## Creativity and innovation

**Task 1: Read the article. If you have time, think about a possible heading for each section.**

A _____

In a recent experiment, scientists gave the same task to a group of people who stayed sitting down and to a group who went for a stroll outside. What they found supports what many people believe, that getting out and about is very good for creativity. In fact, 100 per cent of the group that went for a walk produced better quality ideas and produced them more quickly.

The researchers then compared a group walking on a treadmill inside with those stretching their legs outside and found that while being outside was good for creativity, even walking on a treadmill helped, which suggests that it is the movement which is most important.

B _____

Your teacher may tell you off for staring out of the window at nothing, but having a wandering mind may be a sign of intelligence and creativity, according to a new study. The scientists recorded brain activity while people lay still, but not asleep, and concluded that daydreaming can help people become better problem-solvers. However, if you're simply not paying attention when you should be, that clearly isn't beneficial.

C _____

Be willing to challenge things that you have always done. A group of Japanese watermelon farmers had an issue with the way that watermelons were difficult to pack and store. Their round shape meant that they took up a lot of space, making their transport more expensive. But why do watermelons actually need to be round? thought the farmers. They began growing the fruit in square glass boxes, thus creating square watermelons. They just needed to think differently to find the perfect solution.

D_____

Believe it or not, more than one research study has shown that people who watch a comedy film are much better afterwards at coming up with a creative solution to a problem than those who watched a horror film. It appears that having a chuckle makes us feel more relaxed, which helps the creative process. It is very difficult to be creative when you're stressed, because the mind is too focused on survival.

E_____

You might imagine that you will be at your most creative if you are able to work in complete silence, but you'd be wrong. Research shows that for most creative tasks, a low level of noise, like the chatter that you get in a café, is best. Complete silence is good when you need to focus on a difficult task, but when you want to come up with ideas, try a little hubbub.


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**Task 2: Match the missing headings (1–6) with each section (A–E). There is one heading you do not need.**

1 Have a good laugh

2 Sit down

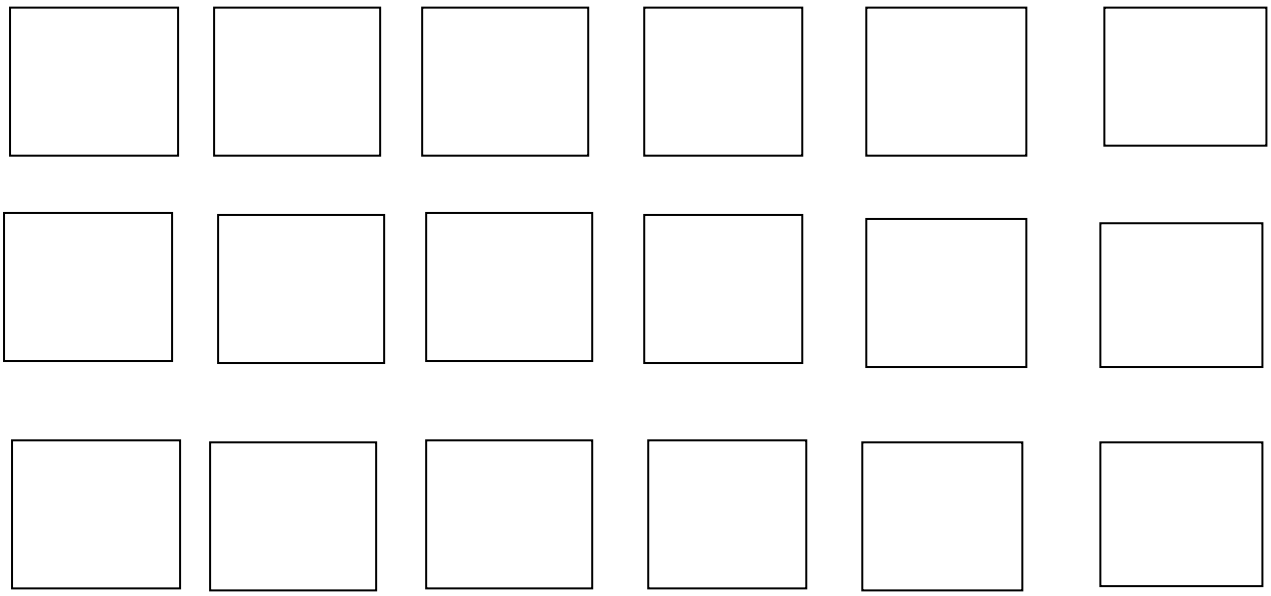
3 Get your legs moving

4 Noise

5 Daydream

6 Think outside the box

**Task 3: Now test your creativity. You have three minutes to turn each of the squares below into a recognisable object, e.g. a present or a house.**



**Compare your completed squares with a partner and discuss the following questions:**

1 How many squares did you complete? Did you get stuck? Why?

2 Did you draw a lot of similar things, e.g. different houses? Does this mean you are less creative? Why/why not?

3 Did you join any of the squares together? Would this be breaking the rules? Do you think creative people should be rule breakers? Why/why not?



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