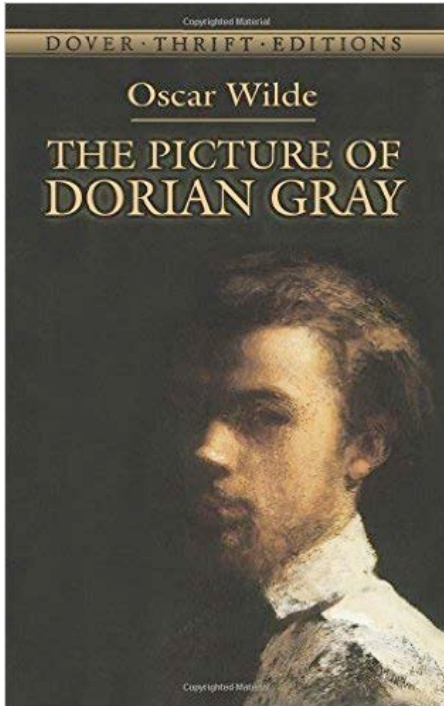
Monday, April 10 @ 6:00 pm

all meetings are held in rooms 2213/14 at North Secondary



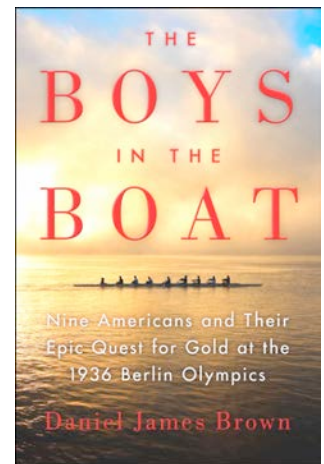
PBS NewsHour Segment on Screen Time

"Teenagers today have never known a world without the internet, which may be why half of all adolescents say they're addicted to their digital devices. In her new documentary "Screenagers," Dr. Delaney Ruston explores why young people are so drawn to social media and video games and what effect it's having on their brains." In the little over seven minute PBS NewsHour segment [The drug-like effect of screen time on the teenage brain \(click the title to watch\)](#) Dr. Ruston continues on the topic we have highlighted related to technology and screen time in both educational and personal use in the November and December editions of the PALMARIUM. If you missed those previously included short articles the links to the TIME magazine article [Screens in Schools Are a \\$60 Billion Hoax](#) and EdWeek's [Warning Sounded on Tech Disrupting Student Sleep](#) article are included again here – just click on the article titles.



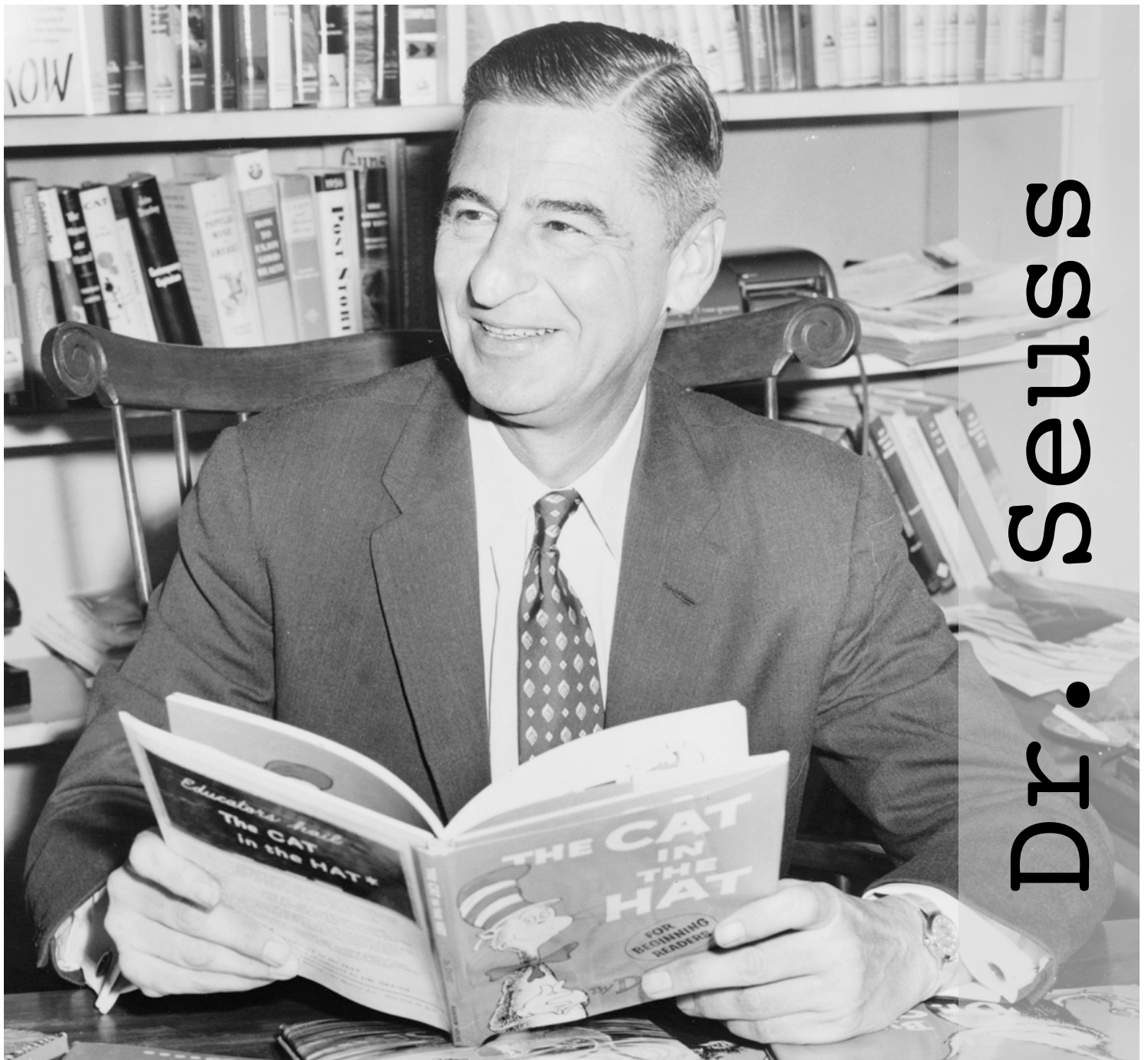
BEYOND THE BOOK CLUB

As part of our continuing *Engaging Minds* theme this year we will have our third meeting of the **Beyond the Book Club** on *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde (a selection read by our seniors each year) **during the February 21st-23rd timeframe** at TCA's North Campus. If you would like to join us for one of the sessions please RSVP to me at wjolly@asd20.org. Our book study meetings will each last approximately 90-minutes. The final studies of the 2016-2017 academic year will be held in April 2017 on *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown – a story about the 1936 men's Olympic rowing team.

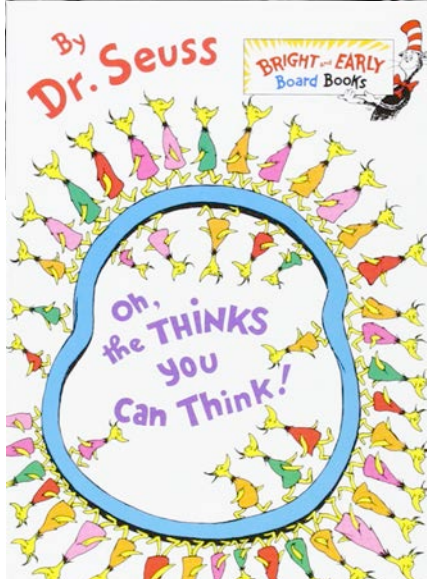


“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.

Albert Einstein



DR. SEUSS



Think left and think right
and think low and think high.
Oh, the thinks you can think up
if only you try.

Dr. Seuss