

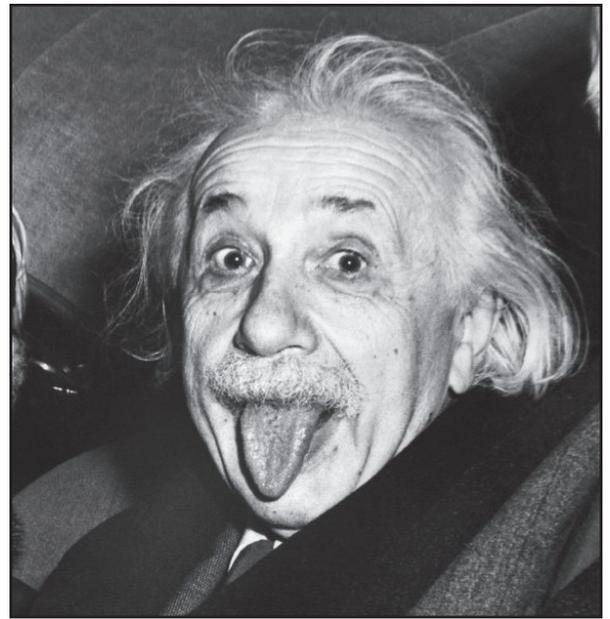
Academic Scholar's Saturday Programme - Autumn Term '16

WHAT IS THE VALUE OF ALTERNATIVE THINKING?

This week Mr Payne presented the assembled group of scholars with the idea of 'creative thinking'. But what does it *really* mean? How can we apply it in our everyday lives? He left us hanging with a seemingly simple and practical conundrum: 'Can you cut a hole in this A4 paper so that, by the end of this talk, it is big enough for a human to fit through?'

Creative thinking, by definition, is the process by which individuals come up with new ideas or new approaches. This is constant self-reinvention - which is a fantastically developmental theory, but how can this be kept in mind during adversity? It is often easy to sail the same seas of thought, to continue with the 'norm', but that isn't always the most successful route to adopt. Thinking creatively essentially means to dare to be different. Above all, the message of the talk was to not just think in straight lines.

Albert Einstein, one of Mr Payne's self-declared heroes, is often used for self-motivation purposes and for perseverance role-modelling, both because of his fame and undeniable success, but also due to his ability to think less traditionally.



Like all of us, Einstein faced challenges, disappointments, and failures, but used creative thinking and a strong, positive mindset to achieve his ends. He was a scientific genius yet considered himself a poor mathematician, which bodes well for the rest of us more humble Mathematicians!

Einstein was driven by his end goals, and so used creative thinking to challenge himself and his thoughts and he pursued each of his ideas with determination. He was always thinking about his own thinking, and was so successful because he challenged himself, persevered and, if met with a brick wall, chipped a door through it.

What I learned from today's talk was that creative thinking is, in essence, seeing what others see but having the confidence to think what no one else has thought. Mr Payne's simple paper activity (which was completed successfully by some in the audience) taught us to think outside of the box, and to think of different ways of cutting, in this case, the paper to solve the problem. Why not give it a go? Try cutting your own path. After all, as Albert Einstein said: "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them".

Nina Porter, Year 12 IB Scholar

