

## Mapping the Possible: The Possibilities Literacy Questionnaire

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### ABSTRACT

In a world marked by uncertainty and accelerating change, there is a growing need for tools that help individuals understand how they relate to the possible. Building on recent work proposing “Possibilities Literacy” as a set of competencies for perceiving, generating, engaging with and ethically guiding possibilities, this article introduces the *Possibilities Literacy Questionnaire* (PoLiQu). Rather than a validated psychometric instrument, PoLiQu is conceived as a reflective tool designed to support self-understanding, dialogue and personal or group development. Its fifteen items correspond directly to the fifteen dimensions of the Possibilities Literacy framework: Perception, Crafting, Engagement, Stewardship, and Mindsets, each explored through Constraints, Alternatives, and Agency. The questionnaire invites respondents to reflect on their behaviours rather than underlying traits, using understandable response options such as “often”, “sometimes” or “rarely”. It can be completed in multiple ways: assessing one’s current practices, one’s aspirations, and the behaviours expected by others. PoLiQu can also be used relationally—i.e., completed with or for others—or as an interview guide

that supports rich qualitative exploration. By proposing a tool that prioritises reflection rather than measurement, PoLiQu contributes to an emerging family of creativity-oriented, socioculturally grounded instruments that aim not to categorise individuals but to expand their horizon of possibility. Its potential applications range from education and organisational development to therapy, coaching, and community work.

### KEYWORDS:

Possibilities Literacy; Creativity, Reflection tools; Sociocultural psychology; Agency; Futures thinking; Constraints; Self-assessment

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Uncertainty has become a defining feature of contemporary life. As individuals and communities face rapid social, technological and ecological transformations, the ability to engage productively with the possible—what could be, could have been, might become, can never be—has become increasingly central. Creativity research has long recognised that navigating novelty requires more than divergent thinking or personal skill; it involves an expanded sensitivity to constraints, a capacity to imagine otherwise, and the active immersion within the sociocultural world we all inhabit (Glăveanu, 2014; Glăveanu & Beghetto, 2017).

Building on this tradition, the notion of *Possibilities Literacy* was recently proposed as a way of naming and organising the competencies involved in perceiving, generating, and ethically guiding possibilities in everyday life (Glăveanu, Tromp & de Saint-Laurent, 2026). Rather than describing a stable trait, Possibilities Literacy highlights a set of situated practices that unfold between people, materials, their multiple histories and futures. To be literate in possibility is to inhabit one's world with a openness to what could be, and with an awareness of how constraints, alternatives and agency shape this horizon.

If this literacy can be cultivated, then a key question follows: how might people become more aware of how they relate to the possible? This article introduces the *Possibilities Literacy Questionnaire* (PoLiQu) as one response. PoLiQu is not a psychometric measure. It does not assume that Possibilities Literacy resides “inside” individuals, waiting to be detected or scored. Instead, it offers a reflective space, encouraging respondents to consider their habitual ways of engaging with constraints, exploring alternatives, and enacting agency. The focus is on behaviour rather than disposition, and on patterns that can be recognised, discussed and developed.

The questionnaire is deliberately simple: fifteen items, each corresponding to one of the core competencies identified in the original framework. Respondents are invited to describe how often they enact these behaviours—“often”, “sometimes”, “rarely”—although numerical scales may be used if desired. This simplicity is intentional. It preserves the reflective, dialogical character of the instrument and avoids reducing possibility-oriented practices to test-like categories. In line with sociocultural approaches to creativity and human development, PoLiQu treats reflection itself as a form of action: a way of reorganising experience, repositioning oneself, and making new forms of agency possible (Valsiner, 2014).

PoLiQu can be used in multiple ways: to reflect on current practices, to articulate aspirations, or to examine the expectations one feels from others and from society. Taken together, these perspectives illuminate gaps and tensions that often remain unspoken: the distance between what one does, what one would like to do, and what one feels obliged to do. Used collaboratively, the tool becomes a prompt for dialogue, allowing pairs or groups to explore their sense of the possible together. Because items are grounded in observable practices, the questionnaire can also function as a qualitative interview guide, supporting richer forms of narrative, experiential or participatory inquiry.

This article presents the conceptual grounding of PoLiQu, outlines the development of its items and discusses its potential uses across educational, organisational, therapeutic and community settings. The aim is not to offer a definitive instrument, but to propose a flexible tool that can help individuals and groups perceive and expand their own horizon of possibility. In doing so, PoLiQu aligns with a broader movement within creativity, futures, and Possibility Studies research toward tools that foster reflection, agency and ethical imagination rather than prediction or categorisation (Craft, 2011; Sternberg, 2021).

## **THE POSSIBLE: FROM POSSIBILITY THINKING TO POSSIBILITY STUDIES AND BEYOND**

Before turning to the framework of Possibilities Literacy itself, it is helpful to situate this work within a broader intellectual lineage concerned with the possible. Over the past two decades, the “possible” has moved from being an implicit background to creativity research to becoming an explicit focus in its own right. Possibility Thinking, developed initially within the field of creativity in education, framed the possible as a shift in stance: a movement from “What is this?” to “What can I do with this?” or “What else could this be?” (Craft, 2011). This orientation emphasised the small, everyday ways in which children and adults reimagine situations, objects or relationships, often in very modest yet consequential ways. Possibility Thinking thus highlighted possibility as an accessible practice rather than a rare creative gift.

In parallel, creativity scholars increasingly acknowledged that the possible has social, cultural and ethical dimensions. Research on “little-c” creativity (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009), on the dynamics of emerging ideas (Corazza, 2016), and on the role of chance and serendipity in opening new possibilities (Ross, 2025) pointed to the fact that creativity unfolds within rich ecologies. The possible is shaped not only by the thinker but by materials, histories, tools, norms and future orientations that both enable and limit action. Creativity began to be understood not simply as the generation of novelty but as the ongoing negotiation of what could be, should be, and might be realised (see Glăveanu, 2020).

This expanding view provided fertile ground for a broader interdisciplinary movement: Possibility Studies. Emerging at the intersection of social sciences, humanities and futures research, Possibility Studies takes the possible as its primary object of inquiry, bringing into focus the social, affective, political and ethical dimensions of how people and communities relate to what is not yet. Scholars in this field argue that possibilities are not merely mental constructions but sociomaterial constructions, shaped by cultural imaginaries, institutional arrangements and lived experiences of hope, fear or constraint (Appadurai, 2013; Miller, 2018). Possibility Studies positions the possible as a fundamental dimension of human existence: something people continually interpret, enact, resist, generate and share.

It is against this backdrop that the notion of Possibilities Literacy emerged. If Possibility Thinking opened the door by showing how individuals ask “what if?”, and Possibility Studies widened the landscape by showing how the possible is socially and culturally constituted, Possibilities Literacy brings these insights together in a form that is developmental and practical. It frames the possible not only as an object of study but as a competence that people can cultivate over time. This perspective echoes work in cultural and developmental psychology that emphasises how futures are imagined and enacted in everyday life and how individuals learn to navigate uncertainty by drawing on cultural resources, narratives, and values (Zittoun & Gillespie, 2015).

Seen in this broader context, Possibilities Literacy becomes part of a long-standing effort to understand human engagement with the not here. Its contribution is to offer a vocabulary for recognising, discussing and enhancing the practices through which people relate to possibility, practices that are shaped not only by cognition but also by bodies, tools, institutions, and relationships. The PoLiQu introduced in this article follows directly from this line of thinking. It translates a complex theoretical landscape into a simple reflective tool, allowing individuals and groups to explore how they perceive, generate, and steward the possible in their own lives.

## **POSSIBILITIES LITERACY: FRAMEWORK AND FOUNDATIONS**

The starting point for PoLiQu is the framework of Possibilities Literacy developed in earlier work (see Glăveanu, Tromp & de Saint-Laurent, 2026). This framework emerged from the recognition that engaging with the possible is neither a single skill nor a purely cognitive capacity, but an interdependent set of practices shaped by sociocultural, material, and relational conditions. To speak of a “literacy” is to emphasise that working with possibility involves learned, situated, and improvable competencies, much like reading or writing, but oriented toward what is not yet realised.

Possibilities Literacy brings together insights from creativity research, cultural psychology and futures thinking, all of which, in different ways, highlight the centrality of constraints, imagination and agency in human development. Within creativity studies, there is a long-standing awareness that novelty arises through a dynamic interplay between limits and freedoms, histories and futures, individuals and collectives (Sawyer, 2017). Cultural psychologists have similarly emphasised how people position themselves in relation to imagined futures, narrative trajectories, and cultural possibilities that are always broader than the here-and-now (Zittoun & Gillespie, 2015). Futures studies adds another dimension by bringing ethical deliberation and long-term thinking explicitly into view (Miller, 2018). The framework of Possibilities Literacy integrates these strands into a coherent set of competencies that reflect how people become attuned to and capable of shaping the possible in their lives.

The model identifies five dimensions—Perception, Crafting, Engagement, Stewardship, and Mindsets—each approached through three orientations—Constraints, Alternatives, and Agency.

In brief, Perception refers to the situated acts of noticing, interpreting and questioning what is given; Crafting concerns the active shaping, testing and development of possibilities through iterative action; Engagement highlights the relational and collaborative processes through which possibilities are negotiated, co-created and enacted with others; Stewardship introduces a reflective and ethical orientation toward futures, including acts of anticipation and the evaluation of consequences and responsibilities over time; and Mindsets refer to the more enduring orientations and dispositions that shape how individuals approach constraints, alternatives and agency across situations. Moreover, orientations are not stages or levels, but fundamental ways of relating to possibility. Constraints highlight the structuring forces (social, material, cognitive) that shape what can be seen or done. Alternatives refer to the capacity to imagine, explore and generate possibilities beyond what is currently given. Agency captures the sense of authorship and responsibility involved in selecting, enacting and sustaining possibilities over time.

Taken together, these dimensions and orientations form a matrix of fifteen competencies. They include practices such as reframing constraints, generating playful alternatives, engaging in co-creation with others, deliberating about futures, and cultivating a mindset that sees oneself as an active participant in shaping what is possible. Although each competency can be described separately, they rarely appear in isolation in everyday experience. For instance, possibility-making is iterative, relational and ecological: the way one perceives constraints affects how one experiments with alternatives; the kinds of alternatives one generates depend on social negotiations and ethical considerations; and the mindset one brings to uncertainty shapes agency throughout.

For clarity, the full framework is presented in the table below as it appeared in the original manuscript on Possibilities Literacy (Glăveanu, Tromp & de Saint-Laurent, 2026). This table offers the conceptual foundation for the fifteen items developed later in this article.

**Table 1. Overview of the components and subcomponents of Possibilities Literacy (from Glăveanu, Tromp & de Saint-Laurent, 2026)**

| Dimension ↓ /<br>Orientation → | Constraints                                                                                                                                                                  | Alternatives                                                                                                                                                                          | Agency                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Perception</b>              | <b>Reframing constraints</b><br>Reinterpreting limits to uncover hidden affordances and open new ways of seeing; includes awareness of assumptions and inviting serendipity. | <b>Possibility mapping</b><br>Identifying and distinguishing among imagined, counterfactual, and emergent possibilities; recognizing the contours of the possible beyond the present. | <b>Deep inquiry</b><br>Engaging with wonder, curiosity, and transformative questioning; seeking new understanding by interrogating what is taken for granted.           |
| <b>Crafting</b>                | <b>Constraint navigation</b><br>Working within and through limits to shape possibilities; adaptive thinking, problem-solving, and creative use of available resources.       | <b>Playful generation</b><br>Using imagination, divergent thinking, and pretend play to generate novel ideas and explore paths unconstrained by immediate utility.                    | <b>Iterative action</b><br>Testing, refining, and realizing ideas over time; balancing uncertainty with decision-making through cycles of experimentation and feedback. |

| Dimension ▼ /<br>Orientation ➔ | Constraints                                                                                                                                                                              | Alternatives                                                                                                                                                               | Agency                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Engagement</b>              | <b>Negotiating constraints</b><br>Collaboratively defining and adapting shared limits, rules, or boundaries; managing power and participation in social contexts.                        | <b>Co-creation</b><br>Jointly imagining and developing possibilities with others; distributed imagination, dialogue, and emergent collective agency.                       | <b>Participatory voice</b><br>Expressing, asserting, and shaping one's agency in relation to others; includes empowerment, inclusion, storytelling, and relational autonomy. |
| <b>Stewardship</b>             | <b>Constraints triage</b><br>Evaluating and prioritizing which constraints or possibilities to maintain, alter, or discard; an ethical decision-making process under uncertainty.        | <b>Futures deliberation</b><br>Reflecting on preferable, plausible, and just futures; involves moral imagination, scenario building, and pluralistic futures thinking.     | <b>Value alignment</b><br>Selecting actions consistent with shared values, sustainability, and dignity; aligning personal and collective futures with ethical commitments.   |
| <b>Mindsets</b>                | <b>Constraint appreciation</b><br>Understanding how constraints function and why they matter; developing a positive stance toward limits as necessary conditions for agency and meaning. | <b>Openness to difference</b><br>Cultivating receptivity to unfamiliar ideas, perspectives, and cultural imaginaries; a foundation for pluralism and learning from others. | <b>Self-authorship</b><br>Developing one's identity as a co-creator of the possible; internalizing responsibility and agency for shaping one's life and world.               |

This matrix forms the backbone of PoLiQu. Each item in the questionnaire corresponds directly to one cell of the framework, one specific way in which people engage with possibility. Importantly, these are not attributes hidden inside individuals. They are enacted relations: ways of seeing, doing and interacting that emerge in particular contexts and can shift over time. A person may often reframe constraints at work but rarely in their personal life; they may engage in co-creation with friends yet struggle with participatory voice in formal settings; they may feel agentic when imagining futures but constrained when enacting them. The purpose of PoLiQu is not to fix these patterns into categories but to help people recognise them, reflect on them and explore how they might be expanded.

In this sense, the fifteen competencies of Possibilities Literacy should not be understood as a checklist or hierarchy. They are better thought of as an ecology of practices: interdependent, flexible, and responsive to context. What matters is not only whether one enacts a given competency, but how these practices combine in real situations to shape one's sense of what is possible. The questionnaire that follows is built precisely to make this ecology visible, accessible and discussable. It translates the conceptual model into a set of everyday behaviours that individuals can recognise and evaluate, opening a space for reflection and development.

## DEVELOPING THE PoLiQu: PRINCIPLES AND ITEM CONSTRUCTION

Translating the framework of Possibilities Literacy into an instrument required careful consideration of what such a tool should and should not do. Because the purpose of PoLiQu is not to measure latent traits but to support reflection, any attempt to replicate the conventions of standardised testing

would have been counterproductive. Instead, the development of the questionnaire followed a series of principles that align with the sociocultural and ecological understanding of possibility at the heart of the framework.

By “reflective tool”, I refer to an instrument designed not to measure latent constructs but to elicit situated accounts of practice and support processes of interpretation, dialogue and development. In this sense, PoLiQu is closer to an interview protocol, vignette-based method or other qualitative elicitation devices than to a psychometric scale. Its primary function is to make patterns of engagement with possibility observable and discussable, rather than to produce standardised scores.

The first principle concerns the nature of the competencies themselves. The fifteen components of Possibilities Literacy describe practices—ways of perceiving, interacting, imagining and acting—that emerge within particular contexts and relationships. They are enacted in response to situations, constraints, values, and social dynamics. This meant that each item had to focus on behaviour rather than disposition, on what people *do* rather than who they *are* presumed to be. Statements were therefore phrased in a way that invites respondents to recognise themselves in familiar patterns of action: noticing, reinterpreting, collaborating, questioning, deliberating, or aligning choices with values. The questionnaire becomes meaningful when respondents can see their own practices mirrored in these descriptions and reflect on their frequency.

A second guiding principle was simplicity. The instrument uses qualitative response categories (“often”, “sometimes”, “rarely”) rather than numerical scales by default. This choice reinforces the reflective character of the tool. It avoids the implicit precision of Likert scales and reduces the temptation to treat the resulting profile as a stable or objective “score”. Simplicity also increases accessibility: respondents can complete the questionnaire without feeling tested or evaluated, and dialogue around the items becomes more fluid and less constrained by technical language. For contexts in which researchers or practitioners prefer numerical coding—for instance, to compare patterns across groups or to explore correlations—Likert-type responses can be introduced without difficulty. These remain optional adaptations rather than integral features of the instrument.

A third consideration involved language. Because the items are meant to resonate with people’s everyday experience, their phrasing needed to be as concrete and direct as possible. In the adult version, the wording reflects practices that can be recognised across professional, personal, and social domains. For the child version (from 7–8 years of age), the language is simplified further, with an emphasis on clarity, accessibility and examples that match children’s everyday contexts. This dual structure acknowledges that possibilities literacy is relevant across the lifespan, while also recognising developmental differences in comprehension and expression. The child version can also be used, with very slight variation (e.g., change the reference to friends), as version B with adult participants whenever evaluations are needed pre and post specific interventions.

Another aspect of the construction process concerned the possibility of including one or two reverse-coded items. While PoLiQu does not require such items, their inclusion can be useful in contexts where practitioners wish to check attentiveness or engage respondents in deeper reflection.

Reverse-coded items are phrased in a way that expresses a distancing from possibilities, for example, avoiding unfamiliar futures or hesitating to offer one's perspective, and can be created using in the existing structure one or two items of the researcher's choosing.

Ultimately, in constructing the PoLiQu items, the biggest challenge was to distil each competency from Table 1 into a single, recognisable behavioural pattern without oversimplifying it. The result is an instrument that, although brief, remains faithful to the conceptual richness of the framework. Its brevity is not a limitation but a strength: it encourages users to focus on the core meaning of each competency and allows space for interpretation and elaboration.

The items themselves are presented in the following section, for both the adult and child version. Their wording reflects the intention behind PoLiQu: to create a tool that invites individuals and, if desired, groups, to explore how they engage with possibility in their lives. Rather than categorising or ranking respondents, the questionnaire seeks to open a space for awareness, curiosity, and dialogue.

Although PoLiQu takes the form of a structured questionnaire, it is not intended as a psychometric instrument and has not undergone validation for measurement purposes. Its structure is used to organise reflection rather than to operationalise a latent construct. Accordingly, it should not be used to assess levels of Possibilities Literacy or to support inferential comparisons between individuals or groups.

## THE PoLiQu ITEMS

The adult version of PoLiQu uses formulations that speak to a wide range of everyday contexts: work, home, relationships, and community life. The child version maintains the same structure but adapts the language so that younger respondents can recognise themselves more easily in the situations described. In both versions, the items are intentionally brief and relatively open. They describe tendencies without presuming stability, inviting respondents to consider how these practices vary across situations and relationships.

Below are the fifteen items for adults, outlined in the order of the fifteen competencies. Items can be used in this order or randomly presented.

### PoLiQu Adults

1. When I notice limits or obstacles in a situation, I often see them in a different or more useful way.  
(*Reframing Constraints / Perception + Constraints*)
2. I find myself imagining different possibilities or outcomes beyond what is immediately given.  
(*Possibility Mapping / Perception + Alternatives*)

3. I question taken-for-granted assumptions and explore ideas more deeply when something feels unclear or incomplete.  
(*Deep Inquiry / Perception + Agency*)
4. I adapt well to constraints and use them creatively when working toward a solution.  
(*Constraint Navigation / Crafting + Constraints*)
5. I enjoy generating new ideas or exploring unusual alternatives, even when they have no immediate purpose.  
(*Playful Generation / Crafting + Alternatives*)
6. I try out ideas, revise and revisit them over time rather than expecting things to work perfectly the first time.  
(*Iterative Action / Crafting + Agency*)
7. I work with others to define shared rules so that collaboration becomes easier or more meaningful.  
(*Negotiating Constraints / Engagement + Constraints*)
8. I like imagining and developing ideas together with others, building on what they propose.  
(*Co-creation / Engagement + Alternatives*)
9. I express my perspective in group settings and try to contribute to shaping shared decisions or directions.  
(*Participatory Voice / Engagement + Agency*)
10. I reflect critically on which limits or possibilities should be kept, changed or removed in a given situation.  
(*Constraints Triage / Stewardship + Constraints*)
11. I think about the future in plural ways, e.g., what is likely, what is possible, and what is preferable.  
(*Futures Deliberation / Stewardship + Alternatives*)
12. I try to make choices that align with values that matter to me and to others around me.  
(*Value Alignment / Stewardship + Agency*)
13. I recognise the positive role that limits sometimes play and try not to see them only as obstacles.  
(*Constraint Appreciation / Mindsets + Constraints*)
14. I am open to ideas, perspectives or ways of doing things that differ from my own.  
(*Openness to Difference / Mindsets + Alternatives*)
15. I see myself as an active participant in shaping my life and the possibilities available to me.  
(*Self-Authorship / Mindsets + Agency*)

## PoLiQu Children

1. When something feels difficult, I think about it in a new or different way.  
(*Reframing Constraints / Perception + Constraints*)
2. I like imagining other ways things could go, not just the way they are now.  
(*Possibility Mapping / Perception + Alternatives*)
3. I ask questions when something doesn't make sense to me.  
(*Deep Inquiry / Perception + Agency*)
4. I try to find good ways of working with the rules or limits I have.  
(*Constraint Navigation / Crafting + Constraints*)
5. I enjoy coming up with new ideas or pretending different things could happen.  
(*Playful Generation / Crafting + Alternatives*)
6. I keep trying and changing my ideas when something doesn't work the first time.  
(*Iterative Action / Crafting + Agency*)
7. I help my friends decide on rules or ways of doing things that work for everyone.  
(*Negotiating Constraints / Engagement + Constraints*)
8. I like making up ideas or stories together with others and adding to what they say.  
(*Co-creation / Engagement + Alternatives*)
9. I share my ideas in groups and try to help decide what we do together.  
(*Participatory Voice / Engagement + Agency*)
10. I think about which rules are helpful and which ones might need to change.  
(*Constraints Triage / Stewardship + Constraints*)
11. I imagine different futures: what might happen, what could happen and what I would like to happen.  
(*Futures Deliberation / Stewardship + Alternatives*)
12. I try to make choices that fit what I think is right and what is good for others too.  
(*Value Alignment / Stewardship + Agency*)
13. I understand that limits can sometimes be helpful and not only get in the way.  
(*Constraint Appreciation / Mindsets + Constraints*)
14. I am curious about ideas that are different from mine.  
(*Openness to Difference / Mindsets + Alternatives*)
15. I believe I can help shape what happens in my life.  
(*Self-Authorship / Mindsets + Agency*)

These items offer a compact yet comprehensive entry into the landscape of Possibilities Literacy. Their value lies not in producing a definitive profile but in prompting respondents to reflect on their own practices and the dynamics that shape them. Because the items remain close to everyday experience, they are well suited to the reflective, dialogical uses envisioned for PoLiQu. The next section will elaborate on these uses and explore how the instrument can be applied in diverse settings.

## **USING PoLiQu: REFLECTION, DIALOGUE AND DEVELOPMENT**

PoLiQu was conceived not as a diagnostic instrument but as a tool for reflective engagement. Its value lies in how it prompts individuals and groups to pause, examine their habitual ways of relating to the possible and consider how these practices might be expanded or reoriented. In this sense, the questionnaire is less an assessment than an invitation. It encourages respondents to step outside the flow of everyday action and take stock of how they perceive constraints, explore alternatives, and enact agency in different areas of their lives. The simple act of answering the items can be transformative: it opens a moment of reflexivity in which people encounter their own patterns, their aspirations, and the forces that shape them.

Because of this reflective orientation, the questionnaire is accompanied by a few guiding instructions that respondents may follow. The most straightforward invitation is to answer each item with reference to one's current behaviour. An option here is to answer each item in general terms and another is to focus on a particular context like family or working life, or on how participants perform specific social roles (e.g., parent, teacher, manager).

***Instruction 1.a (current behaviour, general):** Answer each item by thinking about how you usually behave in everyday situations.*

***Instruction 1.b (current behaviour, specific):** Answer each item by thinking about how you usually behave in context X (or in role Y).*

This establishes an initial picture of one's possibility practices and forms the basis for further reflection. Respondents may then be encouraged to repeat the questionnaire with a different perspective in mind, for example how they would *like* to behave.

***Instruction 2 (aspirational behaviour):** Answer each item again, imagining how you would ideally like to behave.*

This shift toward aspiration often reveals values or potential directions for growth, pointing to possibilities that feel desirable yet not fully realised. A third set of responses focuses on perceived expectations: how respondents believe they are *supposed* to behave.

***Instruction 3.a (perceived expectations, adults):** Answer each item a third time, thinking about how others or society expect you to behave.*

For children, this form of reflection remains possible with more age-appropriate wording.

***Instruction 3.b (perceived expectations, children):** Think about how adults, teachers or people at school expect you to behave when you answer the items again.*

These three invitations—reflecting on what *is*, what one *would like* to be, and what one feels one *should* be—offer a simple yet powerful way to illuminate tensions in people’s lives. Many respondents find that certain competencies appear frequently in their aspirational profile but only rarely in their current one; or that expectations from others do not align with their own values and preferred ways of engaging with the possible. Such insights do not need to be codified numerically. Their value lies in the discussions they provoke, whether internally or with others, and in how they bring into focus the dynamics that shape people’s sense of agency.

For those who wish to use PoLiQu in a relational or dialogical format, instructions may invite two people to complete the questionnaire together or even for one another, when this is appropriate and consensual. Respondents might first complete the items about themselves and then repeat them as they perceive the other person to behave, before sharing their reflections.

***Instruction 4 (relational use):** You and another person may each complete the questionnaire for yourselves, and then (if you both agree) complete it again as you see the other person.*

They might also swap forms they completed for themselves and discuss similarities, differences and possible misunderstandings.

***Instruction 5.a (paired dialogue, adults):** Exchange your answers and talk together about where you saw things similarly or differently.*

This form of “double reflection” can be particularly generative in mentoring relationships, partnerships or creative collaborations. In educational settings, teachers and students might complete PoLiQu separately and then compare their reflections to better understand their shared learning environment. With children, instructions should emphasise respectful interaction.

***Instruction 5.b (paired dialogue, children):** Share your answers kindly, and only if the other person agrees, focusing on helping each other understand the answers.*

The questionnaire also allows for collective use. A group—such as a class, a team or a community workshop—can be invited to reflect on each item from the perspective of “we” rather than “I”.

***Instruction 6 (group use):** Answer each item together, thinking about how your group usually behaves.*

Group profiles can be compared with the group’s aspirational profile (“how we would like to behave”) or their perceived external expectations (“how others expect us to behave”), providing rich starting points for discussion.

Finally, PoLiQu can be used in qualitative or narrative formats by treating each item as a question or prompt. Respondents may be invited to give examples, tell stories or describe moments in which they enacted or struggled with a particular competency.

***Instruction 7.a (qualitative use, adults):** Use each item as a question, give an example, tell a story or describe a situation that fits the behaviour.*

Practitioners in coaching, counselling or futures-oriented facilitation can integrate PoLiQu into reflective sessions. Children, too, can be guided in this way through simple examples drawn from their everyday lives.

*Instruction 7.b (qualitative use, children): Think of a moment at home or at school when this happened and describe it in your own words.*

In all of these uses, the emphasis remains on meaning-making and development. The structure of the questionnaire and the flexibility of its instructions encourage people to treat the items as open invitations that reveal how they inhabit the possible. Whether considered individually, relationally or collectively, PoLiQu prompts reflection not only on present practices but also on the futures one might want to cultivate and the social worlds that make these futures more or less attainable. Its strength lies in this generativity. PoLiQu does not close down questions of identity or ability; it opens space for dialogue, imagination and change.

## **APPLICATIONS OF PoLiQu ACROSS CONTEXTS**

PoLiQu was designed to be adaptable. Because it speaks the language of everyday practices rather than technical constructs, it can be woven naturally into a wide range of settings. What unites these applications is not the search for fixed scores or comparison but the desire to open reflective spaces in which individuals and groups can better understand how they inhabit, negotiate, and expand their fields of possibility. The tool becomes a companion to learning and development, helping people articulate what is often implicit in their sense of constraint, freedom, and imagination.

In educational contexts, PoLiQu offers a gentle way of encouraging learners to reflect on their agency and on the relationship between their present practices and their imagined futures. Rather than measuring creativity in a conventional sense, the questionnaire supports the kind of reflective work that creativity researchers increasingly highlight as essential to learning, i.e., an understanding of oneself as a participant in shaping one's own possibilities (Craft, 2011; Glăveanu & Beghetto, 2017). Students may complete the tool individually or as a class. When used collectively, PoLiQu highlights how schools and classrooms themselves become possibility spaces, structured by norms, constraints and opportunities for co-creation. Because it can be applied from different perspectives, teachers may complete PoLiQu from their own viewpoint, and students may do the same; comparing these profiles can open valuable conversations about shared expectations, collaboration, and the climate of possibility in the classroom.

In organisational settings, PoLiQu can serve as a reflective instrument for teams, managers or leadership development programmes. Many organisations aspire to be innovative yet struggle with the tensions between structure and openness, control and creativity. By prompting employees to consider how they negotiate constraints, engage in co-creation or align decisions with shared values, PoLiQu offers a way of discussing organisational culture without relying on evaluative

performance tools. It draws attention to the relational and ethical dimensions of creativity that are often overlooked, resonating with sociocultural views of innovation as a distributed and negotiated process rather than a purely individual accomplishment (Sawyer, 2017). Employers and employees may each complete the questionnaire, separately or together, comparing how they perceive their shared environment and how they imagine its future. Teams can use the questionnaire to surface expectations, identify misalignments or explore emerging futures collectively.

Therapeutic, coaching or mentoring contexts offer another rich application. Because PoLiQu highlights the interplay between what people do, what they wish to do and what they feel expected to do, it naturally opens conversations about agency, identity, and personal meaning (Kaufman, 2018). Items associated with reframing constraints or self-authorship resonate with approaches that view personal development as the reorganisation of one's relationship to oneself and others. The aspirational and expectations-based versions of the questionnaire can help clients articulate tensions between internal desires and external pressures. Practitioners may use the items as prompts, inviting stories of times when respondents felt able—or unable—to act on a wide range of possibilities.

In community settings, PoLiQu can be used to explore collective agency and the shared imagination of futures. A community group might complete the questionnaire about “how we act” and “how we want to act”, revealing areas where collective capacity feels strong and others where support or change is needed. Because the items emphasise perception, interaction and ethical deliberation, they can help communities reflect on how they navigate constraints imposed by social, economic or environmental conditions, what Appadurai (2013) describes as the challenge of our “capacity to aspire”. In participatory workshops, PoLiQu can act as a mediating artefact, helping participants articulate the kinds of futures they hope to work toward and the practices that sustain them.

Last but not least, PoLiQu also holds significant potential for research. Its clarity and simplicity make it easy to deploy across diverse populations, allowing researchers to examine how people in different cultural settings engage with the possible. Cross-cultural studies might use PoLiQu to explore how constraints are perceived or how agency is enacted in societies shaped by distinct economic, historical or educational conditions. Comparative work within domains is equally valuable: for example, studying how teachers and students differ in their perceptions of possibility in the same learning environment, or how managers and employees interpret the same organisational culture. Because the instrument can be completed from different vantage points—self, aspiration, perceived expectation—it allows researchers to capture subtle tensions within and between social roles. Classroom-based research could compare students' and teachers' collective profiles, while organisational research could explore alignment or disconnection between leadership and staff. PoLiQu thus provides a flexible foundation for qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods comparative work that is sensitive to context.

Across these diverse areas, PoLiQu retains its central purpose: to foster awareness of, dialogue about, and engagement with the possible. Its strength lies not in generating definitive outcomes

but in enabling individuals and groups to see themselves differently, to notice how possibilities emerge, how they are supported or constrained and how they might be reimagined. By offering a structured yet flexible approach to reflection, PoLiQu contributes to broader efforts within creativity and futures research to cultivate more intentional, ethical and collaborative forms of engagement with the unknown.

Important to note, when used in research, PoLiQu is best understood as a tool for exploratory, descriptive and interpretive inquiry. Numerical coding of responses may be employed to support pattern recognition or facilitate discussion, but such representations remain indicative and should not be treated as validated measurements of underlying competencies.

## CONCLUSION

The development of PoLiQu emerged from a simple yet pressing question: how might people become more aware of the ways they engage with possibility in their everyday lives? At a time marked by uncertainty, rapid change and overlapping crises (Montuori, 2023), understanding one's relationship to the possible—i.e., how one perceives constraints, imagines alternatives and enacts agency—has become not only a matter of creativity but also of well-being, resilience, and ethical responsibility. The framework of Possibilities Literacy offered one conceptual answer. PoLiQu offers a practical complement: a tool that enables individuals and groups to explore this terrain reflectively, gently, and with a sense of curiosity rather than a sole focus on evaluation.

By distilling the fifteen competencies of Possibilities Literacy into recognisable behaviours, PoLiQu helps respondents articulate practices that often remain implicit. Its structure encourages a movement between present actions, aspirational directions and the expectations that shape people's lives. These multiple vantage points reveal tensions that are central to human development and creativity: tensions between what one is and what one seeks to become, between external constraints and inner commitments, between personal agency and shared futures. In this way, PoLiQu aligns with approaches in creativity and cultural psychology that view development as an ongoing negotiation between the actual and the possible (Glăveanu, 2014; Valsiner, 2014; Zittoun & Gillespie, 2015).

The value of the questionnaire lies not in any definitive, once and for all result but in the conversations it opens. Whether used individually, in pairs, in classrooms, in organisations or in community workshops, PoLiQu becomes a mediating artefact that supports reflection and dialogue. It allows people to describe their relationship to the possible in accessible terms and to explore how these practices might be strengthened or reimagined. It also provides a flexible foundation for research, including comparative work across cultures, institutions and social roles. Because it can be completed from different perspectives, PoLiQu lends itself to nuanced analyses of how people make meaning in diverse settings and how they imagine their futures under different constraints.

Looking ahead, PoLiQu represents a first step rather than a final form. Future developments may include digital versions, expanded qualitative guides, domain-specific adaptations or collaborative formats designed explicitly for participatory research. Psychometric validation may be undertaken by those interested in measurement, although the conceptual grounding of the tool remains firmly tied to reflection and development rather than categorisation (similar to the ethos of the psychometrically validated Possibility Thinking Scale; see Glăveanu, Karwowski, Ross & Beghetto, 2024). Most importantly, PoLiQu invites users to rethink their own role in the creation of possibilities. Above all, it proposes that possibility-making is not a rare talent but an everyday practice that is distributed, relational, and open to cultivation.

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