Defining the Creative Process

**1: First Insight** Seek and/or discover problems that need solving. (This will be in the form of Quests, assigned or self-directed. One of us will be defining a problem in need of a solution.)“The formulation of a problem,” said Albert Einstein, “is often more essential than its solution, which may be merely a matter of mathematical or experimental skill. To raise new questions, new possibilities, to regard old questions from a new angle, requires creative imagination and marks real advances in science.”
*— A. Einstein and I. Infeld / The Evolution of Physics*

**2: Saturation** Gather, sort, and categorize information. (I’ve gotten the ball rolling with [Inspiration](http://maclab.guhsd.net/content/more/inspiration%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank). Don’t underestimate the value of looking at the same imagery dozens of times. That’s what the right brain needs to shift into its pattern recognition, intuitive, problem-solving mode.)The unconscious, though one cannot force it, will not produce new ideas unless it has been painstakingly stuffed full of facts, impressions, concepts, and an endless series of conscious ruminations and attempted solutions. On this we have the testimony of many creative people.
*— Morton Hunt / The Universe Within* It seems, then, to be one of the paradoxes of creativity that in order to think originally, we must familiarize ourselves with the ideas of others.
*— George Kneller, The Art and Science of Creativity*

**3: Incubation** Searching for a solution. Trial and error. Brainstorming. (Here’s where imagination and intuition play their part, *if* you’ve stuck with the process.)It [the right hemisphere] needs exposure to rich and associative patterns, which it tends to grasp as wholes. Programmed instruction is certainly not for the right hemisphere, but I am not sure what is the right method of instruction for our silent half. It is part of the elusiveness of the right hemisphere that we find it easier to say what it is not than what it is.
*— Eran Zaidel / The Elusive Right Hemisphere of the Brain*

**4: Ah-Ha!** The solution suddenly appears. (This is the mysterious moment of clarity, the instantaneous moment of knowing, the [magic moment](http://maclab.guhsd.net/blog/?p=5538" \t "_blank) of the creative process. Few students are diligent enough to experience this. Will you be different? Or will you be yet another [flatliner](http://maclab.guhsd.net/blog/?p=3485" \t "_blank)?) I can remember the very spot in the road, whilst in my carriage, when to my joy the solution occurred to me.
*— The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin*

**5: Verification** Acting on the Ah-Ha moment. Testing your insight. (This is not only following through on your idea, but taking it that [final 10%](http://maclab.guhsd.net/blog/?p=5573" \t "_blank) *after* you think you’re finished, boldly going where few students have gone before. A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the luster and the firmament of bards and sages. Yet he dismisses without notice his thought, because it is his. In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty. Great works of art have no more affecting lesson for us than this. They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good-humored inflexibility than most when the whole cry of voices is on the other side. Else tomorrow a stranger will say with masterly good sense precisely what we have thought and felt all the time, and we shall be forced to take with shame our own opinion from another[.](http://maclab.guhsd.net/content/quests/self-reliance)