

Umbrella Girl Creativity Exercise

by Chazda Albright -

<http://greatstorybook.com/wednesdays-inspiration-3/>

The success of this particular type of writing exercise is something I never would have thought to do. It happened completely by accident. I was at the local library reading a storybook to the kids. Afterward, I guided the kids through a craft project that was inspired by the story. Sometimes, moms stay and help their child finish the project. When they do, they inevitably have a really great time with it.

But one time in particular, there was a woman who came with her daughter and the girl didn't want any help at all. She wanted to do it all herself. While the mother didn't say anything, I could see very plainly that she really didn't know what to do with herself. So I told her that it would be great if she could color in a drawing for me because she would probably have some techniques the kids could learn from her.

She was skeptical at first, but didn't want to be a pain in my side and obliged - primarily to be polite. Every once in a while I would glance over at her. I could see that as she colored the page, she got more immersed in what she was doing and the rest of the world around her was falling away. Her face became more peaceful as she did it. It was an incredible thing to see.

She did some great things with the drawing and the children were quite impressed and started implementing her techniques into their own projects, which were 3-dimensional but could be decorated in any way they wanted. The woman told me that she had a great time, and that she hadn't colored since she was a little girl.

What struck me about all this was her transformation, so I decided to try it as a creative exercise - to see if it would work to get me going again when I felt dried-up and too tired to do anything creative. Well, it worked. I tried it again when I felt flattened and it worked again.

I've since asked other writers and students of mine to try this out as a warm-up before writing - to do it when they feel especially useless as writers. It has worked fantastically well for all of them. **I know it sounds silly, but you've got to just try it out... at least once!**

Here it is:

This is a coloring-page writing exercise. It's soothing somehow; especially for office workers, it can be therapeutic. This is really important in being creative: to first be relaxed and have an open mind.

Find your calm.

1. Print this image. (It is a drawing from me.) You can either copy-&-paste the image into a document, or click the link to download it as a pdf.

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2. Color it! You can use pens, pencils, crayons, watercolor - whatever you wish. Use glitter! Anything goes. Paste fabric to the page if you are so inspired.

3. Write a poem, a song or a short story about it.

4. Tell me how you did. If you like, share it with me. I would love to see.
