Let's face it: modern life is busy! Working, commuting, studying, parenting, sometimes fitting in time for fitness. Sometimes it seems that if only we can make **every moment** of **every day** effective it can all fit. On the best days, it works. On the not so great days... we step back, look at all the things that need to be done in a day and realize the element that's missing is **time. Time to be creative**. Good academic work and good creative work are not the kind of activity that can be wedged into a day. Creativity takes time. For that reason, I became interested in the role of creativity and developing creativity in education. This project will explore the edit-on-the-fly app 1 second each day's role in mobile technology supporting developing creativity and helping users tell their stories and find time for creativity.

Let's start with what creativity is and why we need it. Even named a number one leadership competency, creativity remains hard to define, so let's start with a description: creativity is the ability to engage in divergent thinking, the production of novelty related to products (like paintings or computer programs), related to people (those who have or develop a talent), related to interaction, and creativity related to environment.

Creative thinkers are defined as engaging in metaphorical thinking, having flexibility in decision making, coping well with novelty, finding order in chaos, persevering and being willing to take risks, valuing originality, and tolerating ambiguity. Ken Robinson puts it this way: creativity is not only what we put into the world but also what we are able to make **of** the world.

What's the connection between mobile technology, constant connectivity, and creativity? Writer Lynda Barry states the problem with mobile technology this way: "The phone gives us a lot but it takes away three key elements of discovery: loneliness, uncertainty and boredom. Those have always been where creative ideas come from." "When we constantly fill up "empty" time with stimulation in the form of electronic devices, games, and distractions, our brains become disengaged and the thinking process is effectively halted. We never get to hear our own inner voice-we don't develop a relationship with ourselves and our minds. We don't get to know who we are because we're not listening." (Smith). Psychologist Daniel Levinson discusses the impossibility of multitasking in that the brain is really just rapidly shifting attention, which uses nutrients, of which there is a limited supply. What if we use up all of the creative energy available to our brains by constantly task switching? What happens if we never get bored?

Time off from thinking about a task is essential to creativity! Scientists have noted that when brains are bored (doing laundry, walking to school) they go into a "default mode" and that's when our brains gets really busy. This time to daydream moves us beyond the conscious into the subconscious and allows us to connect disparate ideas.

Educators might consider leveraging mobile digital technologies to support creativity by allowing space for creativity and ways of telling stories. Apps for creation rather than consumption like the edit-on-the-fly app **1 second each day are examples**. **This blend of high-tech with low tech allows for a physically creative process of incubation and creative storytelling. One second everyday** allows users to easily cut together short clips, ideally 1-2 seconds each day, in chronological order. The app allows users to choose between one moment each day, choosing from multiple clips and distilling down to only one one per day that represents the entire day. As a learning tool, this might be a good reflection tool at the end of a term as students go chronologically through recordings and reflect on the most significant

moment of each day. The final film is short! Given that each snippet is only one to two seconds the final video lasts only minutes per term.

Visualization can be a powerful tool in triggering memory. Being forced to choose only one second per day prevents users from recording entire events; rather, knowing that only one second can be included may be an impetus for being more present in activities because it allows us to put our devices away. Only a second or two of video is enough to jog a memory of an event while most of the event is experienced first-person and present in the event, rather than watching the event through the lense of a camera.

As a creativity tool, the app reminds users to collect a second each day through a push notification that can be turned on or off. The reminder is an opportunity to get learners thinking about what portion of the learning activity they might record and include in the final video.

The app may allow students to think in other ways than a chronological recording of events. What if, rather than being chronological and collecting one second each day for a single person, a classroom full of students each collected a second each day over the course of a term and mashed them together as seen in projects such as <u>Canada in a day</u>? This may allow for interesting studies of place-based education such as [Campus Calgary's Open Minds](), in which students get out of the classroom every day for a week. What if each student collected one important second each day for five days? A classroom of 25 students would have a short video of a couple of minutes to kick start reflection upon return to the classroom.

The app capitalizes on mobile technology because it relies on cameras in smart devices. Because it allows only one second per day, it does not require a great deal of memory on the device, which is often a problem in education environments where more devices are purchased with smaller amounts of memory to allow more users access to digital technology. The app does not, however, require users to record using only the device that will be used to edit the final product. Footage may be recorded using any digital device, synced to a common drive, and then imported to edit the footage.

After having used the app for a short time, I found that I started to view my day by what might make for interesting one second clips, so while I find it is useful in the short term I worry about the long-term effects on creativity when yet another constantly-connected way of sharing lives is added to the constant connectedness of our lives. In the short term such an app may allow for increased creativity but over long term use users may find that it further erodes our ability to be alone, to wander, to incubate ideas, and to participate in deeply creative endeavors.

Resources

Craig, C., Deretchin, L. (2011). *Cultivating Curious and Creative Minds: The Role of Teachers and Teacher Educators, Part 2*. R&L Education.

Cropley, A. (2001). *Creativity in Education and Learning*. Sterling, VA: Psychology Press

Egan, K. (1997). *The educated mind: How cognitive tools shape our understanding*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Halliday, A. (2017). Lynda Barry on How the Smartphone Is Endangering Three Ingredients of Creativity: Loneliness, Uncertainty & Boredom.
http://www.openculture.com/2017/09/lynda-barry-on-how-the-smartphone-is-endangering-three-ingredients-of-creativity.html

Robinson. K. Aronica, L. (2009) *The element : how finding your passion changes everything.* New York : Penguin Books.

Zomorodi, M. (2017). How Boredom Can Lead to your Most Brilliant Ideas.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=37&v=c73Q8oQmwzo