# **How Rote Learning Is Affecting Your Child's Creativity**

**Source:**[www.dellaarambh.com](http://www.dellaarambh.com)

Many people believe that one will be able to quickly recall the meaning of the material the more one repeats it. This method of learning is called "rote learning". Anita Acai, a master's of health science education student at McMaster University in Hamilton, says that "there isn't any evidence that memorising makes you any better at learning. It's sort of a quick-fix solution to learning".[[1]](http://www.macleans.ca/education/just-the-facts-heres-why-rote-learning-is-wrong/)

At the opposite end of the spectrum is interactive learning, a technique that encourages a student to engage with the lesson, understand concepts and then apply them to their daily lives. While both learning techniques have their advantages, this article explores the way in which rote learning has been seen to impact creative thinking skills.

### **So how does rote learning affect a child's creative thinking skills?**

Creativity is the ability to come up with new, original, unique solutions to problems or ideas. It makes use of divergent thinking, which is solving problems with many possible solutions, as opposed to convergent thinking, which is solving problems with a single, correct answer. Rote learning, in essence, has been seen to encourage convergent thinking. When used as the sole learning technique it ignores the development of a child's divergent thinking skills, leading to a reduced ability to think creatively.[[2]](https://www.thinkcompany.com/2011/10/divergent-thinking-vs-convergent-thinking/)

At school, most projects and assignments focus on increasing the speed at which the child solves a certain problem. They focus on arriving at the solution quickly, instead of focusing on alternative (and, perhaps, more creative) solutions to the problem.

This is how rote learning implies that there is only one "right" solution to every problem and the focus is always on establishing that answer as quickly as possible. In the long term, this discourages students from exploring the boundaries of possibilities and diminishing their ability to creatively approach every problem and situation.

The other most obvious consequence of rote learning is that it kills a student's interest in a subject. **Drill and Kill** is a phrase educators use to describe teaching and learning methods used to master a set of items. For Example:

1. List of muscles or bones in the body
2. Multiplication Table
3. Periodic Table of Elements

Many educators dismiss drill and kill because it promotes memorization or rote learning, as opposed to deeper, conceptual learning. Moreover, it makes students passive consumers of content, leaving them bored, listless and more importantly unwilling to learn.[[3]](https://teched2010.wikispaces.com/Drill+and+Kill)

While this article briefly delves into the effects of rote learning on creativity, this is but the tip of the iceberg. Rote learning affects the creative thinking of children because of it encourages "knowing" over "understanding", as seen in the video below.

A perception survey shows that nearly 80% of school principals across the country blame rote learning for poor standards of learning.[[4]](https://teched2010.wikispaces.com/Drill+and+Kill) As parents, it is important to counter this by encouraging your child to participate in discussions, take online lessons and learn through interactive means as they prove to be a better alternative to learning by rote.