

MISSING LETTER CHALLENGE

A demonstration of Knowledge Constraints

PREPARE

Gather letters. They can be Scrabble tiles, letter blocks, or cut-out paper.

Ensure the letter “T” is removed from the pile.



PROCEDURE

- Divide students into Group A and Group B. Each group can have smaller groups to put students in groups of 4ish.
- Send Group A into the hall or out of the room.
- Challenge Group B to spell these four words, one at a time, as quickly as possible: Wild, Game, Fair, Tame. Time them and keep track of the time for each.
- When Group B gets to *Tame*, don't give hints. They may arrange other letters in the shape of a “T” to get the word, or they may give up. Either are acceptable.
- Switch groups, and have Group A repeat the challenge with this key change: *Tame* is now the first word. Have group B watch silently.
- Nearly every time, without the experience of writing the first three words, Group A will arrange letter tiles in the shape of a “T” much more quickly than Group B.



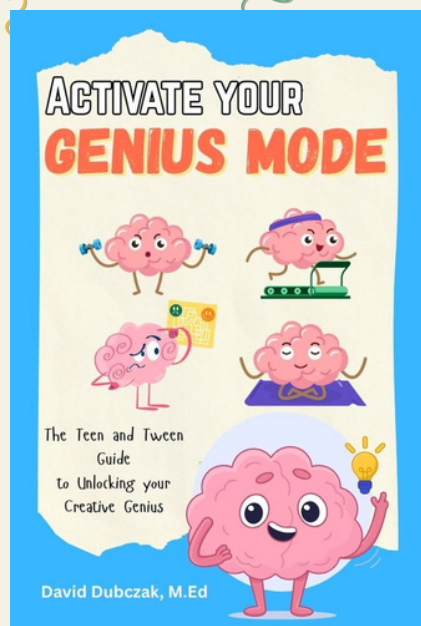
GENIUS MODE CONNECTIONS

A **knowledge constraint** is when your existing knowledge on a topic prevents you from seeing the topic any other way. When Group B spelled the first three words, we created a knowledge constraint on how to play the game. When Group A was asked to spell *Tame* first, they were unconstrained by previous experience, and much more quickly ideated alternative ways of completing the challenge.

Students encounter these barriers to creative thinking when they:

- Are **shown examples** of previous or exemplary work,
- Are asked to **revise drafts** of previous work,
- Are asked to **innovate or create** unique work,
- Perform group brainstorming **before** individual creation.

Activate your Genius Mode discusses knowledge constraints in more detail, and gives teachers and students a variety of ways to recognize and overcome them.



Reviews Say:

Empowering, Entertaining, and Perfectly Designed for Tweens & Teens! "Activate Your Genius Mode is a creative powerhouse of a book that speaks directly to young minds in a way that's equal parts hilarious, encouraging, and deeply practical."

YOU NEED THIS BOOK! I feel this book will enable me to explain and get them to not be so afraid of giving a "dumb" answer... I loved this book and can NOT wait to use it in my classroom in just a few weeks!!"

John Hattie's research of educational practices shows **Creativity Programs** and **Problem-Solving Programs** can increase learning by more than one year per academic school year! Perfect for a method that can be applied to any subject.

Is smart something you're born with?

Genius isn't a birthright. It's a habit you can train.

Activate Your Genius Mode shows teens and tweens (and the adults who guide them) how to turn creativity from something you wait for into something you can **do on demand**. Drawing on brain science and proven psychology, this fast, practical guide teaches the three core skills every creative thinker masters:

- Divergent thinking to generate bold options
- Convergent thinking to choose the best ones
- Planning to turn ideas into real results

Inside you'll find:

- A **30-day Creativity Bootcamp** with bite-sized daily reps
- The **Creative Problem-Solving (CPS) process**, used by psychologists and innovators to get reliable ideas fast
- **Activities, worksheets, and stories** that make the science stick—and the practice fun
- Additional online free resources only for those who purchase the book, including printables, videos, lesson plans, and more.

You'll walk away able to beat blocks, make better decisions, and ship your best ideas—whether you're a student, teacher, parent, or professional problem-solver.

Creativity isn't something you're born with. It's something you build.

Open the book. Flip the switch. Activate your genius mode.

Buy at www.DavidDWriter.com/GeniusMode