

## *Creativity, Imagination, Invention, Originality and Talent*

### 1. ESSENCE

- 1875 Creativity comes from awakening and directing men's higher natures, which originate in the primal depths of the universe and are appointed by Heaven.  
I Ching (B.C. 1150?)
- 1876 Genius is eternal patience.  
Michelangelo (1474-1564)
- 1877 Imagination is the eye of the soul.  
Joubert (1754-1824)
- 1878 Genius is essentially creative; it bears the stamp of the individual who possesses it.  
Germaine De Stael (1766-1817)
- 1879 Genius is the power of lighting one's own fire.  
John Foster (1770-1843)
- 1880 Genius is a promontory jutting out into the infinite.  
Victor Hugo (1802-1885)
- 1881 Originality is simply a pair of fresh eyes.  
Thomas Higginson (1823-1911)
- 1882 Genius is initiative on fire.  
Holbrook Jackson (1874-1948)

### 2. OPPOSITES

- 1883 Genius always gives its best at first; prudence, at last.  
Lavater (1741-1801)
- 1884 It is the great triumph of genius to make the common appear novel.  
Goethe (1749-1832)
- 1885 Genius does what it must, talent does what it can.  
Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873)
- 1886 Talent repeats, genius creates.  
Talent is a cistern; genius a fountain.  
Edwin Whipple (1819-1886)

- 1887 Nature is the master of talents;  
genius is the master of nature.  
Josiah Holland (1819-1881)
- 1888 Genius makes its observations in short-hand;  
talent writes them out at length.  
Bovee (1820-1904)
- 1889 Doing easily what others find difficult is talent;  
doing what is impossible for talent is genius.  
Henri Frederic Amiel (1821-1881)
- 1890 To do great work a man must be very idle  
as well as very industrious.  
Samuel Butler (1835-1902)
- 1891 Inventing is a combination of brains and materials.  
The more brains you use, the less material you need.  
Charles Kettering (1876-1958)
- 1892 Talent is what you possess; genius is what possesses you.  
Malcolm Cowley (born 1898)

### 3. INSIGHT

- 1893 Genius must be born, and never can be taught.  
Dryden (1631-1700)
- 1894 When a true genius appears in the world you may know him by  
this sign, that the dunces are all in confederacy against  
him.  
Swift (1667-1745)
- 1895 The merit of great men is not understood, but by those who  
are formed to be such themselves; genius speaks only to  
genius.  
Leszczynski Stanislaus (1677-1766)
- 1896 Genius is independent of situation.  
Charles Churchill (1731-1764)
- 1897 Everyone is a genius at least once a year;  
a real genius has his original ideas closer together.  
Georg Lichtenberg (1742-1799)
- 1898 Everything has been thought of before, but the problem is  
to think of it again.  
Goethe (1749-1832)
- 1899 The lamp of genius burns quicker than the lamp of life.  
Schiller (1759-1805)

- 1900 Talent, lying in the understanding, is often inherited; genius, being the action of reason and imagination, rarely or never.  
Samuel Coleridge (1772-1834)
- 1901 Genius is the gold in the mine; talent is the miner who works and brings it out.  
Marguerite Blessington (1789-1849)
- 1902 Great geniuses have the shortest biographies. Their cousins can tell you nothing about them.  
Emerson (1803-1882)
- 1903 There are geniuses in trade as well as in war, or state, or letters; and the reason why this or that man is fortunate is not to be told. It lies in the man: that is all anybody can tell you about it.  
Emerson (1803-1882)
- 1904 To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men - that is genius.  
Emerson (1803-1882)
- 1905 He is the greatest artist who has embodied, in the sum of his works, the greatest number of the greatest ideas.  
John Ruskin (1819-1900)
- 1906 Genius - To know without having learned; to draw just conclusions from unknown premises; to discern the soul of things.  
Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914?)
- 1907 Genius is one per cent inspiration and ninety-nine per cent perspiration.  
Thomas A. Edison (1847-1931)
- 1908 True genius resides in the capacity for evaluation of uncertain, hazardous, and conflicting information.  
Winston Churchill (1874-1965)
- 1909 The principal mark of genius is not perfection but originality, the opening of new frontiers.  
Arthur Koestler (1905-1983)

#### 4. POSITIVE

- 1910 The honors of genius are eternal.  
Propertius (B.C. 50-16)

- 1911 There is no genius free from some tincture of madness. 4 of 7  
Seneca (B.C. 3-65 A.D.)
- 1912 The poets' scrolls will outlive the monuments of stone.  
Genius survives; all else is claimed by death.  
Edmund Spenser (1552-1599)
- 1913 Imagination disposes of everything; it creates beauty,  
justice, and happiness, which is everything in this world.  
Pascal (1623-1662)
- 1914 The first and last thing required of genius is the love  
of truth.  
Goethe (1749-1832)
- 1915 Imagination rules the world.  
Napoleon (1769-1821)
- 1916 The drafts which true genius draws upon posterity, although  
they may not always be honored so soon as they are due, are  
sure to be paid with compound interest in the end.  
Colton (1780-1832)
- 1917 All good things which exist are the fruits of originality.  
John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)
- 1918 Dead he is not, but departed, - for the artist never dies.  
Longfellow (1807-1882)
- 1919 Imagination is more important than knowledge.  
Einstein (1879-1955)
- 1920 There is the happiness which comes from creative effort.  
The joy of dreaming, creating, building, whether in painting  
a picture, writing an epic, singing a song, composing a  
symphony, devising new invention, creating a vast industry.  
Work is the great redeemer. It has therapeutic value. It  
brings happiness.  
Henry Miller (1891-1980)
- 1921 Geniuses are the luckiest of mortals because what they must  
do is the same as what they most want to do.  
W. H. Auden (1907-1973)

## 5. NEGATIVE

- 1922 If people knew how hard I have to work to gain my mastery  
it wouldn't seem wonderful at all.  
Michelangelo (1474-1564)

- 1923 Originality is nothing but judicious imitation.  
Voltaire (1694-1778)
- 1924 The richest genius, like the most fertile soil, when  
uncultivated, shoots up into the rankest weeds.  
David Hume (1711-1776)
- 1925 He who has imagination without learning  
has wings but no feet.  
Joubert (1754-1824)
- 1926 Fortune has rarely condescended to be the companion  
of genius.  
Isaac D'Israeli (1766-1848)
- 1927 The imagination is of so delicate a texture that even words  
wound it.  
Hazlitt (1778-1830)
- 1928 In every work of genius we recognize our own rejected  
thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated  
majesty.  
Emerson (1803-1882)
- 1929 The artists must be sacrificed to their art. Like the bees,  
they must put their lives into the sting they give.  
Emerson (1803-1882)
- 1930 Talent is often to be envied, and genius very commonly to be  
pitied. It stands twice the chance of the other of dying in  
a hospital, in jail, in debt, in bad repute. It is a  
perpetual insult to mediocrity; its every word is a  
trespass against somebody's vested ideas.  
Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809-1894)
- 1931 For precocity some great price is always demanded sooner or  
later in life.  
Margaret Fuller (1810-1850)
- 1932 Genius and its rewards are briefly told:  
A liberal nature and a niggardly doom,  
A difficult journey to a splendid tomb.  
John Forster (1812-1876)
- 1933 Genius unexerted is no more genius than a bushel of acorns  
is a forest of oaks.  
Beecher (1813-1878)

- 1934 Men of genius are often dull and inert in society, as a blazing meteor when it descends to earth, is only a stone.  
Longfellow (1807-1882)
- 1935 Genius may be almost defined as the faculty of acquiring poverty.  
Edwin Whipple (1819-1886)
- 1936 In the republic of mediocrity, genius is dangerous.  
Robert G. Ingersoll (1833-1899)
- 1937 The public is wonderfully tolerant.  
It forgives everything except genius.  
Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)

## 6. ADVICE

- 1938 Beware of dissipating your powers; strive constantly to concentrate them. Genius thinks it can do whatever it sees others doing, but it is sure to repent every ill-judged outlay.  
Goethe (1749-1832)
- 1939 For a man to achieve all that is demanded of him he must regard himself as greater than he is.  
Goethe (1749-1832)
- 1940 The three indispensables of genius are understanding, feeling, and perseverance. The three things that enrich genius are contentment of mind, the cherishing of good thoughts, and exercising the memory.  
Robert Southey (1774-1843)
- 1941 Where we cannot invent, we may at least improve; we may give somewhat of novelty to that which was old; condensation to that which was diffuse, perspicuity to that which was obscure, and currency to that which was recondite.  
Colton (1780-1832)
- 1942 The human body is the magazine of inventions, the patent office, where are the models from which every hint is taken. All the tools and engines on earth are only extensions of its limbs and senses.  
Emerson (1803-1882)
- 1943 Only an inventor knows how to borrow, and every man is or should be an inventor.  
Emerson (1803-1882)

- 1944 Every man who observes vigilantly and resolves steadfastly grows unconsciously into genius.  
Bulwer-Lytton (1803-1873)

## 7. POTPOURRI

- 1945 The lunatic, the lover and the poet  
Are of imagination all compact.  
Shakespeare (1564-1616)
- 1946 Sometimes men come by the name of genius in the same way that certain insects come by the name of centipede - not because they have a hundred feet, but because most people can't count above fourteen.  
Georg Lichtenberg (1742-1799)
- 1947 If we can advance propositions both true and new, these are our own by right of discovery; and if we can repeat what is old, more briefly and brightly than others, this also becomes our own, by right of conquest.  
Colton (1780-1832)
- 1948 Genius lasts longer than Beauty. That accounts for the fact that we all take such pains to over-educate ourselves.  
Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)
- 1949 Originality does not consist in saying what no one has ever said before, but in saying exactly what you think yourself.  
James Stephens (1882-1950)
- 1950 When I am finishing a picture I hold a God made object up to it - a rock, a flower, the branch of a tree or my hand - as a kind of final test. If the painting stands up beside a thing man cannot make, the painting is authentic. If there's a clash between the two, it is bad art.  
Marc Chagall (born 1887)