

Parents Matter

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Creative Thinking and Why It Matters

Daniel Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future*, creates a compelling case for creative thinking in the 21st century. He claims that three A's—Abundance, Asia and Automation—will be responsible for an increased demand for higher level, innovative thinking needed to promote economic stability and prosperity. Firstly, as more people have access to resources and even the smallest levels of disposable income, they demand aesthetic choices when shopping for goods. Most people don't shop for just any new purse, pair of shoes, or even a simple shower curtain. They shop for design and colour, and they demand a sense of style and aesthetic. Secondly, many jobs have been outsourced to the lower waged, labour market in Asia and as a result, new industries and jobs must be created. And finally, automation continues to change the working landscape and new jobs must be created as old ones are replaced with machines and technology.

So who is going to create these new industries, these new jobs and the means for people to support themselves and their families? According to Daniel Pink, it will be the creative thinkers - the right-brainers. Creative thinking goes beyond a music or art class several times a week. We're talking the need for creative problem-solving, for turning problems inside-out, for seeking multiple solutions, for asking "what if" questions, for grappling with the unknown.

What you can do as a parent at home to promote your child's creative thinking. Seek out and discuss intriguing stories of ingenuity across the disciplines including: Dr. Gunther von Hagen's use of plastination to preserve bodies for his BODY WORLDS exhibit, George Ferris Jr.'s innovative Ferris wheel unveiled at the World Fair in Chicago, and Dr. Lister's (yes, Listerine was named in his honour) chemical solution devised to sterilize hands before surgery that killed microorganisms causing infection. The goal is to help students learn to ask questions and think more expansively about the world they live in and the challenges they'll face as adults.

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Another Parent Tip From...

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