

1

# Creativity



Street painter, Florence, Italy



# TED TALKS

**SIR KEN ROBINSON** is an English educationalist, writer and former Professor of Arts Education at Warwick University (UK). In 1998 he led an inquiry for a British government advisory committee into the significance of creativity in the educational system and the economy. He was knighted for his achievements in this area in 2003. He believes passionately in the innate talents of each individual and that the current western education system is not structured in a way that makes the most of these talents.

Ken Robinson's idea worth spreading is that we radically need to rethink the way education works so that we can foster rather than stifle creativity.



## BACKGROUND

**1** You are going to watch an edited version of a TED Talk by Sir Ken Robinson called *Do schools kill creativity?* Read the text about the speaker and the talk. Then work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- 1 What has been Ken Robinson's focus in education?
- 2 What do you think the phrase 'stifle creativity' means?
- 3 What do you think is meant by 'creativity' in education? What subjects or activities at your school were not creative, in your opinion?

## KEY WORDS

**2** Read the sentences (1–6). The words in bold are used in the TED Talk. First guess the meaning of the words. Then match the words with their definitions (a–f).

- 1 In the past, **ADHD** in children was not really a recognized condition. Now children are given help with it.
  - 2 The Minister of Education's **contention** is that history lessons should focus on the country's own history.
  - 3 Fewer university students study **humanities** than sciences.
  - 4 Society tends to **stigmatize** those who fail in education and business.
  - 5 His advice was **benign**, but it made me feel more stressed.
  - 6 In the Nativity story, three kings come with gifts of gold, **frankincense** and myrrh for the new baby.
- a a claim or argument  
b academic subjects concerned with human culture, e.g. philosophy, history, languages  
c kind, intending to do good or be helpful  
d an aromatic resin from a tree used in perfumes  
e an abbreviation for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder  
f to label or mark something out as bad or disgraceful

## AUTHENTIC LISTENING SKILLS **Rhythm and stress**

English is a stress-timed language. Rather than giving each word and syllable equal stress and length, the rhythm of English varies and speakers tend to stress the most important (content) words. (For multi-syllable words, only certain syllables are stressed, not the whole word.) The less important words are not stressed and are crowded into a shorter space.

When listening to fast native speech you won't hear every word. But you will hear the content words (or the stressed syllables in them) and from these you will be able to construct the meaning of the sentence. For example:

*You won't hear every word. But you will hear the content words or the stressed syllables in them.*

**3a** **1** Look at the Authentic listening skills box. Look at the extract from Ken Robinson's talk. Listen and underline the words and syllables that are stressed.

'What these things have in common, you see, is that kids will take a chance. If they don't know, they'll have a go. Am I right? They're not frightened of being wrong.'

**3b** Work in pairs. Practise saying the extract in Exercise 3a with the same stress.

**3c** **2** Listen to the next part of the talk. Complete the extract with the content words.

I <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ mean to <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ that being <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ is the <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ thing as being <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_. What we <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ know is, if you're <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ to be <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, you'll <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ come up with anything <sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.