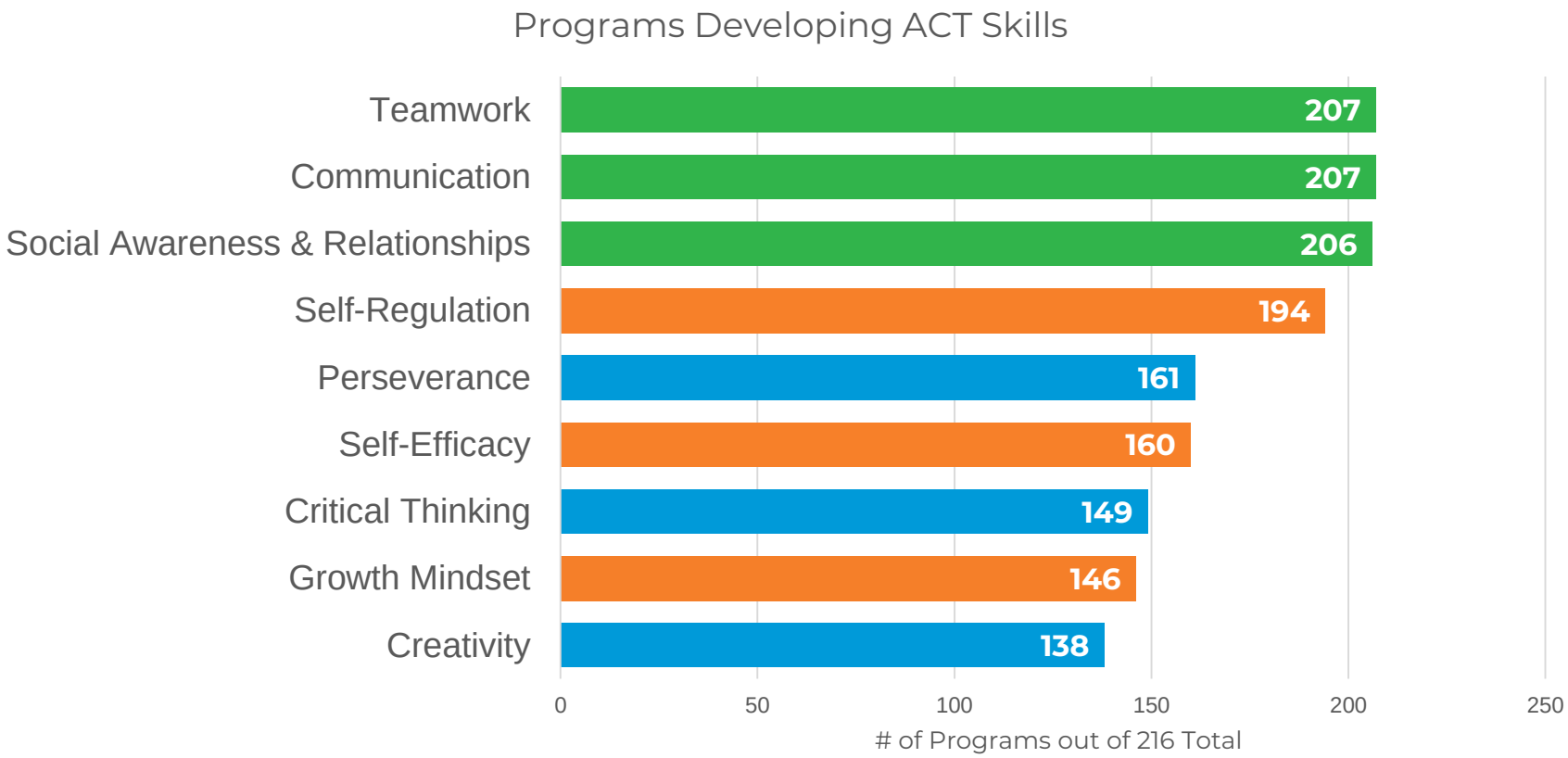
Boston
After School
& Beyond

The ACT Skills: Creativity

The Achieve-Connect-Thrive Skills

Connect Skills are the most widely taught



Representative of 2023-2024 School Year

What is Creativity?

Creativity is exhibiting originality, imagination, inventiveness, or ingenuity.

Research shows that creativity is important for classroom engagement, academic achievement, and workforce preparedness. Young people with strong creativity skills will generate multiple solutions to a problem, show originality, ask questions, and demonstrate curiosity.

Why Creativity?

- Survey by IBM (1,500 CEOs from 60 countries and 33 industries): creativity more important than rigor, management, discipline, integrity, or even vision to navigate an increasingly complex world
  IBM 2010 as quoted in Hadani and Jaeger, 2015

- "The first step in winning the future is encouraging American innovation… What we can do—what America does better than anyone else—is spark the creativity and imagination of our people."
  President Obama, State of the Union Address 2011

- Complex relationship with academic performance. Creativity can encourage engagement in learning.
  Boxx et al, 2013

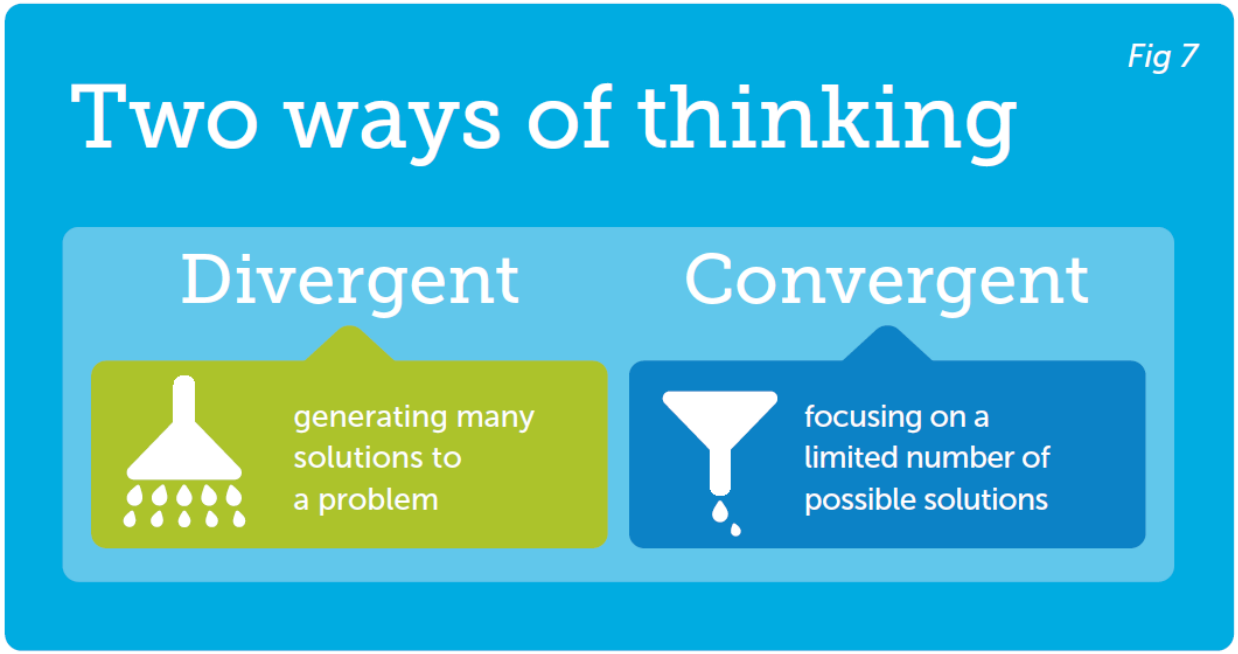
What does Creativity look like?

- Express imagination or original ideas (can be language, art, movement, sports, STEM)
- Openness to new experiences
- Decision-making to refine ideas

Hadani and Jaeger, 2015

Sociedad Latina, Mark Curreri Photography

What does Creativity look like?



Hadani and Jaeger, 2015

How to Encourage Creativity

Provide Opportunities for:

1. Exploration
2. Flexible Thinking
3. Decision-Making

1) Exploration

- Protect free time or exploration time
  e.g., free write, free play
- Engage in brainstorming / idea-generating activities
- Ask open-ended questions or prompts where there is no right answer
  e.g., reflection, what would you do?

Hadani and Jaeger, 2015

2) Flexible Thinking

- Provide new experiences and encourage active engagement (curiosity, learning)
  e.g., new cultures, professions, environments
- Perspective-taking
  i.e., other ways of thinking
- Explicit instruction to “be creative” -- saying it actually works

Hadani and Jaeger, 2015

Zoo New England

3) Decision-Making

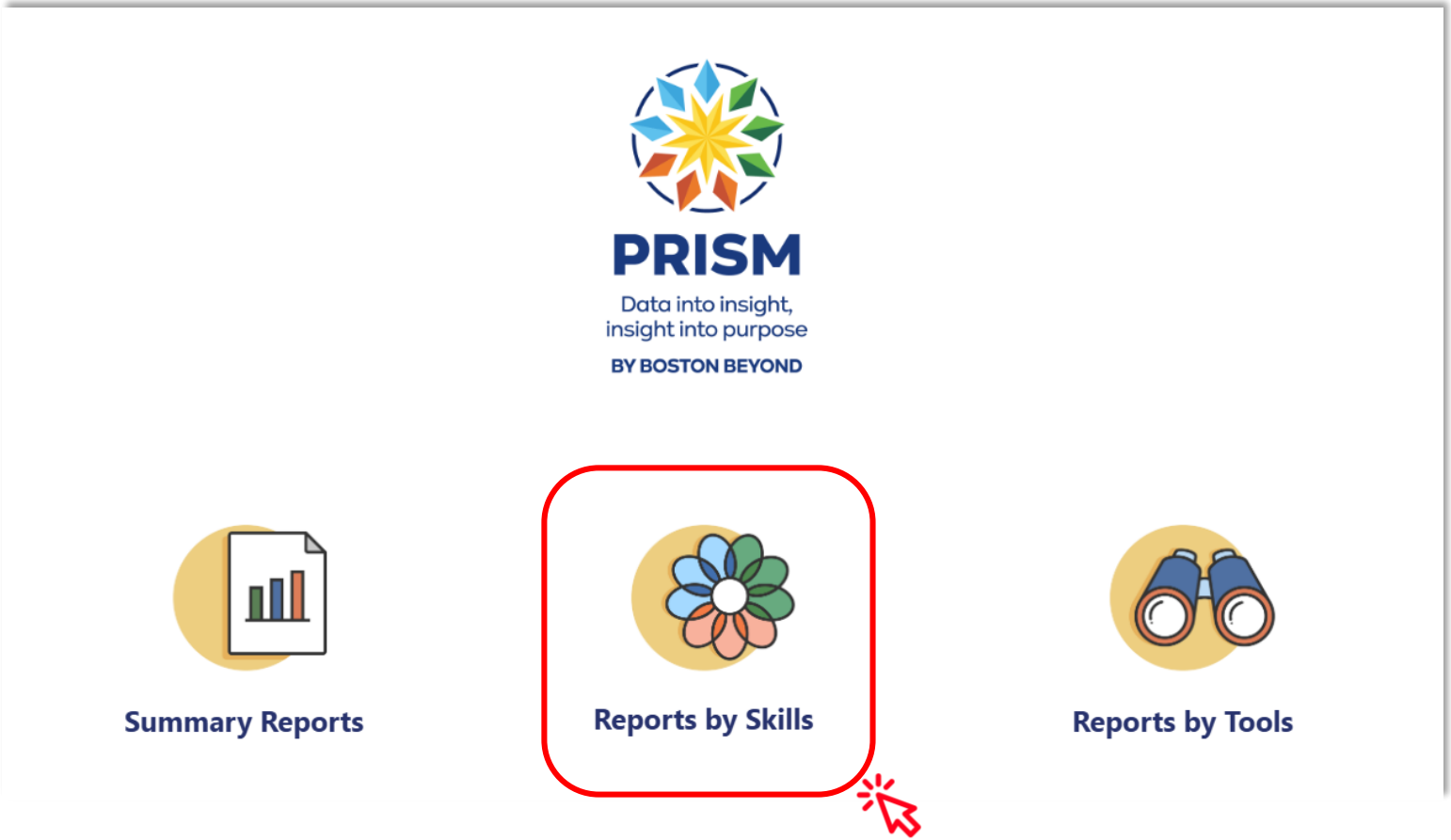
- Provide constraints (deadline, budget) that require thoughtful choices
- Provide opportunity to review and revise with feedback so students can reflect on decisions

Hadani and Jaeger, 2015

MassArt, Casey Atkins Photography

Building Creativity beyond school

Don’t forget the Reports by Skills in the PRISM



Works Cited

Hadani H, Jaeger G (2015), Inspiring a Generation to Create: Critical Components of Creativity in Children. Center for Childhood Creativity.

Boxx, R., Carpenter, S., ... Wigand, S. (2013). Beyond content: Incorporating social and emotional learning into the strive framework. Philliber Research Associates.