



*Creativity,  
Innovation &  
Unfinished  
Perfection*

# London Gifted & Talented

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- London Gifted & Talented is an organisation that was established within the London Challenge to stretch and challenge more able students and build the capacity of their educators to do the same
- Since 2003 we have directly worked with well over 4,000 schools and 15,000 teachers across all 33 London Boroughs and nationally
- In addition, more than 160,000 educators worldwide have used our award winning online resources on [www.londongt.org](http://www.londongt.org)
- In Europe we have worked with governments and networks of schools and universities in Finland, Romania, Holland, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan and the Ukraine.
- Worldwide we have advised schools, universities and cities across Africa, the Middle and Far East and the USA.

# The Approaches of Leonardo Da Vinci

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- What are the 7 key concepts that drove Da Vinci's inventive thinking?
- How can we still use them to improve our own creativity, 500 years after his death?
- How did the man earn his genius across many disciplines and achieve a genuinely universal mind ?
- How can attention to detail, breaking the frame and straddling contradictions help us to learn?
- What approaches do we need to take that will make our own learning more original and thoughtful?
- In pursuit of the unified learning principles that sit at the heart of his work, this presentation will explore what innovative thinking Leonardo can still offer to our modern world

# The seven concepts

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***Conscious ignorance; Developing a beginner's mind***

***Regaining Wonder; Developing the fuel of enthusiasm***

***Perfecting Attention; Developing a sensory approach***

***Unnecessary beauty; Developing the dialogue across disciplines***

***Thinking aside; Developing a metaphoric perspective***

***Negative capability; Developing productive frustration***

***Unfinished Perfection; Developing sustained irresolution***

# Phase 1 - Conscious ignorance

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*Developing a beginner's mind*

*Shoshin (初心)*

*Cultivating a wise unknowingness*

*Breaking up familiarities*

*Questioning what we think we  
know and believe*



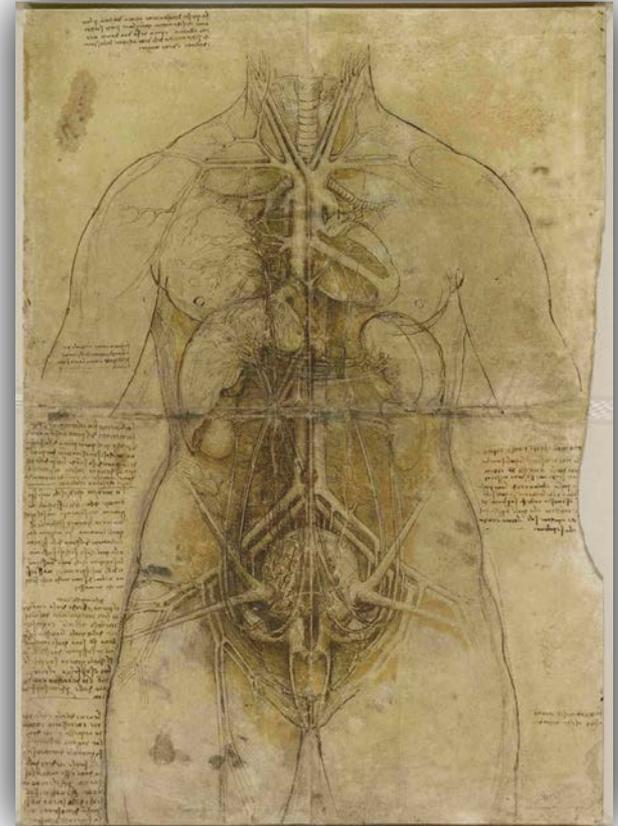
# Conscious ignorance - What could it mean for us?

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*Understanding how we forage for  
new knowledge*

*The need to counter the  
anaesthetic of our familiarity*

*Exposing ourselves to our own  
ignorance on a daily basis*



*'The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new  
landscapes, but in having new eyes'*

# Conscious ignorance - How can we grow from it?

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*Breaking up familiarities is at the very core of the Leonardo approach. He would use his notebooks, filled with scientific sketches, as an immediate and direct method of exploring his world. Foraging for new knowledge then testing and owning it, questioning assumptions, generating and developing his ideas through these drawings...He was never addicted to, or even interested in, consensus, but instead was attentive to the irregular, the odd.*

# Phase 2 - Regaining Wonder

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*Developing the fuel of enthusiasm*

*Learning scatteringly*

*Feeding ourselves with questioning*

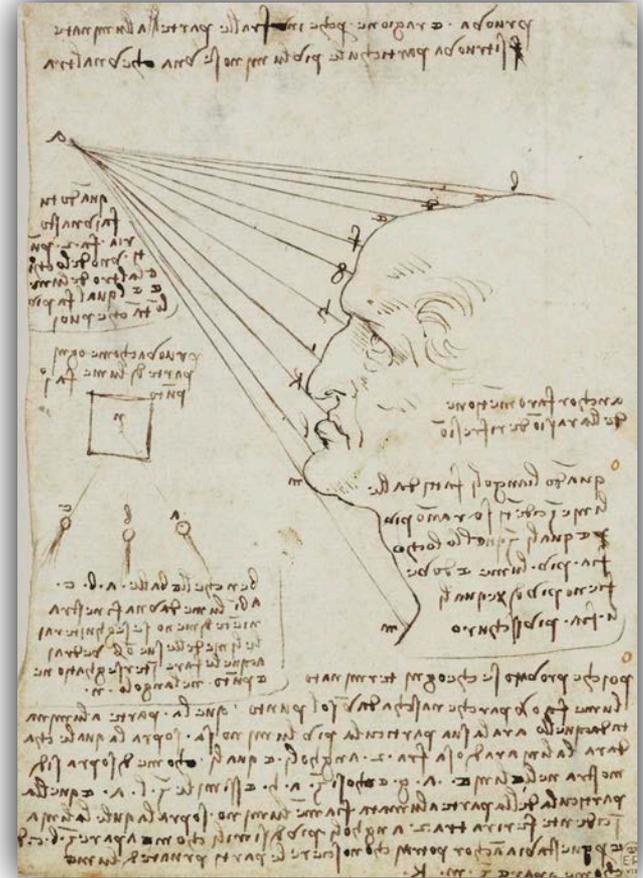


# Regaining Wonder - What could it mean for us?

*How we approach engagement in  
our work and our lives*

*How we allow the unknown to  
illuminate the known*

*Understanding that we don't acquire  
information, we debate it*



*‘Wondering is the foundation of all philosophy’*

# Regaining Wonder - How can we grow from it?

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*We need to retain a childlike sense of wonder, never to cease to stand like curious children before the great mystery into which we were born. We should be careful to never outgrow our wonder years, that have a mercurial quality without which we risk losing the impetus and desire to learn for ourselves.*

# Phase 3 - Perfecting Attention

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*Obsessive noticing*

*Shaping the invisible*

*Interrogating reality through his  
senses*



# Perfecting Attention - What could it mean for us?

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*How to cultivate our senses*  
*How we pull our experiences*  
*together and refine our*  
*responses*  
*How we pay attention to our*  
*attention*



*'All of our knowledge has its origin in our perceptions'*

# Perfecting Attention - How can we grow from it?

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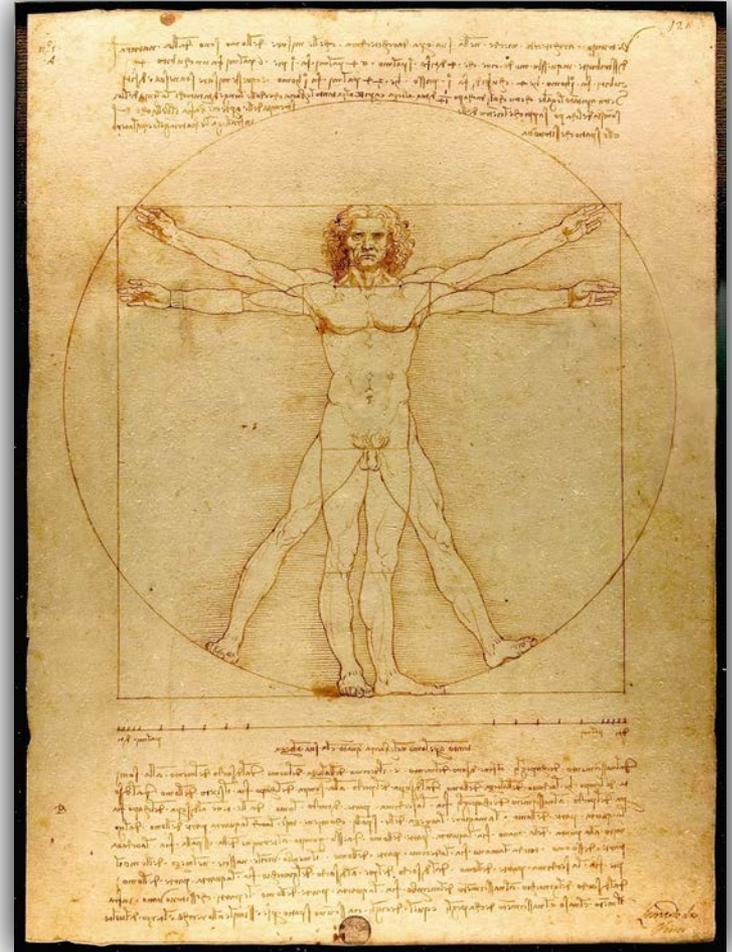
*Meaning is in everything – learning to see in the broadest way possible will release multitudes of unexpected and brightly lit moments. Leonardo wasn't simply trying to find the way a dragonfly's wings worked, or how a bird flies, or how the human body moves, or how light and shade interact – he was striving to capture and charge the whole cosmos with emotion, imagination and meaning.*

# Phase 4 - Unnecessary beauty

*Developing dialogue between  
experiment and theory*

*Surrendering preconceptions*

*Developing the dialogue across  
disciplines*



# Unnecessary beauty - What could it mean for us?

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*Everything we learn should lead to  
more learning*

*Mental cross fertilisation is key  
between different disciplines*

*Improving how we can use different  
lenses to spark enquiry*



*‘Study the art of science and the science of art’*

# Unnecessary beauty - How can we grow from it?

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*When we look at Leonardo's anatomical drawing we are of course struck by the beauty and detail of his draftsmanship, yet more than that we are taken aback by how he is constantly pushing his understanding to the edges of what was possible for him and his contemporaries, and for those who followed*

# Phase 5 - Thinking aside

*Developing a metaphoric perspective*

*Sensing connections and patterns*

*Realising adjacent possibilities*

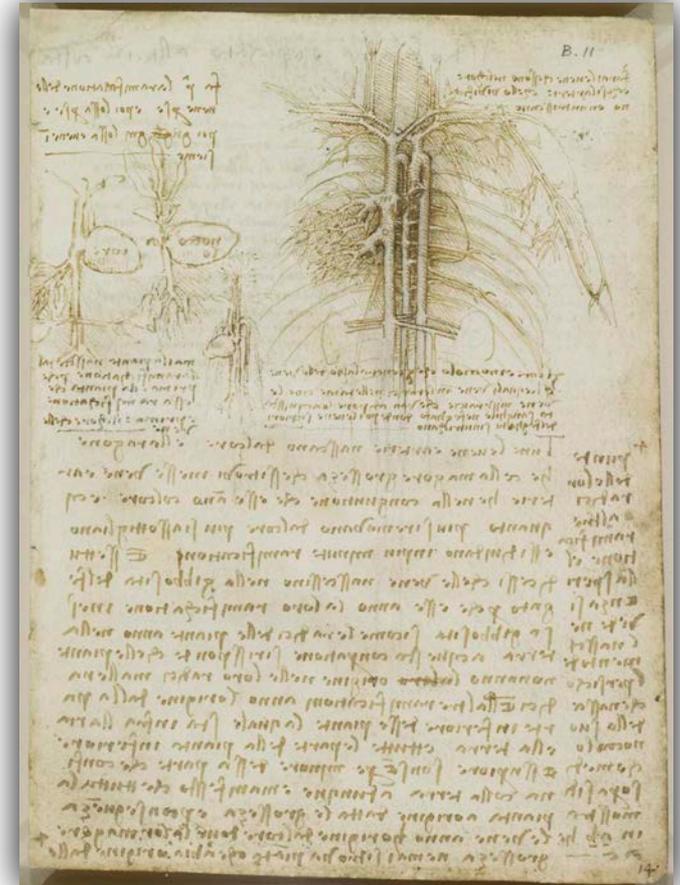


# Thinking aside - What could it mean for us?

*Developing the unconscious as a matchmaker*

*How we can interpret, change and exchange meaning*

*How we can make strange the known*



*'By thinking about some thing that is not related different, unusual patterns are activated'*

# Thinking aside - How can we grow from it?

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*Leonardo's lateral discoveries in terms of water and sound are a perfect example of what has been called, a solution looking for a problem. Leonardo called this process of connecting two apparently dissimilar ideas the Law of Continuity...For him, and for us, it is about the drive to integrate, to find patterns, create analogies and ultimately uncover solutions. He believed that the brain cannot focus on two unconnected subjects without eventually forming some connection between them*

# Phase 6 - Negative capability

*Developing productive  
frustration*

*Discovering desirable  
difficulties*

*Seeing old problems from new  
angles*

*Accepting uncertainty*



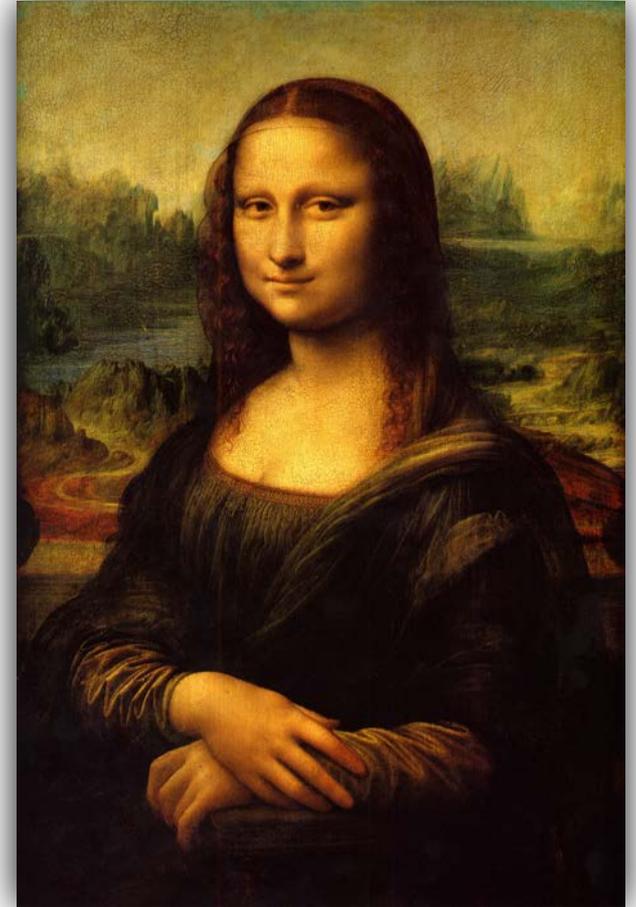
# Negative capability - What could it mean for us?

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*Understanding the importance of doubt*

*Seeing complexity and difficulty as  
desirable*

*How we rethink our experiences and  
straddle contradictions*



*‘What is not surrounded by uncertainty cannot be truth’*



# Negative capability - How can we grow from it?

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*Leonardo's paintings never close. Their smoky boundaries take us to the thresholds and edges of our understanding – to the experimental, to dreams and in-between feelings – about his subjects, his world, his life – and about his art. The paintings are enigmatic, have a spiritual mystery, and allude to something beyond sight, to something ineffably unsettling, to an acknowledgement that there is a dimension to the universe that was not knowable to the human intellect...*

# Phase 7 - Unfinished Perfection

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*Developing sustained  
irresolution*

*Embracing the elusive*

*Refusing frozen thinking*

*Continuing the search*



# Unfinished Perfection - How can we grow from it?

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*Accepting non-completion as an ending*

*Developing our ability to suspend judgement*

*Not freezing the evolution of our understanding*



*‘Confused things kindle the mind to great inventions’*

# Unfinished Perfection - How can we grow from it?

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*Leonardo had no finishing point, there is always more to learn and understand – always more subtle refinements made possible by the application of new insights, just as there is, or should be, open questions remaining within any project we undertake in our own work or learning...He would insist that saying our quest is complete, or frozen denies the possibility of going further. What we know of our own lives and work can never reach a conclusion*



# Redefining English for the **More Able** A Practical Guide



THE REDEFINING MORE ABLE EDUCATION SERIES

IAN WARWICK and  
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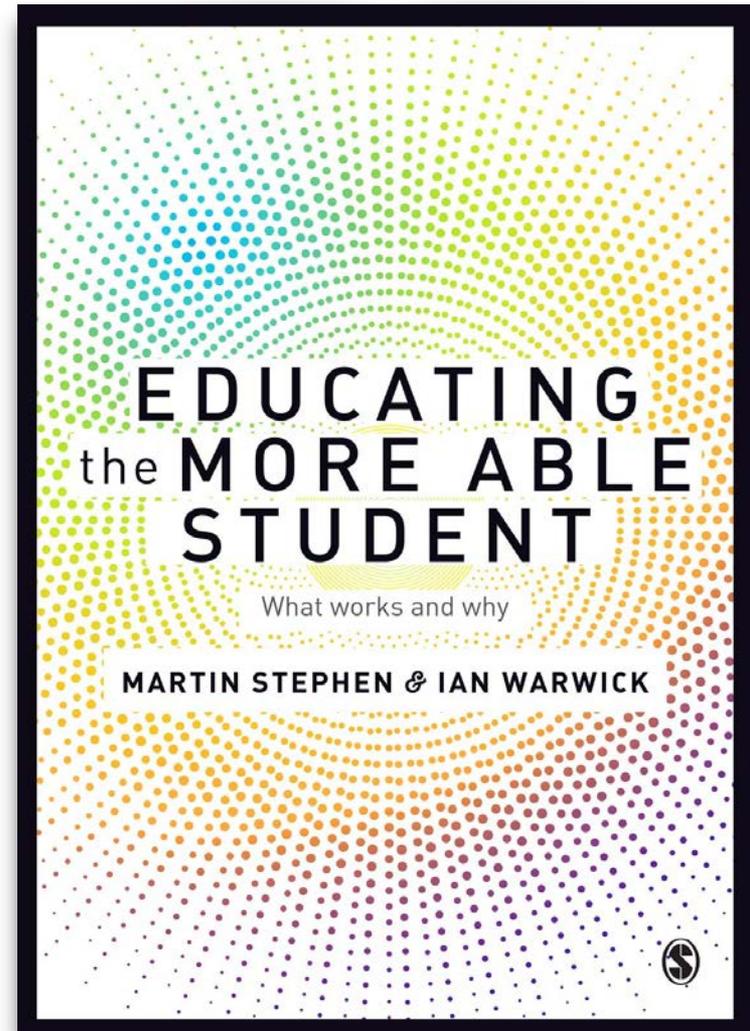
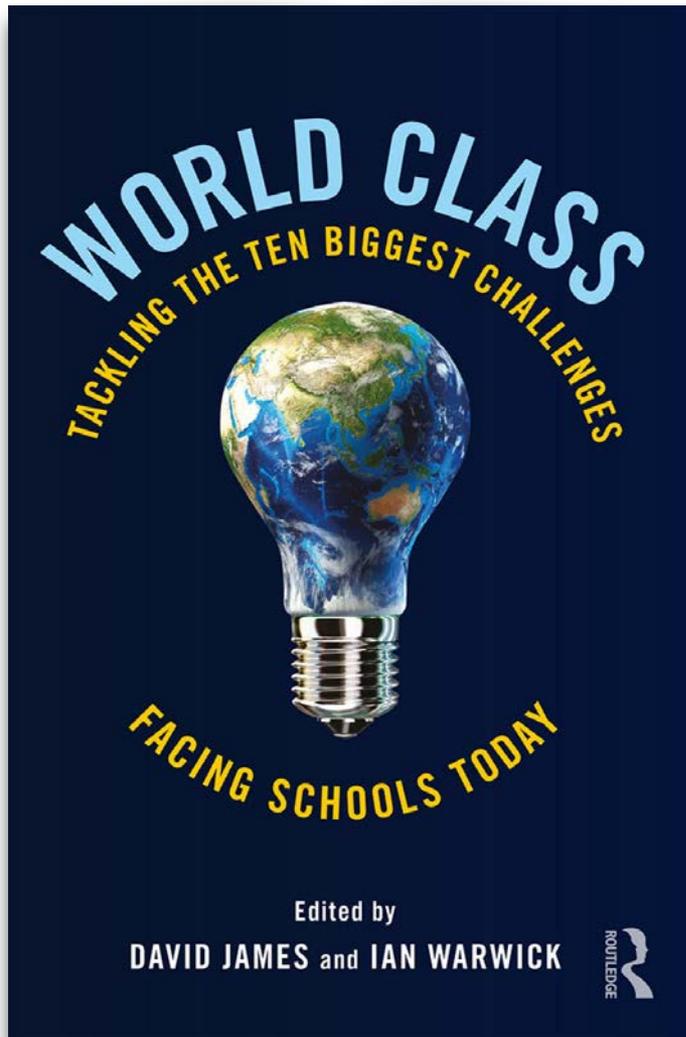
# Redefining More Able Education Key Issues for Schools



REDEFINING MORE ABLE EDUCATION

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# How can we grow from this?

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