



## British Council **Seminars**

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@BCSeminars



## This evening's programme

- 1730 – 1800** Welcome and refreshments
- 1800 – 1855** **Preparing lower level students for IELTS**  
with Fiona Aish and Jo Tomlinson
- 1855 – 1905** Short break
- 1905 – 2000** **IELTS 2: Is creativity possible, desirable and/or  
necessary in the IELTS classroom?**  
with Sam McCarter
- 2000 – 2030** Networking reception

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**#BCSeminars**



## IELTS 2

**Is creativity possible, desirable and/or necessary in the IELTS classroom?**

Sam McCarter



# What is creativity?



If you hear a voice within you say, ‘You cannot paint,’ then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced.

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



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.

Creativity is contagious, pass it on.



Helping students to use their creative side is about giving them the opportunity to express themselves by teaching them how they bring together, or synthesise, ideas, evaluate them and come with something ‘new’ for them, and perhaps other people.

It is about thinking and writing ‘something new’ for them, which they have never thought before. This is a concept of creativity in the widest sense.



Process

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Manipulating systems

Flexibility

Skills transfer

Spontaneity

Building confidence

Doubt

Questioning

Connecting

Change





## Straitjacket of freedom



## Essential/ Text features in IELTS

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- Time relationships
- Problem and solution
- Cause and effect
- Classification
- Comparison and contrast
- Argument
- Description- processes/ sequencing



- Narrative
- Instruction
- Definition
- Explanation
- Exemplification
- Generalization and specificity
- Drawing conclusions
- Rhetorical organisation

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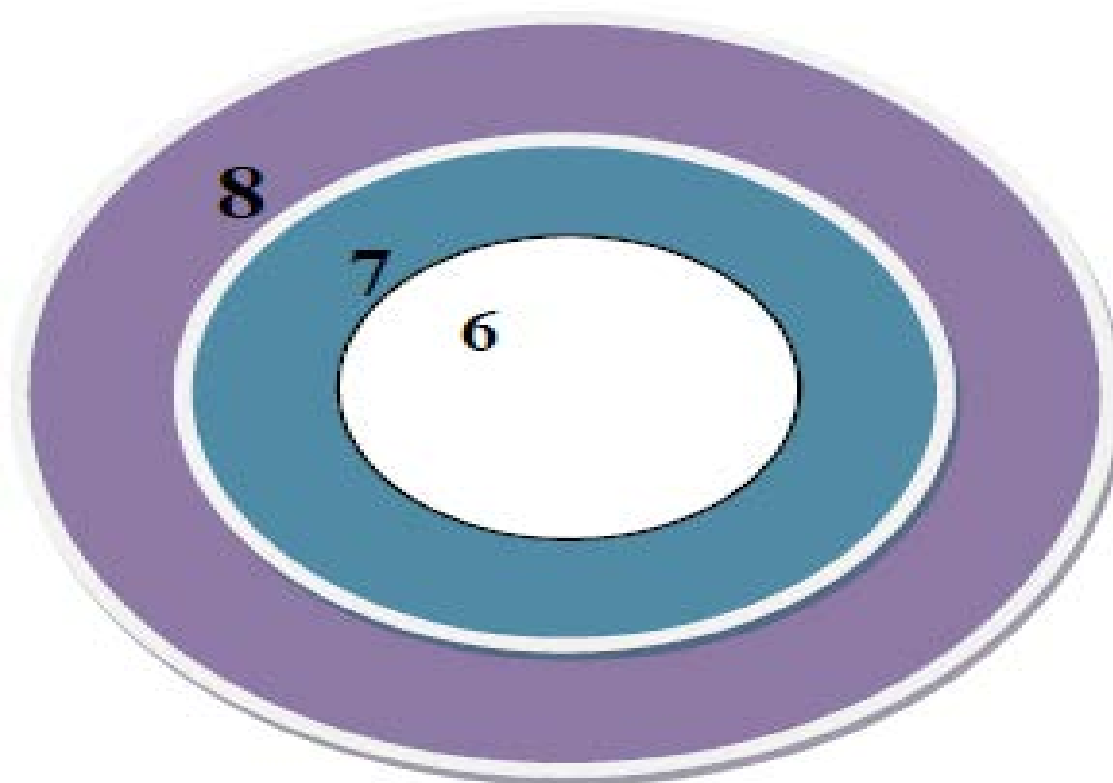
(Weir, C et al. 2009. The relationship between academic reading construct as measured by IELTS and the reading experiences of students in their first year of study at a British university. *IELTS Research Reports 9: 109.*)



# Barriers



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- I can't/ my students can't ...
- Lack of ability 'to navigate ideas'
- Exam backwash
- Exam treadmill/ Repeated exam takes
- 'Certificate acquisition' syndrome
- Class sizes
- Time constraints



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- Courses / Course length
- Exam ignorance
- (Lack of) Experience
- High stakes of the IELTS exam
- Student wants vs. student needs
- Student expectations
- Student / family etc ignorance



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- Professional background
- Educational background
- Focus on memorising
- Teacher assumptions
- Fossilisation?





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## Techniques for a creative writing process



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- Breaking barriers
- Doing things differently
- Ask our students
- Using pictures
- Random selection
- Brainstorming
- Time limits
- Various triggers/ stimuli



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- Word association- individual
- Phrase association
- Drawing lines between boxes
- Paraphrase
- Visual /word/ phrase
- Chains
- Function chains: cause effect/ reason/ purpose/  
example/conclusion/ general truths/ claims



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- Information sequences

*Past present future*

*Cause effect/ problem solution*

- Consequences
- Making connections
- Creating collisions



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- Connections/ Links/ Associations

*Simple and familiar*

- Technology and growth
- Technology and health
- Technology and freedom
- Technology and games



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- Technology and design
- Technology and transport
- Technology and food
- Technology and education
- Technology and sport
- Technology and cars



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## Questioning



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Transport

Entertainment

Education

Finance

Games

Growth

**Technology**

Culture

Health

Food

Cars

Freedom

Manufacturing





## Perspectives

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personal

familial

social

local

international

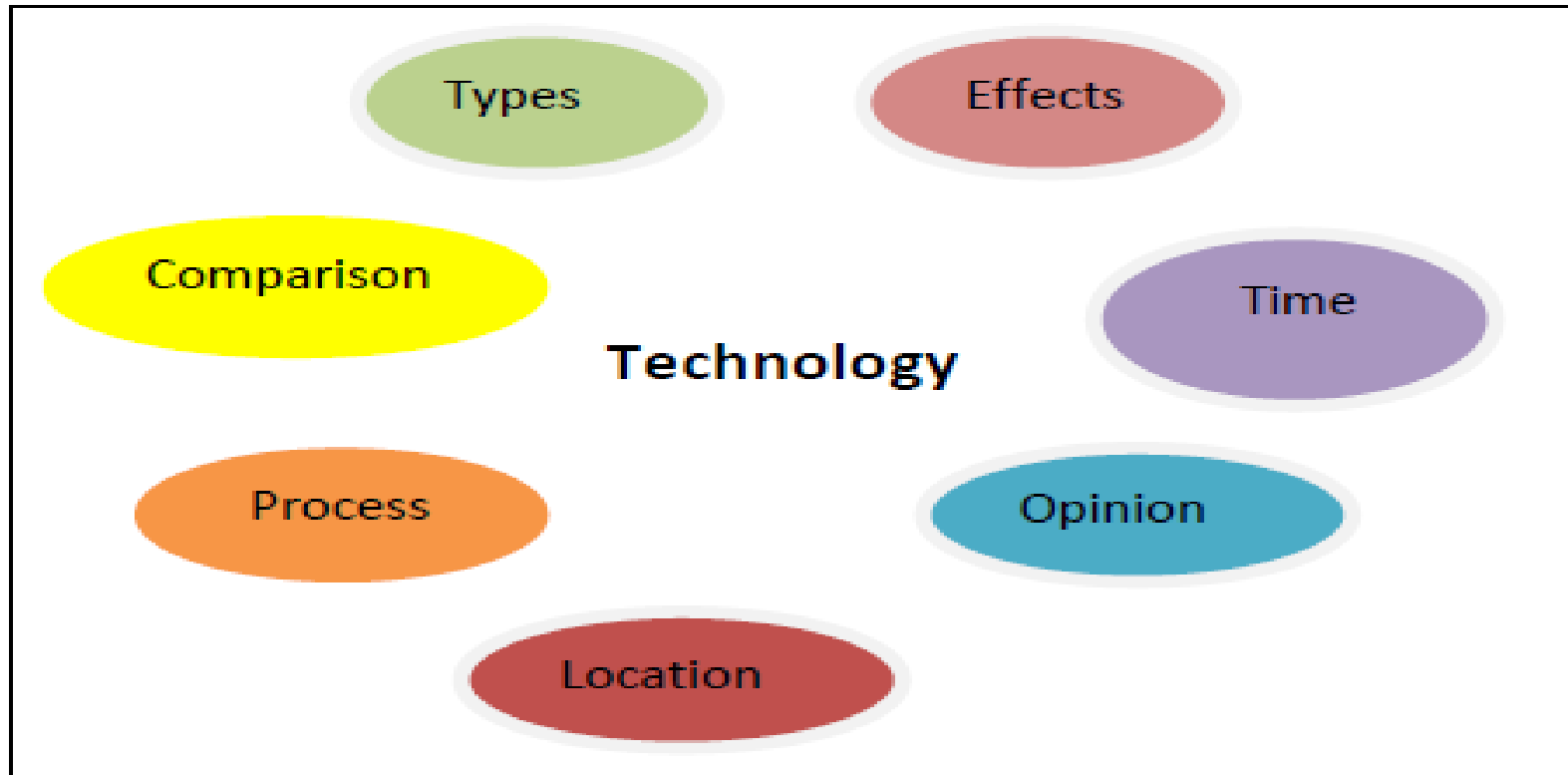
regional

national



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- Students create chains: *words/ perspectives/ functions/ nouns/ adjectives/ mixed (personal – abstract)*
- Trigger- must add it in an essay
- Must avoid





## Task

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Technology

Education

Crime

Environment

The arts

Science



## Post writing

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- Map a paragraph according to perspective
- Map a paragraph according to time sequence
- Map a paragraph according to functions
- Rewrite according to a different perspective
- Paraphrase the text



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**Thank you!**