

Why Are Some People More Creative Than Others?

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Creativity is often defined as the ability to come up with new and useful ideas. Like intelligence, it can be considered a trait that everyone—not just creative “geniuses” like Picasso and Steve Jobs—possesses in some capacity.

It’s not just your ability to draw a picture or design a product. We all need to think creatively in our daily lives, whether it’s figuring out how to make dinner using leftovers or fashioning a Halloween costume out of clothes in your closet. Creative tasks range from what researchers call [“little-c” creativity](#) – making a website, crafting a birthday present or coming up with a funny joke—to [“Big-C” creativity](#): writing a speech, composing a poem or designing a scientific experiment.

Psychology and neuroscience researchers have started to identify thinking processes and brain regions involved with creativity. Recent evidence suggests that creativity involves [a complex interplay between spontaneous and controlled thinking](#) – the ability to both spontaneously brainstorm ideas and deliberately evaluate them to determine whether they’ll actually work.

Despite this progress, the answer to one question has remained particularly elusive: What makes some people more creative than others?