



TRANSCRIPT

FRAMEWORKS THAT FASCINATE

Lesson 02 | Inspiration

Welcome to Inspiration, the second lesson in this module that's all about sources that fascinate.

In this lesson, you'll see how to mine yet another fascinating source--inspiration--to generate raw materials and new connections for your fascinating course ideas.

You will learn:

- How inspiration can fuel course content
- What to look for as inspiration
- 3 rules for working with inspiration to stay original
- Tools you can use to curate and categorize the inspiration you want to keep

(SEE SLIDE 3)

To use inspiration, you'll iterate through these three Cs of inspiration work.

- The first is consumption--actively looking for things that can inspire.
- The second C of inspiration work is Curation--As you consume inspiration, identify the pieces you want to be able to refer back to--and save them.

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- The last is Categorization--To work with the inspiration you've curated, spend time "categorizing" it -- not only in order to have a place to file it but also to understand how it fits within the context of your current work and to identify connections and possibilities for how you might use it.

Look at this not as work to be gotten through but as an experience to fuel your ideas.

When you view and save and organize pieces that inspire, you are engaged in important generative work.

(SEE SLIDE 4)

For creatives, coaches, and experts who want to build online courses, working with inspiration can fuel your teaching in several ways.

1. The first is that it can give you new ways to practice your own expert work. Use the ideas you're encountering to fuel the kind of exploration described in the previous lesson of this course. Use them as models, as paths to trying out new assumptions, new approaches.
2. A second way that inspiration fuels your teaching is as it provides examples, illustrations, stories and models for your course lessons. The best teaching weaves lecture and "demo." The lecture is the telling of concepts and facts. The demo refers to the many ways you can illustrate concepts and work in action. Having a variety of compelling examples and stories will make your teaching richer--and so keep an eye out for them when consuming inspiration.
3. Inspiration can also lead to finding a "big idea" around which a course can be created. Most courses deliver an outcome that your audience wants. Implicit in that outcome is a big idea or big theme that represents the beliefs or aspirations your students hold--and consuming inspiring content often leads to these kinds of big understandings.
4. You can even find a complete framework for your lesson or module topics in inspiration. It's all about those combinations and connections that develop as you consume, collect relevant pieces and make your own system of categorizations. I'll show you examples of how this works later in the lesson.

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(SEE SLIDE 5)

TYPES OF INSPIRATION

We'll be talking about collecting different types of inspiration: Visual Inspiration, and Thought Inspiration

Sources of visual inspiration are things like art, architecture, floral arrangements, fashion, photography, and crafts.

Thought inspiration will come from sources like books, podcasts, new columns, magazines, studies, even creative thought work like movies.

Some things inspire you both visually and in your thoughts. When you travel, you'll take in visual sights and you'll encounter new situations that could inspire you. When you watch movies, you're getting a visual experience, and a thinking experience, and, hopefully, a feeling experience.

Music is one more type of inspiration you might consume that can inspire you by the meaning and feelings it evokes and, if you're a musician, by the way its created.

(SEE SLIDE 6)

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN INSPIRATION

Let's talk about what you're looking for that can fuel new ideas for your teaching as you consume inspiration. For some of you this might be obvious and easy--but maybe you're missing a few things that could be useful. And if it's not obvious and easy for you--then this guide to what to look for will be especially helpful.

>>1. Look for inspiration that fits within your "content pillars" and directly inspires your work.

The goal is to make sure you're finding inspiration that not only appeals--but that you're also looking for inspiration that could be useful, that you can combine with your own experiences and approaches to make something new for your students.

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As you start you need to figure out WHERE to look. And so my first advice is strategic and practical: look at sources that fit within your content pillars.

Content pillars are the BIG categories your expertise falls into. They are the most obvious way you think to organize all that you're already doing around teaching.

The easiest way to determine your content pillars is to ask yourself this: *If I were filling up a blog with posts that comes out of my expertise and that helps my audience, what would my blog categories be?*

Or think of it this way: if you made a series of helpful videos what would your playlists be?

(SEE SLIDE 8)

EXAMPLE | CONTENT PILLARS | SCRAPBOOKING: I taught scrapbooking design and storytelling for over 10 years at Get It Scrapped and one great way for me to organize the content was by the five scrapbook page parts: Photos, Journaling, Embellishment, Title and Canvas. There was lots and lots I could teach about each of these areas—and they provided a way to divide up all that I taught in a way that made immediate sense to my students. They were my content pillars.

As I was consuming inspiration, I could be on the lookout for ideas that could fuel each of these.

Here are 5 Pinterest boards full of visual inspiration that maps to my five content pillars. The PHOTOS board has a lot of creative photography poses and ideas and angles. The Embellishing board is full of pretty little details--on fashion, in crafts, in jewelry.

(SEE SLIDE 9)

These boards have provided inspiration for multiple courses including one called PhotoPlay. Another one on embellishing: Details. This one Titles Lookbook pulls from the titlework board and here's a course, The Page Parts Idea and Design Compendium that could have taken inspiration from all of them.

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EXAMPLE | CONTENT PILLARS | ROCK THE MOM LIFE: Here's another example of content pillars as a guide to your inspiration curation.

What if you're teaching overwhelmed moms how to "Rock the Mom Life?"

Figure out your content pillars. What are the main areas in which you'll teach?

It might be: Meals, Home Organization, Family Calendar, Relationships, Sleep, and Together Time.

Thinking of your own philosophy, now figure out where you'll look for inspiration for the meals content pillar. You could look for cook-ahead freezer meals inspiration. You could go through recipes figuring out what would translate to the freezer? Or if you want to make the elegant meal simply, look at gourmet food magazines. You'll decide.

And then onto the next pillar: home organization. You could look at the Real Simple magazine or turn to organization experts or look at current home magazines or blogs. You can definitely find a lot of home organization visual inspiration on Pinterest. Another approach is to search related hashtags on Instagram.

So this is a first practical way to start searching out inspiration--through your content pillars.

(SEE SLIDE 11)

>>2. Look for inspiration that obliquely inspires aspects of your work.

A second approach to looking for inspiration is to look at things that obliquely inspire aspects of your work.

The approach I just described had you looking for inspiration that connected to your work in straight, clear lines. Looking for inspiration to fuel new approaches to teaching scrapbook page title work? Look at billboards and movie credits and

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book covers. The connection is clear. But oblique inspiration can be just as useful.

Take a look at the two images here. The book cover is an example of DIRECT inspiration for a scrapbook page. I could place photos on a page in a horizontal band like those on the book cover. I could place the page title just above the photos on the book cover. I could embellish with a large watermark as on the cover.

But now take a look at the home décor image and let's talk about oblique inspiration. It could also inspire a scrapbook page—but I'd have to look at things from another angle.

I could design a scrapbook page in which the photo is placed like the centered mirror here. The title could run below it like the white mantle of the fireplace, and all those accent pieces on the mantel become journaling and/or embellishments.

That's how finding inspiration from an oblique angle works.

(SEE SLIDE 12)

EXAMPLE | PERSONAL GROWTH COACH: If you're coaching or teaching personal growth,

- Straight-forward inspiration comes from articles or case studies that directly illustrate or support your teaching, that prove the point you're making.
- Oblique inspiration could come from the story of character in a movie or novel or documentary who faced something similar and found their own way through--without you as their coach--but their story illustrates your point and resonates more clearly than a drier case study.

You might cite a study on the value of self-coaching and the importance of figuring things out through experience to support the path you're teaching.

And you could also share the story of a fictional character who discovered this: like Dorothy when she found out that she could have gone home at anytime after she got those slippers--but she realizes all she would have missed if she hadn't gone on her journey in Oz.

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(SEE SLIDE 13)

You'll need to be open to spotting this kind of inspiration when it arises as opposed to actively hunting it. Sometimes you don't know what you're looking for until you uncover it. To some extent your inspiration hunting must be a form of play and exploration. To some extent you need to let go of knowing the end goal ahead of time.

The approach in that home décor example I just shared with you was something that my teammate here at Teach What You Do (and in the past at Get It Scrapped), Amy Kingsford, revealed several years ago in an incredible series of articles. She's always been a big fan of using inspiration pieces to fuel her creative work and I'm grateful she discovered this way to use oblique sources of inspiration.

She energized me and our students with her ability to find scrapbook page designs in the unexpected. Be on the lookout to give your own students this same kind of unexpected eye-opener.

(SEE SLIDE 14)

>> 3. Look for inspiration pieces that intrigue or delight you.

A third type of inspiration to look for is inspiration that intrigues, surprises or delights you. Keep your eye and mind peeled for that thing that stands out--and that ends up being relevant to your work.

Here's something I saw this week on Instagram that inspired me. There's an artistic challenge called "Folk Tale Week" in which illustrators and artists working in a variety of mediums share art that is illustrative of a story every day for the week--and it corresponds to the story prompts here: home, secret, path, smoke, darkness, key, and crown.

The STRUCTURE of this creative challenge inspires me. It's a series of topics, categories even, that someone defined out of their own preferences and sense of fun. You use this idea of an intriguing series of topics to inspire your own course.

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In Module 2 of this course, one of the course structures I'll teach you is what I call "Look Book" and this is makes a great example of that style of teaching. You'll see me use this inspiration in that lesson.

(SEE SLIDE 15)

EXAMPLE | PARENTING: Here are examples of intriguing pieces for someone teaching parenting. It's a list of recent parenting articles in the Washington post Lifestyle section.

Take a look at the titles:

- *How to talk to your kids about money when you don't have a traditional job.*
- *When the youngest asks, the youngest gets.*
- *Why do so many kids "see ghosts"? We asked some psychologists.*

First of all, magazines and newspapers have great copywriting in their title work and you can learn a lot from that. Consider this: what do they use to pique the interest of the reader around your topic?

In addition to taking copywriting inspiration, you can also take inspiration from the topics: money, age-related behavior, technology, entertainment. Are any of those good fodder for your teaching?

You can also dig into specific articles to get inspiration for topics to cover as well as stories and research that can support my work.

Take a look at this article: Why do so many kids "see ghosts" is a provocative title and an article that starts out with some believable ghost stories--but that then digs into the line between fantasy and reality for children. This consideration of reality and fantasy is an interesting angle to take in your parenting teaching.

The article on movies and building character is really fun -- and it can inspire the idea of a series of lessons built on movies or another form of entertaining--and then you can link to messages about parenting.

You get to pick the angle.

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EXAMPLE | SCRAPBOOKING: Here's one more look at inspiration initially collected because it intrigues or delights.

On the Get It Scrapped Pinterest account is a big series of boards that start with the word STYLE. And they are fun and they are not styles you'd immediately think of: Curated Natural, Provincial Picnic, Modern Nautical are three of them. Amy and I both built these boards. Some came out of spotting repetitions as we surfed inspiration. Some came out of trends we were watching. Some were built because we wanted to define them. It happened over time--and over that time, we turned them into articles. Take a look: Ideas for Scrapbook Page Storytelling with the Wabi-Sabi Style is a blog post article. As is Scrapbook Page Storytelling with a Modern Nautical Style.

And it wasn't only me who was delighted and intrigued by these as I collected--our readers adored these pushes into new territory. We pushed them in new directions.

(SEE SLIDE 17)

So now you know what to look for:

- inspiration that fits within your “content pillars” and directly inspires your work
- inspiration that obliquely inspires aspects of your work
- inspiration pieces that intrigue or surprise or delight you

But there's more I want to tell you about this fun and rewarding idea work.

BEST PRACTICES FOR WORKING WITH INSPIRATION

(SEE SLIDE 18)

Now let's talk about working with inspiration. It's important that you're curating

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relevant pieces—of course there will be some stuff you never use, but let's get you spotting the good stuff. The other thing I want to make sure you do is use inspiration in ways that aren't direct copying of pieces you like but rather spring-boarding from the curation to make your own unique work.

(SEE SLIDE 19)

Here are three “rules” that'll help you with inspiration spotting and curation choices.

RULE #1 is to identify the “wow” factor.

As you're drawn to an inspiration piece, take time to understand why, specifically, you are drawn to the piece. What matters? What compels you? And is it relevant for what you're doing?

I'd mentioned this parenting article about how movies can help build kid's character a minute ago. If I think about it, the reason it wows me is because I love the idea of compiling a whole collection of movies that can each impart a different lesson. It's not just because it's about movies. It's about the approach.

RULE #2 is to Combine inspiration pieces.

When you find something inspiring, actively look for related examples and curate them, too.

You're looking for pieces that have something in common with the first--with the goal of blending these elements and creating something original out of the inspiration. In this way you understand more about why this piece matters and you move toward your own original work with it.

When we were creating an article on the Nordic Christmas style at Get It Scrapped, we collected inspiration pieces in a variety of formats: illustration, crafts, clothing, dinnerware, ornaments, cakes, even. All of them together informed color and motif and texture and the overall Nordic Christmas feeling.

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Here's one more piece of advice for you:

RULE #3 is Set it aside as you create.

Don't look directly at your inspiration piece as you create. Take it in ahead of time. Understand why you're drawn to it, what its power and relevance are. And then do your own work. With it set aside, your own experiences and preferences can then take your work to a new place.

TOOLS FOR CURATING AND CATEGORIZING INSPIRATION

(SEE SLIDE 20)

There are so many places to take in inspiration--and inspiration comes in different formats. Think back to the commonplace books and scrapbooks that thinkers used to collect information. You'll need your own equivalent of the commonplace book.

I've got a couple of recommendations for you.

(SEE SLIDE 21)

1. Pinterest- For saving and organizing visual inspiration, create a Pinterest account and use it. You'll "pin" pieces of visual inspiration that inspire. You'll create boards to hold those pins. Pay attention to how you name and organize them so that you can reference them later.

On my Get It Scrapped Pinterest account you'll see 100s of boards and many of them have inspired free and paid content. There are a whole bunch that start with the word "Inspo" and that organize inspo on topics like signs and architecture and art and entertainment and so much more. Here's a look at some of the Materials and Motif boards on our account.

- Learn how to "pin" images that you find around the internet.
- Learn how to upload images you encounter in real life and photograph.

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- And be sure to come up with an organizational system for naming and ordering your boards.

Pinterest is also a fabulous search engine for finding inspiration in addition to being a great tool for storage and organization.

You might also save visual inspiration on Instagram (and search for it with hashtags). You can create categories on Instagram.

(SEE SLIDE 22)

2. OneNote - When it comes to collecting and organizing text-based inspiration, use the free software OneNote by Microsoft. OneNote is a digital notebook that you can use to create sections and subsections and pages--and on those pages you can place the inspiration you collect. You'll develop your own system of organization--just as the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes did in support of his own work.

Here are 3 easy ways to move thought inspiration into your OneNote notebooks:

The first is with OneNote WebClipper. If you install the OneNote webclipper extension to your internet browser, you can then capture articles and clips including text and image right from your browser. You'll click on the icon up at top right and then indicate what you want to capture AND where in your OneNote notebook to save it. Here, I'm capturing an article from Vanity Fair and putting it in my "Debbie's Big Book" notebook.

(SEE SLIDE 23)

You can also get content into your OneNote notebooks using the SHARE option when reading newspapers and magazines in mobile apps. You can email or text the content to yourself, then copy it over into your OneNote library. OR if OneNote is installed on your mobile device, you can share directly to OneNote--again indicating where in your notebook to save it.

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A third way to move thought inspiration into OneNote is in your Kindle book-reader app. You can highlight and make notes about your reading and then export those highlights via email. Once received, you can add them to your One-Note notebook.

NEXT STEPS

(SEE SLIDE 25)

Are you ready to begin Consuming, Curating and Categorizing inspiration?

You now understand how inspiration can fuel your teaching ideas,
you've learned about the types of inspiration to look for
And even gotten some best practices for working with the pieces you curate.

Now it's time to set up your inspiration processes and be open to it as it arrives.