

The Unusual Object Challenge

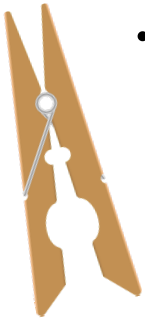
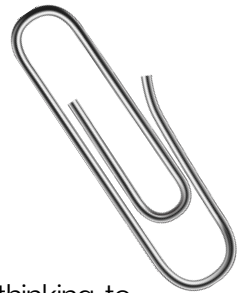
Objective: Students will develop divergent thinking skills by exploring alternative uses and perspectives of everyday objects.

Materials: Various everyday objects (e.g., paperclips, rubber bands, plastic bottles, clothespins, etc.)

Instructions:

Lesson 1 (Introduction to Unusual Object Challenge)

- Begin the lesson by introducing the concept of thinking differently and divergent thinking to the students. Explain that thinking differently involves looking at familiar objects or situations from new perspectives and considering alternative uses.
- Engage students in a brief discussion about the benefits of thinking differently. Ask questions such as:
 - How can thinking differently lead to creative solutions?
 - Why is it important to explore alternative perspectives?
 - Can you think of any examples where thinking differently helped solve a problem or led to a new invention?
- Introduce the Unusual Object Challenge. Explain that students will be given a series of everyday objects and their task is to brainstorm as many unusual or creative uses for each object within a specified time frame.
- Divide students into pairs or small groups. Distribute the objects among the groups, ensuring that each group has a variety of objects.
- Set a timer for 5-10 minutes (adjust as needed based on the number of objects and group size) and instruct students to brainstorm and write down as many unusual uses for their assigned objects as possible within the given time.
- After the time is up, have each group share their list of unusual uses for their objects. Encourage students to explain their ideas and engage in a class discussion about the different perspectives and creative solutions generated.



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Lesson 2 (Unusual Object Presentations)

- Begin the class by reviewing the Unusual Object Challenge from the previous lesson. Ask students to reflect on the experience and discuss the benefits and challenges they encountered while thinking differently.
- Instruct students to select one object from the previous lesson's activity and create a short presentation showcasing the unusual uses they brainstormed for that object.
- Allow students time to prepare their presentations, encouraging them to think creatively about how they can demonstrate and explain their ideas effectively.
- Conduct a presentation session where each student or group presents their chosen object and shares their unusual uses. Encourage students to provide visual aids, props, or demonstrations to enhance their presentations.
- After each presentation, open the floor for questions and discussion. Encourage students to ask clarifying questions, offer feedback, and share their own perspectives on the presented uses.

Sample Answers to the Questions:

1. How can thinking differently lead to creative solutions?

- Thinking differently allows us to break free from conventional patterns of thinking and consider new perspectives and approaches.
- It encourages us to challenge existing assumptions and explore unconventional ideas, which can lead to innovative and creative solutions.
- By thinking differently, we can make connections between seemingly unrelated concepts or find unique combinations of ideas that spark creative solutions to problems.

2. Why is it important to explore alternative perspectives?

- Exploring alternative perspectives helps us gain a broader understanding of a topic or situation.
- It allows us to consider different viewpoints, which can lead to more well-rounded and informed decision-making.
- Alternative perspectives often offer fresh insights and new possibilities that we may not have considered before, leading to more creative and innovative solutions.
- By understanding and appreciating alternative perspectives, we can also foster empathy and inclusiveness in our interactions with others.

3. Can you think of any examples where thinking differently helped solve a problem or led to a new invention?

- One example is the invention of the Post-it Note. Spencer Silver, a researcher at 3M, was trying to create a super-strong adhesive, but instead, he accidentally developed a weak adhesive that could be easily removed. Arthur Fry, another 3M employee, thought of a unique use for the adhesive and used it to create the now-famous Post-it Note.
- Another example is the development of the personal computer. Visionaries like Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak thought differently about the potential of computers and aimed to make them accessible to individuals rather than just large institutions. This thinking led to the creation of the Apple computer, which revolutionized the technology industry.
- Alexander Graham Bell's invention of the telephone is another example. His innovative thinking allowed him to explore ways to transmit sound over long distances, leading to the invention of the telephone and revolutionizing communication worldwide.