
May 2017: Nurturing an Innovative Spirit

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Why This Matters Now

Innovation fuels so many engines these days, from business and the economy to technology and science. Inherent in innovation are related concepts, such as problem-solving and creative and critical thinking. Employers are looking for workers who think like innovators, not just to conceive that one big idea, but rather to bring a spirit of exploration and experimentation to all projects. Dramatic technological innovation is transforming the job market, displacing routine work and requiring training for an entirely different set of skills. It's important to understand what innovation is, why it matters, and how we can nurture innovate thinking in students.

Resources

Podcast Series

[Innovation and the Art of Problem-solving](#) is a four-part audio podcast and article series explores all aspects of innovation and how to introduce it into the classroom. With insight from Wharton and PwC experts, as well as questions from high school educators, this rich content is meant to deepen educators' knowledge and help guide students into the world of innovation.

Lesson Plan

[Innovative Ideas Come from Need](#): Through informational texts that compare and contrast ideas, students learn about innovation and where innovative ideas come from. Students also research companies and report on how these businesses use innovation to gain a competitive edge.

Hands-on Learning

In the KWHS article [Thoughtful Approach: Developing a Questioning Mind and Spirit](#), Enoch Hale of the Foundation for Critical Thinking, says, "I do not think it's possible to develop critical thinking skills without developing a questioning mind." Teens often look for ways to validate their own opinions, rather than listen and think critically about the opinions of others. Read the above article and then divide the class into groups of two. Have each group choose a controversial topic like terrorism, global warming or food security. It would help to pair students with somewhat opposing views. Have each group discuss and express opinions, with a goal of listening to each other, asking critical questions, and taking themselves out of their own emotions. Each student will need to report back to the class about the other student's perspectives.

Video Glossary

Provide an extra layer of learning for your students with our video glossary. Here Wharton professors define terms like: [Innovation](#), [Innovator](#) and [Innovation Tournament](#).

KWHS Quote of the Month

"Innovation is about changing the way we think about or do things to make them more effective and accessible...To shift society or have an impact, you have to introduce something novel." — Jamie Lee Solimano, Stuyvesant High School, NYC