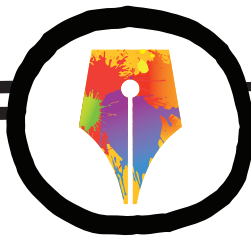
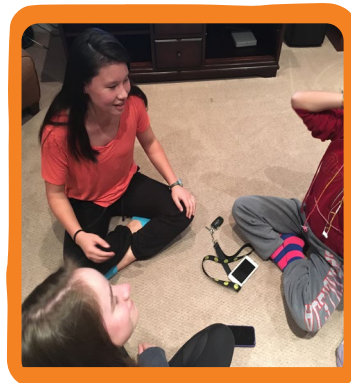


# MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR Creativity Style



You may strongly identify with one style, or maybe you're a Chameleon, taking on the style that suits the moment.. Whatever your mix, here are some strategies to try out as you brainstorm, draft, revise, and share your work with the world.



CREATIVITY STYLE:

## The Inventor



*"I have an idea..."*

*Ideas? You've got a hive of them buzzing around that busy mind of yours. For the most part, creativity is joyful for you... that is, until you have to grind through the nitty-gritty details. You enjoy fun strategies that help you play your way through the drafting and revision process, especially when you're starting to lose your mojo. And you don't want one-size-fits-all tips and tricks; you want ideas that leave room for you to make the creative process your own.*

## PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS:

Surprises delight and inspire you. Create tools and strategies that keep your planning and drafting process lively. For example, collect writing prompt questions on slips of paper and keep them in a question jar. Create image flashcards as quick idea-sparkers. Try making a pair of paper dice with ideas to mix and match. What can you dream up? Gather other fun items that inspire creative thinking.

## WHEN YOU'RE STUCK:

### 1. BRAINSTORM COLORFULLY

Colorful supplies make work feel like play. Use colorful markers or post-its to gather a stack of ideas. Go for more (many more) ideas than you need, and give yourself room to be zany. Sometimes the off-the-wall idea rattles loose another possibility that fits exactly right. Once you have a collection, sort your ideas to find patterns, narrow down the options, and then choose the idea that fits best.

### 2. PLAY AROUND THE EDGES OF THE PROBLEM

Tap into your other senses to see what ideas pop up. Create a collage, go for a walk and notice the textures, colors, and smells around you, or create a music playlist connected to your project. Rather than forcing an idea to show up, try setting the problem aside while you play. Often the moment you let go and let yourself play, unexpected insight shows up.



CREATIVITY STYLE:

## The Architect



*"Above all, start with a plan."*

*You appreciate structure, checklists, and outlines. As long as the creative process lines up with your blueprint, you easily stay in motion. You might start to feel stuck when a project takes a detour or when new expectations are added that you didn't account for in your original plan. You appreciate step-by-step guidance, clear objectives, and easy-to-measure progress.*

### PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS:

The big-picture thinking and wide range of possibilities at the beginning of the creative process may feel overwhelming at times. Keep in mind that once you've mapped out a plan, you'll be past the difficult part. Use your structured thinking to build an organized approach to keep yourself motivated and on track. For each type of creative project you encounter frequently, design a system to guide you from assignment through project set-up. Consider making personalized checklists, a color-coded key, and a milestone and goal-setting system.

### WHEN YOU'RE STUCK:

#### 1. MAKE A LIST

Manage the many details by listing them. Next, organize them into a logical order. You can then consider one decision or question at a time.

#### 2. USE CAUSE AND EFFECT THINKING

Review the decisions you've already made, and use those givens to figure out what the next logical choice should be. Instead of looking over the project as a whole, focus on the problem area and stick to this step-by-step thinking until you find your way out of the confusing spot.



CREATIVITY STYLE:

## The Collaborator



*"Together, we do great things."*

*Whether you're bouncing ideas off a friend, talking out the next chapter, or problem-solving a snag, what you value most throughout the creative process is a friend or, even better, a group of them. Sometimes the quieter parts of creative thinking are a challenge, so you appreciate opportunities to invite others into your process at each stage of the game.*

### PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS:

Wherever you can, use your collaboration skills to boost your energy and flow. Motivate yourself through the solo parts of the creative process with a plan to share your ideas or progress once you reach a milestone. Find a peer who also thrives on collaboration, and experiment with ways to motivate and support one another. Maybe you can share a Google Doc and read one another's work and comment now and then. Maybe you schedule a regular check-in to brainstorm ideas or to celebrate successes. Keep in mind that when your energy is low, a chat with a friend may be all you need to boost your enthusiasm and flow.

### WHEN YOU'RE STUCK:

#### 1. TALK IT OUT

For Collaborators, the voice is a powerful tool. When you're stuck, try telling your story or putting your ideas into words out loud. Use storytelling to better understand characters, setting, plot, theme, or point of view. Your friend's questions, feedback and encouragement will likely be a powerful source of un-blocking.

#### 2. RECORD YOUR THOUGHTS AND LISTEN

If you don't have anyone to talk to at the moment, try recording your voice and playing it back. Even without a friend, hearing your ideas out loud will be helpful.



CREATIVITY STYLE:

## The Special Agent



*"Focus, and get it done."*

*Why take the long road when a shortcut is there for the taking? Getting to "the end" is one of your favorite things. Even so, you want to finish strong and feel proud of what you created. For you, the best strategies are the ones that help streamline the creative process and keep you humming along on track.*

### PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS:

Prepare yourself for writing sessions by thinking about your work ahead of time. Mentally play through your next scene or your next argument for an essay. If some research is needed, do that work before the next session. If reflection is in order, plant the key questions in the back of your mind, and mull them over as you drift off to sleep. You'll likely wake up with answers.

### WHEN YOU'RE STUCK:

#### 1. FINISH SOMETHING

Momentum is your friend. The longer you stay stuck, the more entrenched the block becomes. If you're stuck on a certain project, don't wait for inspiration to strike. Instead, make a decision and push forward. If you can't take the project forward but you still need momentum, choose a small task that you can finish easily. Organize your notebook or finish a small, matter-of-fact assignment. The endorphin burst that comes with the small win may rattle loose the answer you need for your project.

#### 2. BREAK THE CHALLENGE INTO PARTS

For instance, clarifying your character may involve answering questions such as, "What makes them likable?" and "How can I give them more strength?" Prioritize your questions based on importance to you. Then, create a "How might I ..." question and put your Special Agent thinking to work.