

# Igniting Imagination with Nellie Jacobs

HELPING PEOPLE THINK CREATIVELY

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## Creativity: Questions & Answers-Part 1

April 19, 2010 by Nellie Jacobs

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As promised in the last posting, this one is the first in a series featuring worldwide creative-thinkers' responses to questions about creativity posted previously on this site. To listen to call-ins talking about "Creativity and Innovation in Our Homes, Schools and Workplaces", [click here to tune in to Part One on Episode 29 and Part Two on Episode 30.](#)

**Please welcome Candace Carriger, director of [The Dance Lab](#), Moorestown, New Jersey, USA:**

*Hi Nellie,*



Candace Carriger

*I am a creative movement/dance teacher and work primarily with preschool age students. My teaching continually pulls on my own creative process and elicits creativity from my little movers. Here are a few of my thoughts on creativity as it relates to young children and movement experiences....*

*Fondly,*

*Candace*

**1. What is a creative environment? How do you define it?**



The Dance Lab: Spiders

A creative environment is one that allows a free flow of thoughts and ideas to blossom.

### **What do you need to be at your creative best?**

My own creativity always develops and grows as I interact with my students. The natural give-and-take that comes from our movement activities inevitably guides us deeper on our journey.

### **How do you develop a creative environment to promote day-to-day creative thinking and solutions at school? (You can refer to physical space, attitudes, systems, beliefs, etc.)**

For creative movement, I utilize a large open space. I create a safe environment for the students (physically and emotionally), so that they are not shy to express themselves. Expressing ones self creatively (especially through movement) can be a bit intimidating and scary for kids (and for adults too). To express your own creativity can leave you feeling exposed to others judgment. I make sure that negativity is kept out, and that a positive supportive environment is maintained throughout my activities.

### **2. What are the common obstacles and fears people commonly face when called to use their creativity? What solutions do you have?**



The Dance Lab: Shapes

In creative movement, I emphasize that there are no wrong answers when expressing yourself, no judgments, no negativity. All ideas and contributions to the activity are welcome, as long as the students are on task, and exploring with me. (believe me, the kids so often times, create amazing ideas in our dance structures that I never even thought of) I believe many people are fearful to express their own creativity because of what others may think of them. Empowering children with the chance to think, move, and express their own creativity is an amazing process to observe daily. I enjoy partaking in this process with my many, many students.

### **3. What strategies are available for people to access their creativity?**



The Dance Lab: Hibernating Bears

How I get kids to think creatively is to present them with dance structures in which they can fill in pieces of the puzzle. I do not give them all the answers up front. I create the structures for them to think of ideas and share their own thoughts. I use open-ended questions that have limitless potential for creative answers. For example: in my warm ups, I will ask the children to reach up to the top of a tree branch and grab something off the tree. I will ask, "What can we reach for?" The answers can range from "Let's get an apple, a banana, some raspberries, pizza" ... even though many of these items may not grow on the top branches of trees, their answers are ok with me. They are thinking and doing, they are imaginative and creative in the process. Moreover, who knows, in a fantastical place far, far away, there just might be pizzas

growing on trees. Using our imagination and creative spirit is so much fun for kids!

**4. In what ways are you creative? In what ways do you contribute to the creative process/outcomes for others?**



The Dance Lab: Hoops

My own creativity comes from thinking beyond the norm, the typical, the actuality of reality. I use picture books to inspire my class planning and the natural world around us. I believe connecting imagination and creativity to the real world around us manifests meaning and enjoyment to the young movers I work with. I try to think like a child might when planning my lessons. Of course, they are the best creators of imaginative play possible. Creativity is a boundless process, as I present dance structures, the students provide creative ideas back to me, and in turn, I develop those ideas more to share back with them. Brainstorming, collaborating, sharing, are all wonderful ways to spark creativity and imaginative thought in all of us.

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Your comments and feedback to this posting are more than welcome.

If you would like to send your own opinions, ideas and experiences, [click here for the questions](#). When you've completed them, [click here to send your responses and contact details](#).

You and your story may be mentioned in my book-in-progress about mining creativity, with acknowledgement and reference to you and your contact information.

Please forward the link to this site to anyone in your network who might be interested in reading them and/or participating.

All the best.

Creatively yours,

*Nellie*

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**\* Nellie cannot guarantee the safety or reliability of any linked website.**

**Nellie is a speaker, workshop facilitator, award-winning artist, best-selling author and host of "Igniting Imagination with Nellie Jacobs" Internet talk radio show. Visit Nellie's website [www.ignitingimagination.com](http://www.ignitingimagination.com), updated every few days, for services and products-including two books soon to be launched. For information about upcoming radio broadcasts, creative opportunities/events, and news, sign up on this site in the right column to get notification of a new blog posting.**

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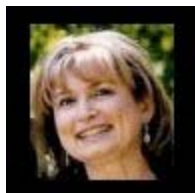
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




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