

What is Creativity?

Min 2 pages (60 points)

Part 1:

Look at the list in the following attachment of characteristics of creativity: 1-5, number 1 being *Associating*

I am adding one more: *Taking Risks*.

Part 2:

- a. Choose two of those on the list: how you feel they factor into why that might make someone an artist.
- b. Read the article below

Part 3: Then:

Explain how your two choices apply to the picture below by Romare Bearden

Creativity also has the potential to influence future thought or action and is vital to most walks of life. In 2010, the IBM corporation interviewed 1,500 chief executive officers (CEOs) from 60 countries, asking them what was the most important leadership skill for the successful businesses of the future. Their answer was not economic knowledge, management skills, integrity, or personal discipline, but creativity.

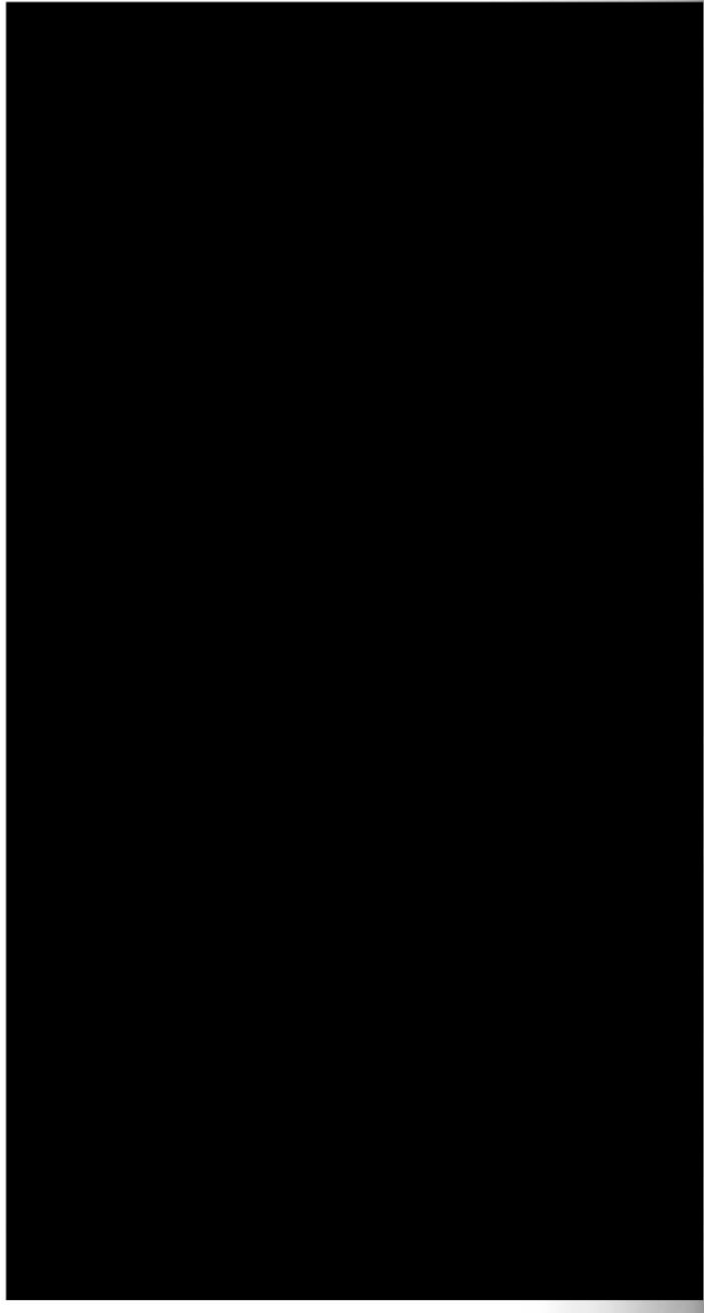
While studying creative people in several disciplines, the authors of the 2011 book *Innovator's DNA*⁴ found five traits that seem to define creativity:

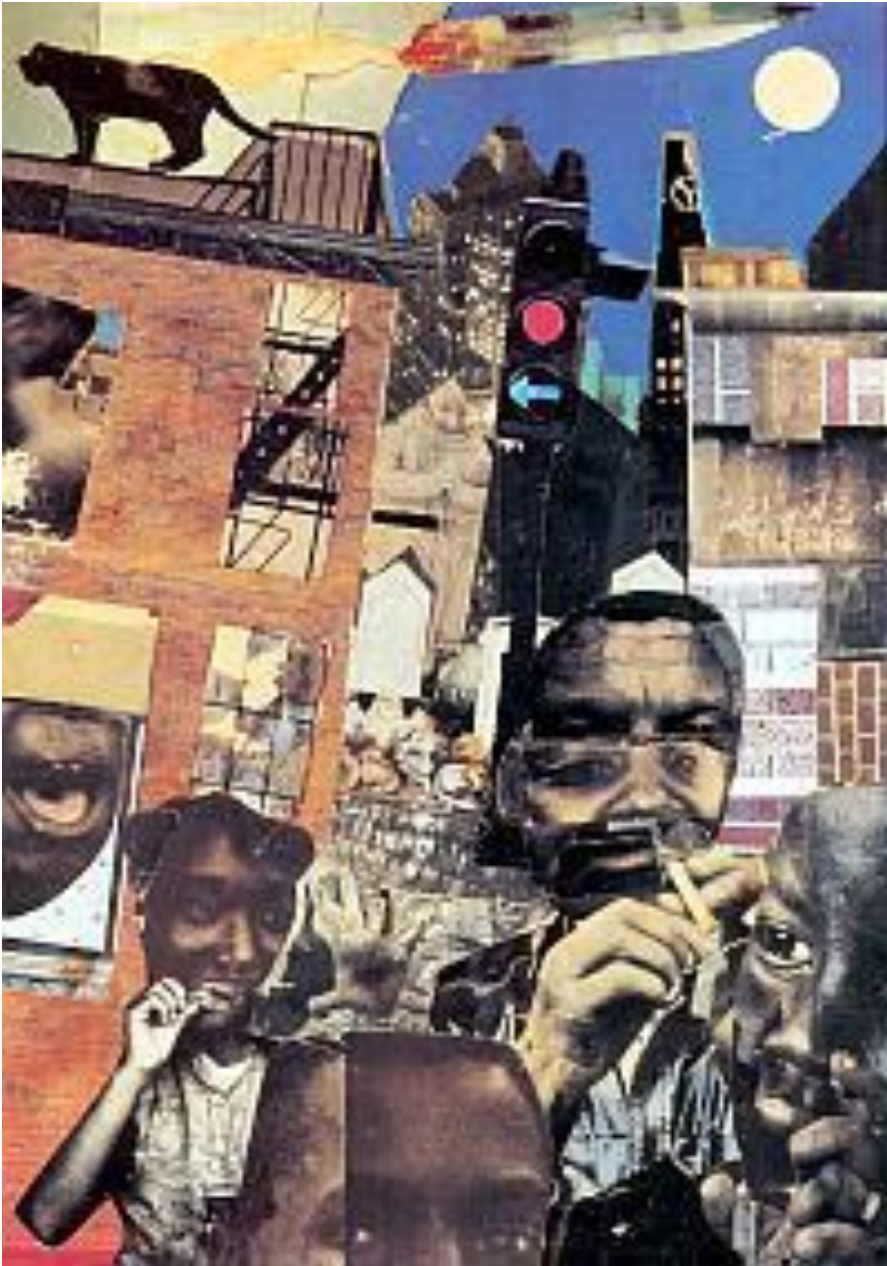
1. Associating. The ability to make connections across seemingly unrelated fields.
2. Questioning. Persistently challenging the status quo, asking why things function as they do now, and how or why they might be changed.
3. Observing. Intently watching the world around, without judgment, in search of new insights or ways of operating.
4. Networking. Being willing to interact with others, and learn from them, even if their views are radically different or their competencies seem unrelated.
5. Experimenting. Exploring new possibilities by trying them out, building models, and taking them apart for further improvement.

Creativity can be found in most human endeavors, but here we focus on artistic creativity, which can take many forms. A film director places actors and cameras on a stage in order to emphasize a certain aspect of the script. A Hopi potter decorates a water jar by combining traditional designs in new ways. A graphic designer seated at a computer screen arranges a composition of type, images, and colors in order to help get his or her message across. A carver in Japan fashions wood into a Buddha that will aid in meditation at a monastery. Most of us have at some time arranged images on our walls or composed a picture for a camera. All of these actions involve visual creativity, the use of imagery to communicate beyond what mere words can say.

He Got Game (**fig. 1.2**) is a good example of visual creativity using simple means. Contemporary South African artist Robin Rhode drew a basketball hoop on the asphalt surface of a street, and then photographed himself lying down in 12 positions as if he were

flipping through the air performing an impossible slam dunk. The artist here imitates the slow-motion and stop-motion photography often seen in sports television to create a piece with transcendent dramatic flair. The work cleverly uses low-tech chalk drawing and a slangy title to celebrate the cheeky boastfulness of street culture. As it clearly shows, creativity is an attitude; one that is as fundamental to experiencing and appreciating a work of art as it is to making one. Insightful seeing is itself a creative act; it requires open receptivity—putting aside habitual modes of thought—and a willingness to stretch the mind.





Rocket to The Moon

Rocket to the Moon (1971) is a serious intervention by Romare Bearden into the visual life of technology. His juxtaposition not only suspends and grafts seemingly disparate lived experiences, but he also effectively draws out lines of criticism with his sharp blade. Here, we are invited to meditate on two simultaneous movements: space travel and the makings of the urban ghetto. The technological advancements and cold war political campaigns that are represented in what is called the "space

race" also index a disproportion in government funding and a literal kind of white flight. This linkage between the extraterrestrial frontier and another kind of highness seem to suggest a that there is escape-hatch or momentary relief to be found in the joint. But such a flight is met with a red light and sharp left into a unsteady structure filled with screams and moans that are nevertheless drowned out by the rockets roar. (If only we can make sense of the black panther watching over the scene.) Still, there is much to ask: where is technological progress articulated? How do we take seriously the relationship between technology and black culture, especially when images such as this suggest that there was already something black about space travel well before Arnaldo Tamayo Méndez and Guoin Stewart Bluford, Jr. arrived on the scene? And lastly, how does the gravity of this scene—the push and pull of poverty and national pride—augment the social work of technology? These are just provisional questions, of course.