Five years ago, when I taught art at a school in Seattle, I used Tinkertoys as a test at the beginning of a term to find out something about my students. I put a small set of Tinkertoys in front of each student, and said:”Make something out of the Tinkertoys. You have 45 minutes today - and 45minutes each day for the rest of the week.”

A few students hesitated to start. They waited to see the rest of the class would do. Several others checked the instructions and made something according to one of the model plans provided. Another group built something out of their own imaginations.

O学科网(www.zxxk.com)--教育资源门户，提供试卷、教案、课件、论文、素材及各类教学资源下载，还有大量而丰富的教学相关资讯！nce I had a boy who worked experimentally with Tinkertoys in his free time. His constructions filled a shelf in the art classroom and a good part of his bedroom at home. I was delighted at the presence of such a student. Here was an exceptionally creative mind at work. His presence meant that I had an unexpected teaching assistant in class whose creativity would infect(感染) other students.

Encouraging this kind of thinking has a downside. I ran the risk of losing those students who had a different style of thin学科网(www.zxxk.com)--教育资源门户，提供试卷、教案、课件、论文、素材及各类教学资源下载，还有大量而丰富的教学相关资讯！king. Without fail one would declare, ”But I’m just not creative.”

“Do you dream at night when you’re asleep?”[来源:学#科#网Z#X#X#K]

“Oh, sure.”

“So tell me one of your most interesting dreams.” The student would tell something wildly imaginative. Flying in the sky or in a time machine or growing three heads. “That’s pretty creative. Who does that for you?”

“Nobody. I do it.”

“Really-at night, when you’re asleep?”

“Sure.”

“Try doing it in the daytime, in class, okay?”