UNIT 28 NURTURING CREATIVITY

Structure

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28.1 INTRODUCTION

Scene I

An adult says to a five year old child: “Can you name two objects that are round?” The child thinks for a while and then says: “Drum-drum and gong-gong” (“When the snake coils itself and sits.”)

“And the second?”, the adult prompts.

The child thinks again and says: “Bara bangle and pukka pukka” (“When salt forms into small balls.”)

The adult is delighted with the novelty and freshness of the child’s answers, as you must be too.

The same person later asked this question to an adult. The adult repeated incredulously: “Two things that are round?” surprised that one could ask such an elementary question.

“Well”, he replied matter of factly, “Ball and orange.”

Scene II

A preschool educator asks a four-and-a-half year old in her class: “Anirban, did you go to see the Durga Puja celebrations during the holidays?”

Anirban who was playing with some toys nodded.

“Then will you draw what you saw at the fair? Make something so that I can know how it was”, the educator suggested.

Anirban looked at her as if struck with an idea, left the toys and made the painting which is reproduced on the next page.

Some days later Anirban’s mother came to the centre. The educator talked to her about her son’s progress. A little later she said, “Anirban tells me you all celebrated Durga Puja?”

“Oh yes! We had a lovely time!” the mother replied.

“Would you like to draw or paint what you saw. It will be interesting, if you were to do so”, the educator suggested.

The mother immediately replied: “Me! Draw! No, I have no sense of proportion or balance! I am quite hopeless at these things, you know!”
The educator reassured her: “Oh, no! I am not going to evaluate what you make. Just draw whatever you saw. Just let your feelings show. Draw as a child would!”

The mother thought for a while and it seemed she would agree. But finally she said: “No! I am sorry, I can’t draw at all!”

Anirban
4½ years

Anirban’s depiction of Durga Puja celebrations. He has shown the goddess piercing her lance through the demon. In her many hands are different weapons. The colour of the painting held in the original is not visible here. The demon was painted in black.
What do these anecdotes reflect? Do they say something about the differences in attitudes of children and adults? Do they indicate something about their personality? Reflect upon them and write your thoughts in the space provided below. We will refer to these anecdotes again later in the Unit.

Objectives

After studying this Unit, you should be able to

- understand the meaning of the term “creativity” and state some definitions
- explain how the caregiver can nurture creativity in young children
- create a setting in the home or the preschool that enables creative expression

28.2 WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

Creativity is a word that often comes up in our conversations. We talk of a certain person being creative, a painting or an essay being more creative as compared to others or a musician whose originality seems to know no bounds. Perhaps you have made or heard statements like: “She is innovative”, “He does things differently! There is a freshness, a newness about his lectures not often encountered” or “That’s a good idea! I didn’t think it could be done like this, that there was another way.” In each of these sentences one is referring to something or someone who is creative.

But what is it exactly that we mean by the word “creative” or “creativity”? Very simply, “to create” means “to bring into being”. But then is it the quality of the thing produced that is important or the process of being creative or both? What are the bases on which you would call something or somebody creative? And then, are people born creative? Is creativity inherited or is it something about one’s personality that makes one creative? Is there something in the social environment that nurtures creativity? Can only the genius be creative? Are children creative? Do you think that you are creative? As you reflect upon the answers to these questions, think also about the reasons for your answers. Note down the points that come to your mind, in the space provided below.
After you have done this, read some of the definitions of creativity discussed below, which will give you a better understanding.

28.2.1 Some Definitions

No other concept in psychological literature has been so difficult to define as creativity. There are more than 60 definitions of this word. People do not agree with each other as to what they mean by “creativity”.

Let us begin with the dictionary meaning. The Webster dictionary defines “to create” as “to produce as a work of thought or imagination” or “to bring into being”. Creativity involves imagination and fantasy.

What do experts in education have to say? In one set of definitions, the emphasis is on the process of creative thinking. Creativity, according to these experts, is the recombination of ideas or restructuring of ideas which leads to a new thought, a new output or a new product. The stress here is on combining ideas in various unique ways.

In another set of definitions, the emphasis is on the product or the outcome or the result of creative thought. The end product is evaluated to judge whether something or someone is creative. One of the definitions of this class is as follows: “Creativity is that process which results in a novel work that is accepted as useful or satisfying by a group at some point in time.”

Another definition which belongs to this class is as follows: “Any process by which something new is produced—an idea or an object.” This new product may be a new song created by a composer, a painting or a recipe for soup.

In yet another set of definitions, the major emphasis is on self-expression. It is believed that “Everyone has a need to express himself or herself in a way which is unique to him or her and so any such expression is creative.” Thus when a person thinks about new areas and in new ways without being influenced by past practices, the person is being creative. The emphasis here is on the process of creative thought—of thinking originally, of breaking away from set and traditional ideas or thought.

Another group of experts have related creativity to problem solving. They state that creativity is being able to think of different solutions; of being able to move mentally in different directions when coming upon a problem. The problem may vary from deciding what to cook for dinner with very few resources to discovering the structure of the cell. Problem solving often involves breaking away from conventional ideas, since questions are not always answered in the same way as in the past.

You would have noticed that the first set of definitions and the last two set of definitions have much in common. They all emphasize the process of creative thinking.

While the emphasis of the four types of definitions vary, they refer to the same thing. Let us look once again at the definitions which stress the process of creative thought. These, as you know, emphasize thinking in innovative ways. When this happens, something new and original will be produced. Similarly, a new and different product, which is the emphasis of one type of definitions, will not be made unless one thinks afresh.

What do we then conclude from this discussion? When we study creativity, we must consider both the process of creative thinking and its product. The definitions quoted above focus on one or the other of these aspects.
Each one of us is a creative person. It seems difficult to believe for if you think of it, there seems very little you have done which you call “creative”. And then there is also this assumption that only the gifted—painters, musicians or scientists—can be creative. And that it requires some special ability to be creative; that one is either born creative or one is not. This is incorrect. One can be creative even when arranging furniture differently to create a harmonious and a pleasant effect. When your child finds the homework difficult and you think of ways it can be made easy and interesting, that is a creative act. When designing a dress or when working in a laboratory, it is possible to be creative.

But creativity needs to be nourished. Disapproval, criticism or domination can destroy it. And this is what does happen to us in the process of growing up. Recall the last time you came up with a new idea or tried out a new dish. How did the people respond? Did they say that it was something foolish or did they support you? How were you affected by their responses? Did their evaluation discourage you or did it make you more sure of putting forth your ideas the next time?

Unfortunately, in many instances both the education system and the family do not encourage creativity. Creativity means being different and there seems to be no place for being different in our system. Right from the primary school to college, teachers are so busy finishing the course that children’s creativity is slowly and gradually eliminated. There is no time for musing. The emphasis is on memorizing information and acquiring as many facts as one can. Parents and teachers think alike. Where getting a job depends on having a degree, being successful in the examination is the most important thing. It is only rarely that we can find a teacher who encourages creative thought and gives time to the child to try out her ideas.

Creative expressions need time to flower and grow. The education system tends to become a race to finish the course work before the examination, prepare for the examination, wait anxiously for the result and then begin all over again. Creativity is not rewarded; it does not have a place in this scheme of things. If creativity has to flourish, the social environment must be conducive to it.

And then is it not ironical that once having snuffed out creativity in the child, we seek to develop it in adults, as is evident from the numerous books available in the market titled: “How to Enhance your Creative Power”, “Building a Creative Environment” and “Creativity and Management”? And then when it becomes difficult to do so, for it has been buried under layers of disapproval, discouragement and criticism, we say that only the gifted are creative.

It is in this context that we quoted the two scenes at the beginning of the Unit. The five year old child goes beyond what is evident. She is naturally creative. Her answer is unusual. Being able to think of the uncommon is one aspect of creativity. In contrast, the adult’s reply is stereotyped.

In the second description, again note how difficult the adult finds it to express herself and how spontaneous the child is. The adult is concerned about evaluation, about how others will perceive what she has drawn, and as a result, is unable to express, even very simply, her experience at the fair. The child, who is too young to be self-conscious, expresses himself freely. When one fears evaluation, one cannot be creative.

Each one of us is creative as a child but tend to become less creative as we grow. We need to nurture our creativity and not allow it to get suppressed. It is clear, therefore, that creativity involves some trying.

By the above sentence we mean that one must be willing to be creative. One has to think of new ways of doing things. One must be open to suggestions and ideas and willing to try out experiments. It is only rarely that an idea, completely formed, comes to one’s mind in a flash of insight. Often, an innovative idea requires careful
planning and concentrated thinking, over a period of time. A person who is resistant to a new suggestion is not likely to be creative. Thus the social environment and one's personality interact in the expression of creativity.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Briefly describe, in the space below, what you understand by the term "creativity".

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2) Choose the appropriate words from the brackets and fill in the blanks in the following sentences:

a) When one fears evaluation of what one has produced, it ....................... creativity. (hinders/fosters)

b) Disapproval, criticism and domination can ............... creativity. (nurture/destroy)

c) Creativity involves ............. (thinking in set ways/thinking originally)

d) If one wants to be innovative, then one must .......... (be open to suggestions/resist suggestions)

e) Experimenting and trying out is ............... to the creative process. (essential/not essential)

f) One's creative expressions are influenced by .......... (social environment/one's personality/both the social environment and one's personality).

28.4 CREATIVITY AND THE CHILD

Let us now talk about creativity in relation to the preschool child. How do children express their creativity?

When we talk about creativity with regard to children, the emphasis is on self-expression and not on the end product. Of course, when children are being creative, they will produce something. But their goal is not the finished product. It is the process of expressing themselves that reflects the creative urge. Evaluation of the end product is more appropriate when working with older children and adults.

Preschool children may express their creativity through their dramatic play, in problem solving, or through art and music. You have read about each of these in detail in the earlier Units. Unit 18 and Unit 22 give various instances of children’s creative problem solving. In Units 26 and 27 of this Block, you have read about art and music activities for young children.
In this Unit let us study the immediate environment that promotes children’s creative expression. Some general principles, which if you keep in mind during your interactions with children will enable you to nurture their creativity, are now suggested.

1) Make children feel creative

The social environment of children will determine, to a large extent, whether they will be creative or not. As you know, one of the first conditions for creativity to flourish is a willingness to try out new things, an attitude which can be summed up by the following words—“Let’s try it out!”, “Why not?” Children have this openness, but we adults seem to have lost it somewhere on the road to adulthood! You, as a preschool worker and as a parent, must revive this approach in yourself. Be open to children’s suggestions about doing something different and venture with them as they explore their play material. Such an attitude will tell them that it is all right to try out something new, to experiment. Sometimes you may need to encourage children to explore and think for themselves if they seem hesitant to do so.

Keep the level of anxiety low. When the children are in an environment that is comfortable and predictable, where they know what is expected of them, they feel secure and have the energy to be innovative and original. Instead, if the atmosphere is tense, then their whole concern is with a feeling of security. In such a setting, creativity takes a back seat. This is something which you too must have experienced at your work place or in your home. You are creative when you are relaxed, contented and happy.

If you wish to generate a creative climate for children, you must be prepared to live with a little bit of disorder. When children are drawing, painting, making items with clay, or playing games using blocks and other such materials, there is bound to be some disorder. Paint may be dropped on the floor or on clothes or the blocks may lie scattered about. Insisting that the children and the play room remain neat and the play materials be kept in order at all times, can interfere with self-expression. Once the children have finished playing, you can involve them in cleaning up.

Give children time to complete what they are doing. While you need to make a time table for the activities for the day, do not stick rigidly to it. If the children are involved in painting or working with clay, then do not change the activity simply because your time table indicates it. You will read more about scheduling activities in Unit 30.

And finally, a general air of approval concerning children in the home or in the preschool, sets a tone in which children can be creative.

It would be useful at this stage for you to see how far these aspects are reflected in your home or preschool centre. Are you flexible when you are with children or do you expect children to conform strictly to rules? Are you rigid and fussy about keeping things in order? Do children seek you out to participate in their play? How do you think you can change, for the better, the climate of your home or the centre?

It is easy to describe the environment in the home or the preschool centre which helps in nurturing children’s imagination, fantasy and creativity. In such a place, children are happy, enthusiastic and eager to explore and the adults are warm, relaxed and friendly.
As we have said earlier, children do not often draw or paint or sing with the sole aim of producing something. When they begin to paint, for example, they rarely have a particular theme or an object in mind. They are interested in experimenting with colours and as they do so, some design is formed. It is the freedom of choosing their colours and mixing them as they like, that makes the activity enjoyable. This is the beginning of creative self-expression and must be nurtured.

Similarly, when preschoolers enact roles in a pretend game, they do not have a planned content in mind. This evolves as they play. If you were to observe their fantasy play for some time, you would see how their dialogues change as they think of something different. They derive pleasure out of the process of enacting and imagining rather than from playing their parts to perfection.

Therefore, do not be critical or judgemental about what children say or do. Rather, respond encouragingly to what they show you and appreciate it. Children's drawings or models or stories are not likely to correspond to adult standards. But that is not important since their intention is not to capture the real world. It does not matter if the apple the child has painted is purple in colour.

You may have seen educators and parents make a drawing of a house or a vegetable or a fruit and then ask the child to copy it. They believe that drawings must be correct representations of reality and since the child cannot do so on her own, she has to be taught to draw. But from the child's angle there is no fun in copying from a model made by adults. Copies are neither spontaneous nor original and you know that originality and spontaneity are essential aspects of creativity.

Given below is an interesting representation by a four-and-a-half year old.
To most adults it will appear that the child has drawn a huge circle and a line. When the preschool educator asked the child what he had drawn, he replied: “यह संप है,” (“This is a snake”, pointing to the line) “और यह है हाथी का मोटा पेट !” (“And this is the elephant’s fat stomach,” pointing to the circle). The child had drawn what he had found significant.

Repeated criticisms of children’s work can take away the fun of making anything and leave them with a negative opinion about themselves. They may be forced to conclude “I can’t sing” or “I can’t paint”, much like the adult mentioned at the start of the chapter.

3) Do not reward children for an activity which they like to do in the first place, in the absence of the reward

Do you remember what a “reward” is? You read about this in Block 4, Unit 20.

Children as well as adults will be most creative when they participate in an activity in which they find interest, enjoyment, satisfaction and challenge. To put it in other words, they will be most creative when they are motivated from within.

Children, like adults, will be most creative when they participate in an activity because of external pressures, i.e., when they are motivated from the outside. To put it differently, motivation from outside means that a person engages in an activity to achieve a goal, i.e., the person does that activity for some objective or reward. The reward may be money, praise or promise of future gains.

It has often been found that when children initially show a high level of interest and motivation in a task, and subsequently they are rewarded for the activity, they lose interest and their creativity goes down. Therefore, when you find that children find activities pleasurable, in the absence of any reward, do not begin to reward them for it. Maintain a delicate balance between praising the children and not diminishing their desire for the task.

4) Encourage children to make choices

You have just read that for children to be creative they must desire to do the task, rather than have it thrust upon them. Asking children to choose what they want to do helps them to understand that they are not being forced to do something. Encourage children to make choices about their play activities and the play materials they would like to use. For example, instead of telling children that they must draw, you can give them a choice between drawing, painting, making a collage or making models with clay. They are all activities that allow self-expression. Similarly, rather than putting out three colours for painting, ask children to choose the colours they want.

Providing a choice also provides variety and this is important since different activities appeal to different children.

5) Offer support when needed, but interfere as little as possible

Children will often come to you to show you what they have made: “How is it?” “It is good, isn’t it?”, they may say. What they are asking for is your approval. At such times encourage and appreciate them. Never criticize their effort. A child took his clay model to show to the educator, who asked him: “What have you made?” The child responded proudly: “A man.” The ‘man’ was a longish roll of clay. The teacher frowned and said: “This does not look like a man. Where are the arms and legs?” Saying this, she took the model from the child and reshaped it. “Here, take this. Now make one like it,” she said.

Watching the teacher change his clay sculpture, the child lost interest. He put the teacher’s clay model away and went to play outside. The teacher had clearly dampened his enthusiasm. If the teacher had drawn the child’s attention to his model by saying: “Would you like to add the arms and legs?”, she would have channelized
the child's thinking in that direction without curbing his enthusiasm. There is a
difference between suggesting and imposing one's ideas.

Children may need help with the play materials. A child, who took to working with
clay with great interest, was about to give it up, since the clay was too hard to be
made into anything. The educator, seeing the child struggle, softened the clay by
adding some water.

6) Schedule some activities each day that allow self-expression and make these
activities as creative as possible

When formulating the curriculum and making the schedule of activities for the day,
you must be careful to see that you have provided enough activities that will foster
the child's creativity. Most activities, for example, painting, dancing, working with
clay, collage, movement activities, story telling and dramatization can be creative or
restrictive, depending upon how you organize the activity. The more freedom an
activity allows a child, the more opportunity it gives for being creative. Stated in
another way, activities that require the least amount of control and instruction by the
teacher are the ones which have the greatest potential for creative self-expression.
For example, while painting if you give the child complete freedom in deciding what
she wants to paint, the variation she wants to use and in choosing the colours, tools
and surface, then the activity has immense scope for creativity. If you ask the child to
use only certain colours while painting or you ask her to paint a certain theme or you
ask her to blow paint or finger paint, then you are limiting the child's freedom to do
as she wants. However, within these confines the child still has considerable leeway
to be creative. This type of activity is important to help the children understand that
there are many variations in painting. But having introduced them to these methods,
the latter sessions of painting should allow them to choose what and how they want
to paint.

What happens in many preschools is completely different. The child is asked to
colour a drawing made by the teacher or copy a drawing from the board. This is least
creative. The child has no freedom at all. Often, she does not even have the freedom
to choose the colours as the teachers or the parents insist that the drawing be
realistic and, therefore, only specific colours have to be used.

In Table 28.1, we have categorized activities according to their potential for creative
self-expression.

You would notice that the activities in Column I do not require much instruction
from the educator. These should be offered over and over again. They have the most
creative potential. Of course, the educator will need to guide the children as to how
to use the play material.

Activities in Column II require more instruction, at least initially, by the teacher.
They tend to have a definite focus and directions and restrict, to some extent, the
expression of ideas. However, despite this there is considerable opportunity for the
children to express their ideas. For example, before the festival of Diwali, suggesting
to children to make Diwali cards may put a limit as to what they can draw but, at the
same time, it also helps to make something relevant to the situation.

There are some people who would say that the activities in Column III are
"creative". Here there is a confusion between creativity and merely making
something. When the teacher makes a model of a house from scrap, she is being
creative, but not the children who are asked to copy. The activities mentioned in
Column III are, in this sense, the least creative.

In some cases you might find that it is better to begin with Column II activities so
that children understand how to use the play material and then go on to Column I
activities. For example, children will need some guidance in handling puppets and,
therefore, if you carry out an activity like the one described in Column II, it will give
some idea to children as to how they can play with the puppets. Subsequently, you
can encourage children to handle puppets as described in Column I.
Table 28.1: Creative Potential of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(I) Good Potential</th>
<th>(II) Moderate Potential</th>
<th>(III) Limited Potential</th>
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**Painting and Drawing**

The child uses the materials as she wishes, so long as she does not come in the way of others. Make available different types of brushes, paints, crayons, pencils, papers so that the child can select as she pleases. Children may use string or straw to do string painting or blow painting.

**Clay work**

Manipulating clay as the child wishes; creating the object the child wants.

**Dancing**

Dancing freely as the feelings or the music suggests. Making as the teacher says. For example: Dance like a bird or move like a monkey, i.e., performing movements with a focus.

**Puppet play**

Children handle puppets as they like. Making up a story with other children and presenting it through puppet play.

**Block play**

Playing with blocks that are available—blocks of different shapes and sizes are set out for self-selection by the child. Also available are other toys which the child might like to use during block play. Making a model of a ship at teacher's suggestion with no model provided and materials chosen by the child. Playing with toy animals that are of a deliberate set out after a trip to the zoo, to provide focus for play.

**Collage making**

Child chooses from the variety of materials what she wants to make—teacher guides and encourages the child by asking her to think what would look good together.

You have read about many play activities in the earlier Units. You would have thought of some others as well. Think of ways you can make each activity as creative as possible for children.
You would have understood by now that the kind of play materials that will encourage creativity are those that are unstructured, i.e., ones that can be manipulated in several different ways and put to several uses. We also call such type of play materials "open ended". Clay, blocks, paints, beads, old clothes, leaves, twigs and pebbles are some examples. Each child can use it in a way in which she wants to use it. In contrast, story books, jigsaw puzzles, alphabet and number blocks, graded blocks for seriation and counting frames are structured play materials, since they have specific uses.

You must provide children with sufficient play materials. Children's self-expression must not be restricted because of a lack of play materials. Fortunately, the type of play materials children need for self-expressive activities is inexpensive and easily available around you. In Unit 25 you would have listed some materials for dramatic play as a part of the Check Your Progress Exercise. The Unit on Art has also described ways by which you can obtain low cost materials for painting, drawing, clay and collage activities. Some more suggestions regarding play materials follow. You can make use of:

1) Old ribbons
2) Leather, suede and cloth scraps—from tailor's shop or factories or stores
3) Package boxes—from stores or from your house
4) Packing material like thermocol, plastic sheets, spongy material—from package boxes from stores or your house
Play Activities for Preschoolers-2

5) Bark, seeds, dry flowers, leaves, cones, dried fruit
6) Drift wood, sea shells, sand from the beach for collage
7) Icecream sticks—can be collected by each child whenever they eat an ice cream
8) Plastic wire
9) Empty ribbon rolls or empty spools from tailor’s shops
10) Old greeting cards
11) Computer paper—some computer places have reams of printouts used on one side, which is to be thrown away
12) Wood shavings, small wooden blocks from construction sites or carpenter’s shop
13) Egg shells—dried, crushed and dyed for collage
14) Corks of bottles—useful for collage and science experiments

With this Unit we conclude the description of play activities for preschoolers. We hope that the Units of Block 5 and Block 6 would have given you numerous ideas about planning and conducting play activities with children. When you meet the other learners at the Study Centre, discuss your ideas with them. In the next Block, we will discuss how to go about setting up a child care centre.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Read the following conversation between two friends. What would you say if you were in Ashok’s place? Write in the space provided below.

Lakshmi is the mother of four-and-a-half year old Ramu. One day she visits her relative, Ashok, who runs a preschool centre. At the time of the visit, Ashok was displaying children’s drawings on the walls of the room. After greeting each other, Lakshmi remarked: “Oh! What beautiful drawings these children have made. My child does not draw well at all. Tell me what should I do?”

Ashok: “May be he does not enjoy drawing. Do not force him to. Have you tried giving him paints or clay? He might like to make something with them.”

Lakshmi: “Oh, I have tried that as well! All he makes is some lines and circles and some figures which don’t look like the real thing. I make a scenery or some figures for him to copy, but he just does not show an interest in them. Once I gave him clay, all he did was to make it into round balls!

And another thing Ashok. He knows so many rhymes but when I tell him to sing when some guests have come, he forgets the words or sings out of tune. Tell me what to do!”

...
2) State whether the following sentences are correct or incorrect. Correct the incorrect sentences.

a) If you wish to generate a creative climate in your home or preschool, you should be open to children's suggestions.

b) When children are anxious and tense, they will be innovative and original.

c) You must give children enough time to complete an activity.

d) You must not be critical about what children do and make. Rather respond encouragingly to what they show you.

e) People are creative when they participate in an activity because of external pressures.

f) Children must be encouraged to make choices regarding the activities they want to participate in.

3) Collect two or three types of open ended play materials like blocks, beads, leaves and twigs or shells. Identify four or five preschoolers in your family or neighbourhood with whom you are familiar and give them these materials to play with. You will find that each child uses the play material differently. Note down in the space below, how each child plays with them.

28.6 SUMMING UP

In this Unit we have talked about what is creativity and how the caregiver can nurture creativity in young children.

Definitions of creativity vary. Some emphasize the process of creative thinking while others stress the outcome or the product of creative thought. We can say that creativity involves thinking originally, recombining ideas in new ways and breaking away from set ways of thinking and behaviour. This process often leads to the production of some novel work, idea or object.

Creativity needs a conducive social environment to flourish. Disapproval, criticism and domination can easily destroy it. An individual's personality also determines how innovative he or she will be. People who are unwilling to experiment and to think afresh and who are resistant to suggestions are not likely to be creative.

Each one of us is creative as a child but our originality gets destroyed in the process of growing up. Some of it is the result of our education system and the family. Therefore, as caregivers it is important that we nourish children's creativity.

Provide a climate in the house or the preschool that encourages children to be creative. Experiment and try out with them. Encourage them to make choices. Do not be critical of their work; rather appreciate what they make, since for them the process of making is more enjoyable than producing something to perfection. Do not
reward them for something which they enjoy doing in the first place, in the absence of the reward. Think of ways you can make activities creative. Help children when they need it but do not impose your ideas on them. Keep a collection of unstructured play materials in the home or the centre. These can be used in different ways by each child and they encourage creative expression.

28.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1) Creativity involves thinking in new and original ways, breaking away from traditional patterns of thinking. It involves a recombination of ideas to produce a new product, which may be a new idea or an object.

2) (a) hinders (b) destroy (c) thinking originally (d) be open to suggestions (e) essential (f) both the social environment and one's personality

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1) Your answer should include the following aspects:

— Lakshmi should give freedom to her child to draw, paint or sing as he wants.
— Self-expression is more important than the thing which is created; it does not matter if the child sings out of tune.
— Lakshmi should appreciate what the child makes.
— Lakshmi should not ask the child to copy what she makes.

2) a) Correct
b) Incorrect. Children express their creativity when they are happy and relaxed.

c) Correct
d) Correct
e) Incorrect. People are creative when they participate in activities because of interest, enjoyment and challenge.
f) Correct