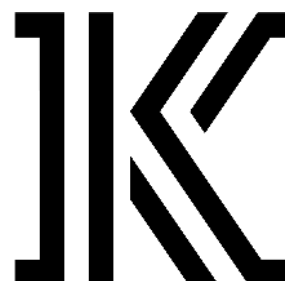


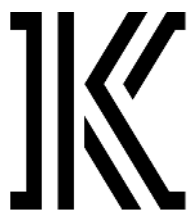
# Art Aid: Weekly activities for prison learners

Inspiration and in-cell activities created for people in criminal justice settings during the coronavirus lockdown.

On each Art Aid sheet, you will find a couple of ideas for creative activities that can be done using limited materials, as well as samples of past entries to the Koestler Awards to provide inspiration.

Download monthly Art Aid sheets from  
[www.koestlerarts.org.uk](http://www.koestlerarts.org.uk)





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## Idea #1: Making Your Mark



Using just a pencil / pen and paper, how many kinds of mark can you make on one page? You could do this very neatly and divide up your page into squares, or just cover the whole page. Let your pen and imagination guide you.

Here are some ideas to get started: strong dark lines, wispy shapes, cross-hatching, shading from dark to light...

Additional ideas:

Think of your pencil or pen as a tool to show how you feel. Can you express different emotions and feelings through your pen by making different marks? Or: Have a go at drawing a simple picture - e.g. of a mug or an apple - using some of your mark-making techniques.

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORY:  
29 - Drawing

## Idea #2: Go For A Walk



Think of a walk you can remember very clearly. Take some time to sit and think about it. Then write the most vivid and detailed description you can, taking the reader on a walk with you.

It might be down the corridor, down the street or up a mountain. A walk through the countryside, along a beach, or through a town...

Try to include description that involves all your senses - what can you see, hear, smell, feel and even taste in the air?

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:  
5 - Non-fiction writing / 6 - Life Story

## Sonnet for a Cretan Tree (Zelkova Abelicea)

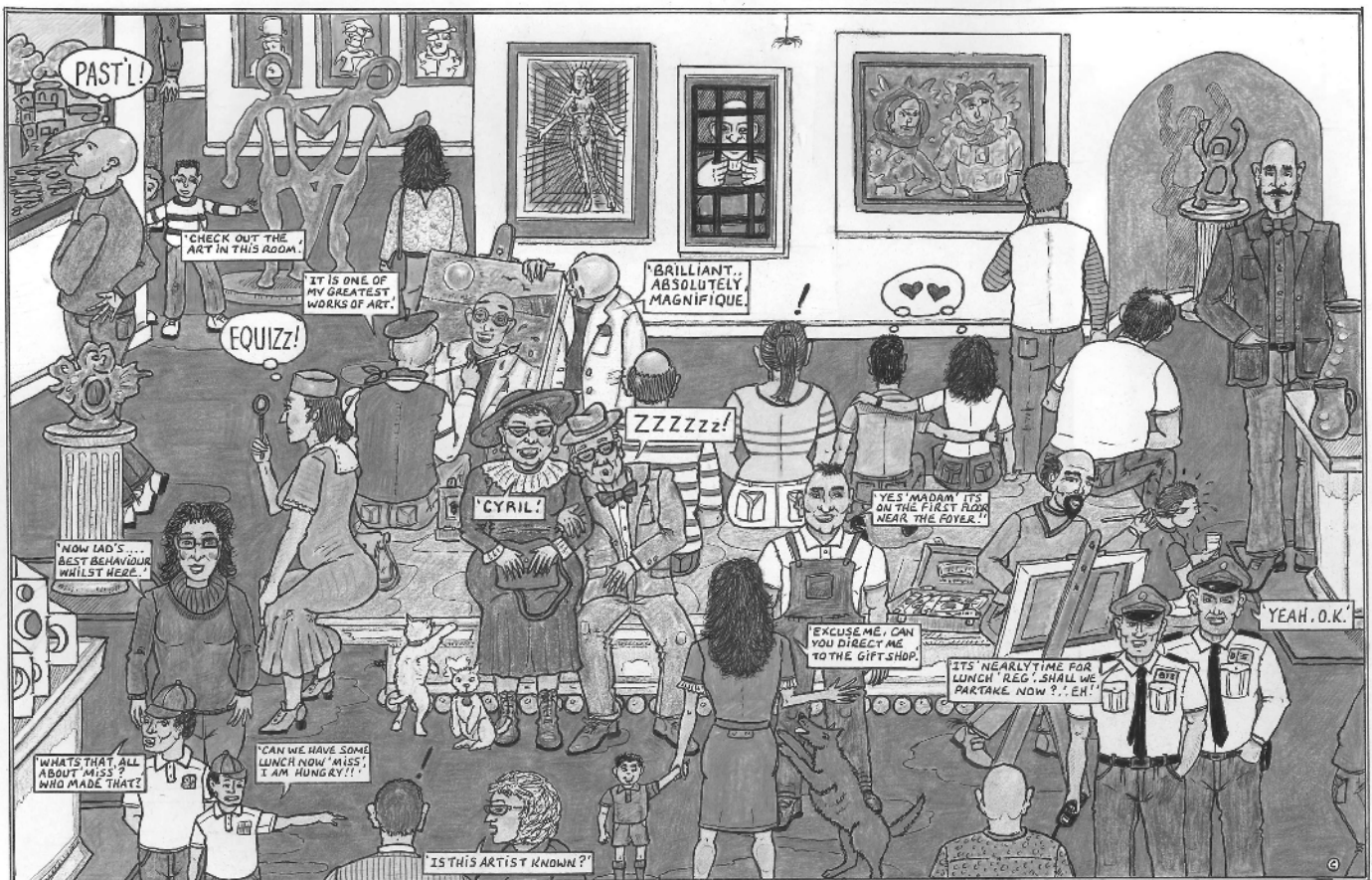
Outside my window there's a foreign tree,  
Each morning it's the first thing that I see.  
I often wonder how it came to stand  
Upon this very piece of no-man's land.  
Those who planned the prison let it grow,  
And built this place around it years ago.  
The RHS have blessed it with a plaque.

But does it ever dream of going back,  
Across the years, the miles, across the sea?  
Does it long for friends and family?  
Although its leaves dance on this English air,  
Does it yearn to blossom over there?

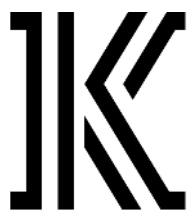
It has no choice. It is a refugee.  
My fellow prisoner, the migrant tree.

*HM Prison Wymott, 2017*

## The Gallery *HM Prison Wakefield, 2016*







*Hello from all of us at Koestler Arts!*

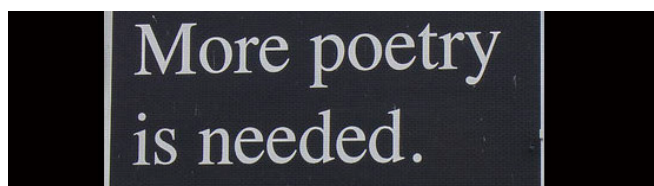
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## Idea #3: Banners



What do you want to say today? What simple bold message do you want to share in the current coronavirus crisis?

Perhaps you are hearing a lot of advice and messages on news and radio about coronavirus: Wash Your Hands / Stay Safe / Clap for the NHS... What individual message would you like to say loudly? They could be words of comfort, advice for people having a hard time inside, or just how you feel today. Try and use as few words as possible to make your message bold.

Then design a banner to proudly display your message. Add pictures or shapes to the design to make your point eye-catching. Use pen and paper, and add in other colours or materials if you have them.

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:  
29 - Drawing / 42 - Calligraphy / 44 - Graphic Design

## Idea #4: In This Place

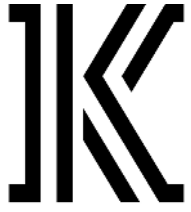


Take the three words 'In this place' as your starting point and then write without pausing or stopping or even thinking too much for at least 10 minutes.

Begin by taking a moment to think about where your 'place' might be - somewhere you enjoy thinking about. It could be a room, a holiday memory, the gym, yoga mat, chapel, somewhere outside or a completely imaginary space.

Then pick up your pen or pencil and begin. Keep going, try not to pause to think or re-read what you have written just yet. See if your writing can be a continuous flow like waves or your breath. After 10 minutes, take a pause and enjoy reading what you have read. You might want to finish there or you might want to carry on writing...

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:  
3 - Flash Fiction / 5 - Non-Fiction



## Nightingale at Dartmoor Prison

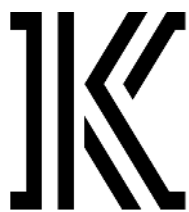
The nightingale begins the night's ritual  
And lands with exuberant notes as gift  
on my window-ledge, to take my victuals.  
I close my eyes and bathe in beauty's lift.  
Her song is drowsy and meandering  
Like summer days or streams without an end  
And though she's gone while I am wondering  
She's wooed me so's I scarcely comprehend.  
Though now is dusk she returns before dawn  
To sing her solo on a silent stage  
So wows my heart and mind, leaves me reborn  
And washes off for now this place's rage.  
Exquisite bird of love, my love is true  
Ever a home is here; ever for you.

*HM Prison Dartmoor, 2017*

## Not Everything Is Black & White

*HM Prison Standford Hill, 2018*





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## Idea #5: Mind's Eye



Set yourself up with a pen and paper and think about something you'd like to draw. Perhaps an item you see around you, or something from your imagination. Start with quite a simple object. Sit and really think about the shape and all the details.

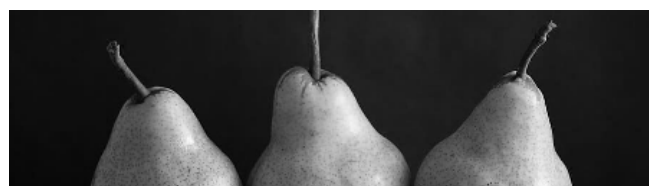
Now comes the challenge: close your eyes!

Keeping your eyes closed, draw your chosen object. Send your concentration within and 'look' with your hand as you draw. Aim to be relaxed and instinctive, not perfect. Then open your eyes and enjoy looking at your creation. Does it surprise you?

You might like to use this technique for more ambitious pictures - perhaps a landscape scene or an abstract design. See where it takes you...

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:  
29 - Drawing

## Idea #6: Lovesong



We have all heard love songs written about special people, but what about writing a love song about food?!

In this time of coronavirus the public are having to make do with less; maybe it is also helping everyone appreciate the little things in life more...

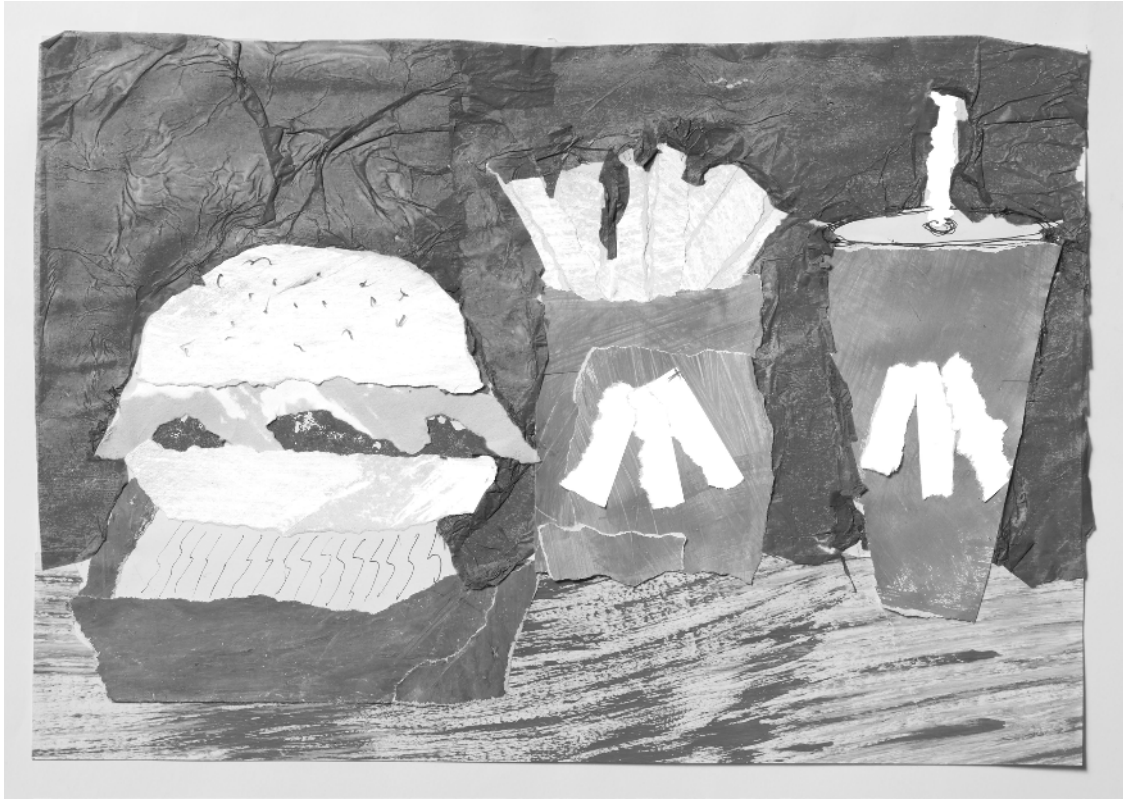
With this in mind, choose a food you really love and use it as the starting point for song lyrics. It might be a perfectly ripe apple, a roast dinner or your favourite chocolate bar. Consider all the qualities of the food that you appreciate. Think about tone - your lyrics could be comic, uplifting, romantic, serious or exaggerated.

To enter the Koestler Awards you only need written lyrics; however if you would like to compose a tune as well then go for it!

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:  
14 - Song writing / 8 - Poem



**Longing for a McDonalds**  
*HM Young Offender Institution Polmont*  
*Highly Commended Award for Mixed Media, 2019*



## The Writer's Hand

Palm flat down before I start.  
Strong veins, brussel sprout knuckles,  
hair creeping up from wrist,  
nails, okay at first sight.

Pen gripped, ready to go.

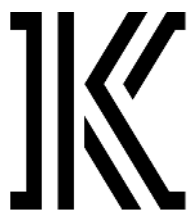
Curled pink O makes a tunnel from eye to page,  
thumb a bit ragged, forefinger less so,  
callus on the middle finger - top knuckle, left side,  
thickening.

Forefinger next door, fleshy pink top,  
a ridge forms the more I write,  
other three fingers looking good.

Rhythmic scraping across the page,  
pen moving briskly now,  
words coming easier than before  
but ink-smudged paper  
means ink-stained hand.

Not as bad as some I've seen -  
my writer's wounds.

*HM Prison Isle of Wight (Parkhurst),  
Engaging Minds Strengths Gold Award  
for Poem, 2018*



*Hello from all of us at Koestler Arts!*

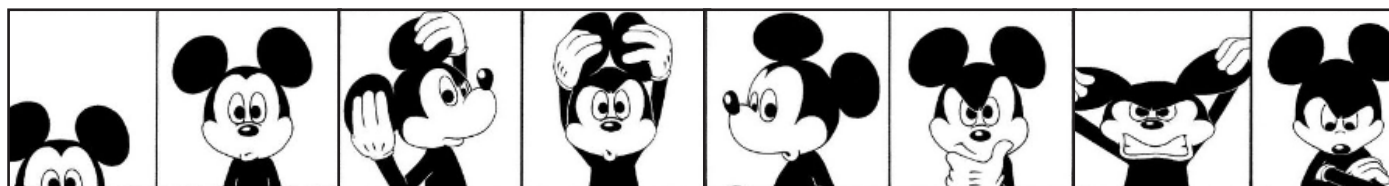
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## Idea #7: One Day



Artworks, books and films are sometimes about the big, dramatic or historical events - wars, weddings and great long journeys. But what about all those everyday events that make up our lives - eating breakfast, chatting to a neighbour, missing a train - maybe they deserve to be turned into a piece of art as well...

So this week's activity is about finding the drama in the everyday. Can you create a piece about the events of one very ordinary day? It could be a day from real life or one from your imagination.

There are lots of different ways to approach this activity. You could draw a comic strip or graphic novel, combining words and images - on the back of this sheet is a comic strip template to get started with. Or you could write a story, a play or create a picture/s.

Before you start, you might like to take a bit of time to sit and think. Perhaps make notes about some of the details you'd like to include. What do your main characters look like, how do they talk, what sort of things make them happy or annoyed?

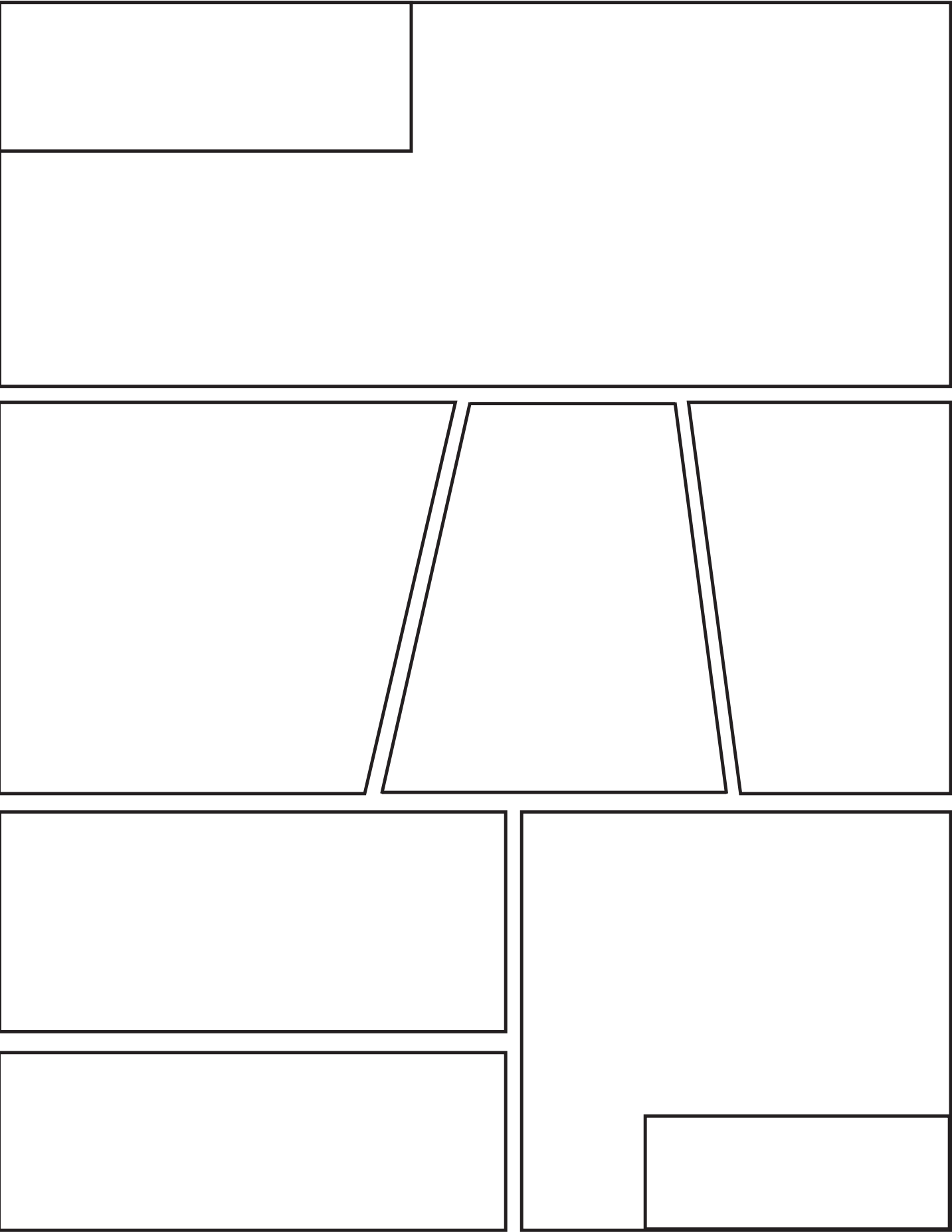
What ways will you find to create drama? Here are a few ideas: exaggeration can make things seem larger-than-life; repetition can help build suspense; humour can do many things...

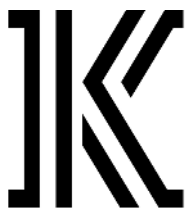
### SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:

35 - Graphic novel / 3 - Flash fiction / 11 - Stage Play



Comic strip or graphic novel template:





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## Idea #8: How does sound look?



If you were to draw sound, what would it look like?

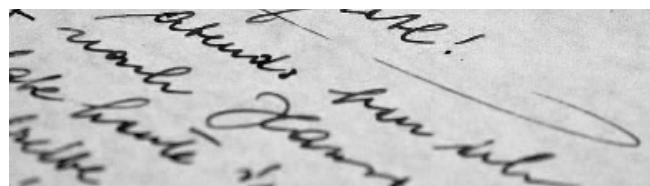
The image above is by the Russian painter Kandinsky (1866 - 1944). He often 'painted' music in his abstract works, blurring boundaries between different forms of art: *'Colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the harmonies, the soul is the piano with many strings'*

Sit quietly and listen to any sounds you hear. Sounds close by and those further away. Try not to judge them as good or bad, just listen.

Begin to make marks on your paper in response to what you hear. Play with the type of lines, the weight of your marks, and colour (if you have it) to show how loud / quiet, how high / low, or what emotions the sounds have. When you feel finished, look at and 'listen' to your composition...

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:  
29 - Drawing / 27 - Painting

## Idea #9: Pen to Paper



Being in lockdown is encouraging people to find different ways to keep in touch. Writing has never felt more important.

You may already be very familiar with the importance of post and receiving letters and postcards. Here are a couple of activities to choose from that you may not have tried before:

Write a letter to a historical figure: tell them why you have chosen them. What would you like to ask to them about their life and times? What else would you like to tell them?

Words of comfort: write a letter to someone who might need cheering up - someone you know, or a letter to yourself. What words would you choose? Might you include a famous quote? How can you 'listen' to someone in a letter?

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORY:  
5 - Non-fiction writing

## Sucks to Zuck

All the laws of truth perverting,  
Hail to Facebook - most diverting.  
Now boring facts bear little weight  
Because mere passion is the light  
That fortifies a sense of right  
And gives all scope to shout their hate.

Let's pile up all the mobile phones,  
Together with those dreadful drones  
And burn them all - a mighty blaze!  
Purge the world of online news  
And internet control of views  
To free us all from slavish ways.

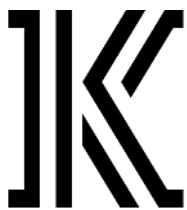
Take up your pen, some ink, and write  
On crisp new paper, pure and white,  
Such thoughtful words as thank or greet  
All those you love, who will regard  
A pers'nal letter, or a card,  
As nicer than a bloody tweet!

*HM Prison Parkhurst, 2019  
First-Time Entrant Award for Poetry Collection*



**Them on That**  
*HM Prison Dovegate, 2016  
Lamb Building Chambers Commended Award*





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## Idea #10: The Lost Words



Lots of words about nature and animals are gradually fading from dictionaries and memories. What does that say about how our world is changing? Which words do you think they are being replaced with?

Can you make something to save these words?

On the back of this sheet is a collection of words about the natural world. Some you may recognize, others may be unknown. Some are general words, others are regional words from different parts of the country. This list is just a starting point. Add any words you would like to in the spaces.

Choose a handful of words from the list that speak to you. These words will be the spine or framework of your artwork. How does each word make you feel? What images, smells, sounds and textures does each word bring to mind? Then build your piece around them - a poem, a collection of poems or a song. If you prefer drawing then you could do a piece of calligraphy - drawing each word with illustrations in and around it. It can be whatever you wish as long as you include the words in some way.

You might like to find ways to share your words with others to help keep them alive...

### SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:

8 - Poem / 9 - Poetry Collection / 42 - Calligraphy / 14 - Song Writing

Here are some words about weather, landscape and animals that you may or might not have come across before. Some are from particular parts of the UK. Do add to the end of the list with any nature words you wish...

**Brais** - sudden heavy shower of rain (Ireland)

**Brook** - small stream

**Cymer** - where two or more rivers or streams join (Wales)

**Dimity** - twilight / dusk (Devon)

**Feetings** - footprints of animals in the snow (Suffolk)

**Glocken** - to begin to thaw (ice / snow) (Yorkshire)

**Griggles** - small apples left on the tree

**Hurly-burly** - thunder and lightning

**Leah** - glade / clearing / open space in woodland

**Monkey peas** - Woodlice (Kent)

**Murmuration** - when hundreds or thousands of starlings (birds) fly together in swooping, coordinated patterns, usually at dusk

**Overstorey** - trees forming the upper canopy of the forest

**Petrichor** - the distinctive earthy smell produced when rain falls on dry soil

**Scoor** - shower of rain (Scotland)

**Scree** - mass of pebbles and small stones that form on a steep mountain slope

**Shepherd's Lamp** - first star that rises after sunset (Cambridgeshire)

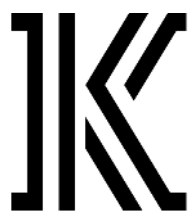
**Shirr** - ripple on water (Cumbria)

**Susurratation** - whistling or rustling sound, as of wind through grass

**Tod** - stump of a tree sawn off and left in the ground

**Understorey** - trees and shrubs underneath the forest canopy





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## Idea #11: Tell Time



During lockdown people are sensing that time has changed. Some are finding time moves more slowly or are losing track of days. Our medical staff are busier than ever.

This week: draw what you think time looks like. You might choose an abstract approach or you might draw something you can 'see' time in. Time might be a pattern or a tangle. It might be disconnected or linked up...

This activity comes from an art gallery Koestler knows called 'Firstsite' - they are gathering ideas from artists around the world. This one comes all the way from an artist in India, who said:

*"You know what, I think time flows not in a straight line, but through the mangled mess of cables, or the knots of a coiled-up rope ... our lives can be seen and understood only by time travelling through these tangled loops."*

SUGGESTED KOESTLER CATEGORY: 29 - Drawing

## Idea #12: Haiku

This task has been designed by a former Koestler entrant, mentee and exhibited artist:

A haiku is a Japanese style of poem. It is made up of 17 syllables split over three lines: The first line has 5 syllables, the second has 7, and the last line has 5.

A syllable is a sound that makes up a word or part of a word - a bit like a beat. For example, there are 2 syllables in water (wa-ter), 3 in inferno (in-fer-no), and 1 in air (air).

Have a go at writing a haiku describing an animal or a person you know. Start by making a list of words describing them, count how many syllables are in each word, and use them as a framework for your haiku.

You don't need huge vocabulary to express yourself. In fact, I believe Haikus work better with smaller words as there's no room for long descriptions and they can be used to convey powerful punchy messages!

On the next page there are a couple of haikus I wrote, which might help inspire you.

SUGGESTED KOESTLER CATEGORY: 8 - Poem



Here is a Haiku I wrote about polar bears:

**Land's largest hunter:  
Polar bears - huge paws, sharp claws  
And very strong jaws.**

Below is a Haiku I wrote about someone I met in prison who had been inside since the age of 14. He was released at 21 and was dreading returning to the outside world.

Inside he was clothed, fed, had a bed, a job and some friends. The outside world represented more than challenges to him; it was a threatening place. It was the opposite of where he had achieved peace - in prison, which is contrary to how many people perceive life inside.

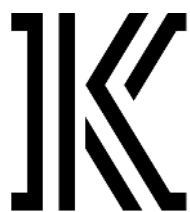
### ***Interlude Haiku***

**A damaged childhood.  
Prison's peaceful interlude -  
Then, back to chaos.**

*Interlude Haiku was on display at Southbank Centre as part of Another Me, the 2019 National Exhibition by Koestler Arts.*



*The One That Got Away*, HM Young Offenders Institution Polmont,  
First-Time Entrant Award for Printmaking, 2019



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## Idea #13: Role Model



A role model is someone we look up to, someone we admire. It could be anyone: a family member, teacher, friend, superhero or celebrity. During the coronavirus pandemic the public are being reminded of the heroes who are our key workers.

We often think about children needing positive role models but spend less time thinking about the positive influences in our lives as adults. This week, take some time to reflect on who your role model is. Who do you look up to? What is it that you admire about them? Perhaps it's their strength of character, their kindness, their dedication or their confidence.

For this task, dedicate your creativity to your role model and show the world why you look up to them. You could do this by drawing their portrait, writing a poem or song about them, including them in a short cartoon strip, or writing an essay or detailed character description of them.

For the 2020 Awards, Koestler Arts have teamed up with the Butler Trust to recognise the work of key workers in prisons by having a new Platinum Koestler Award (£100 for winning entrant) for a work that celebrates them. For your chance to win this award, consider using this task to make work about a member of staff who has supported you at your establishment. It could be a prison officer, librarian, chaplain, art or English tutor who has gone that extra mile and made an impact.

### SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:

5 - Non-Fiction, Blog, Essay, Article and Review / 6 - Life Story / 8 - Poem / 14 - Song Writing / 31 - Portrait / 35 - Graphic Novel



Above: *Female Officer*  
HM Prison Lewes  
Bronze Award for Sculpture  
2017

Right: *Origami Officer*  
HM Prison and Young Offender  
Institution Parc  
Craft  
2019

## ***Guiltfoot Ron***

HM Prison Grendon

Tim Robertson Platinum Award for Poem, 2016

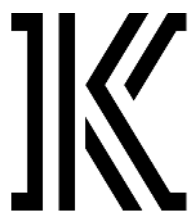
Ron's got a foot made completely of guilt,  
No muscle or bone in his heel or his toes,  
It's just the way he's built.

He's got an angry knee  
And an eyeful of fear,  
An ambivalent thigh,  
And a strangely complacent ear.  
The left one, the right one's intense,  
One elbow's for real, the other's all pretense.  
He's a wistful smile and an anguished wrist,  
His sternum's sober but his ribs are half-pished,  
He has two clinically depressed fingers  
And one very glum thumb,  
His shoulder blades are emotionally numb.

But the thing that really sets Ronnie apart,  
And makes him the sum of his complicated parts,  
Is his compassionate, generous heart.







*Hello from all of us at Koestler Arts!*

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## Idea #14: Lockdown Log

This challenge has been set by a former Koestler Mentee - someone who successfully applied for Koestler Arts Mentoring and was matched with a professional mentor to help them continue to develop their writing after being released from prison:



Create a lockdown log to document life as it is now. Your experience is unique, record it!

Your lockdown log can be in the form of a diary, journal or blog. Try describing one day in your life under lockdown. If you enjoy it, maybe set a time each day to add to your log. I find early morning is the best time of the day to write. I enjoy the peace and the solitude before the world gently wakes.

You could write about what you're thinking and feeling each day, or about your daily routine. You might write up conversations you've had or note down things you really want to say to friends and family. Think about how you felt when lockdown was first announced. Do you feel differently now? How has lockdown affected your daily routine? How has it affected your relationships? What are your hopes for the future?

Perhaps you'll want to keep your lockdown log it as a memory of the current moment, or perhaps you'll want to share your story with others.

**Tip:** Be really honest in your writing. Open-up and let your feelings pour onto the page.

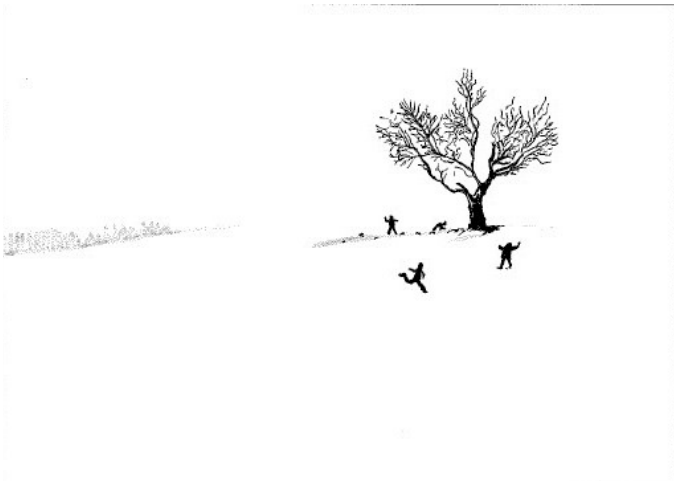
*This challenge was set as a writing challenge but if you prefer expressing yourself visually, why not do this as a drawing challenge? Do a drawing to document each day; sketch out some of your activities or try to express your emotions in the way you draw. Perhaps you use strong, bold, spikey lines to show your frustrations and light, flowing, curling lines to record happier moments.*

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:

5 - Non-Fiction, Blog, Essay, Article and Review / 6 - Life Story / 29 - Drawing



To Me Age 2, June  
Today you nearly drowned in a rock pool on Scarborough Beach. You lost your toy car as you went under but your Dad breaking the surface and pulling you up and out is our most vivid memory. I can still see it now. It was the moment you made your Dad a hero. So flawless that years later when he walks out on you (us) we will never understand why we are not the glue strong enough to keep him and Mum together. It's something we'll never understand.  
But today enjoy the hero. Enjoy being saved even if you had to walk back through Scarborough without trousers or pants!  
Love Me (You)

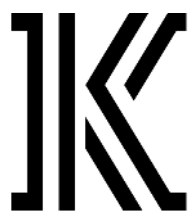


To Age 10 Me, January  
Snowball fights. The best thing in the world, right? The highlight of January. Running around free in the open air with mates. Diving and rolling around like commandos in the snow. Is anything better? Enjoy it while it lasts.  
Twenty-two years later when you are in prison you will discover that inmates, because of health and safety reasons, aren't allowed on the yard when it snows. Yeah, I know?! So, instead you will watch the snow fall from your cell windows yearning to be 10 again - young and free playing in the snow.  
Love Me (You)



To Me Age 0-33 September  
So, why is the last postcard to you (me) blank? Well, because your future, our future is unknown. We know our past - so does everybody it seems. But they don't. We (You) aren't defined by our (your) mistakes. We're defined by how we deal with our mistakes.  
You are still loved. You still have friends. You still have hope.  
You, me, we can still succeed. We can still achieve the dreams we have.  
I believe in you but most importantly you must believe in me.  
Love Me (You)

Postcards to Myself  
London CRC - Haringey and Enfield  
Platinum Award for Anthology  
2015



*Hello from all of us at Koestler Arts!*

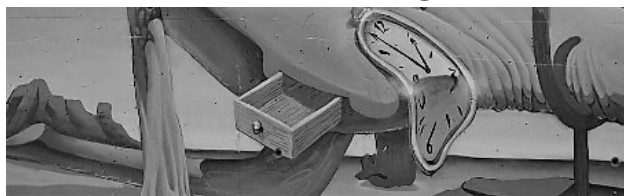
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## Idea #15: Active Imagination



'Free association' means to use whatever comes to mind, without editing it, as a method of creativity. It's a bit like making a collage of your thoughts. Painters, writers and jazz musicians especially have used this method of working.

For this task, allow images or words to unfold spontaneously without judgement, control, or intention for specific outcomes.

Observe your thoughts and let them guide you. The images you draw or the sentences you write may not make sense. Go with it, and allow your subconscious to flow through you as you let go of your usual way of logical thinking.

Your outcome is likely to be surreal and dreamlike. It may seem disconnected and silly, or it may offer the viewer a window into your mind.

SUGGESTED KOESTLER CATEGORY: 1 - Themed Category: Window / 3 - Flash Fiction and Short Story / 8 - Poem / 29 - Drawing

## Idea #16: Not so Still Life



This is a memory and quick drawing challenge set by a painter called Hurvin Anderson via a past Koestler exhibition venue, Firstsite, Colchester.

Get your drawing materials ready, turn on the TV and choose a programme that interests you. As you watch, keep an eye out for an image which stands out. Capture the image in your mind and sketch it as quickly as you can from memory.

Repeat with other images and see how much you remember. Do the images tell a story? Is it the same story as the TV programme or has the narrative changed? You could use your drawings as stand-alone pieces or you could develop them into a graphic novel.

If you do not have access to a TV, try illustrating something you read instead.

SUGGESTED KOESTLER CATEGORY: 29 - Drawing / 35 - Graphic Novel  
Issue #10 Page 1



*The Sun Did Not Rise*

HMP Prison Ashfield

Lorraine Holden Memorial Platinum Award for Poem, 2017

The Sun did not rise this morning and I waited for hours.  
A clear blue haze stretched from horizon to horizon,  
the air remained cold, frost did not melt.  
By midday I gave up and went home.

The news said the Sun had not been seen since yesterday.  
Nobody knew what to do.  
So they sent out search parties.  
Evening came; it did not feel so strange,  
but I went to bed early anyway.  
Sunshine can not abandon you at night.

I went back to the same hill in the morning,  
there were loads of people waiting.  
It was very quiet, electric, filled with gnawing anticipation.  
Everyone stared wide eyed at each other; hoping, expecting.  
Birds flew down and sat on our shoulders, watching us!  
As if we knew what to do!  
Rabbits and squirrels and foxes stood next to us,  
as we all emptied hope towards the dim haze on the horizon.  
And then the rains fell like tears from heaven,  
washing our hopes away.

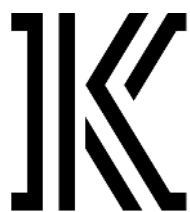
A stranger turned to me and whispered,  
'If our hearts are warm, will that not do?'  
I thought for a moment and replied,  
'Perhaps we just need to stand closer together.'



*Man's Best Friend (Lucky)*

HM Prison Dovegate

Sarah Lucas Platinum Award for Sculpture, 2014



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## **Idea #17: The Poet as Witness**



This challenge has been set by Joelle Taylor, a poet and Koestler judge, via The Poetry Society:

One of the roles of the poet is as witness; observing and documenting the world. But how can we witness something we cannot reach? I was recently asked by BBC Radio 3 to write a poem looking at 'isolation' during these perplexing times. All writing happens in context, and so I wrote 'A Very English Apocalypse' in response not only to Covid-19 but the tumultuous political discourse of the years preceding the virus, the rise in nationalism, the Windrush scandal, and Brexit.

Have a read of the poem on the other side of this sheet. Look at the line 'the windows are laboratory slides, darling'. What does it mean?

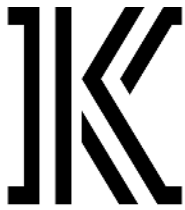
Look out the window or imagine looking out of a window. What do you see? A tower block? A field? Water? Your task is to create a life, a culture, from the laboratory slide of the window.

Ask yourself these questions when creating the character or new life for your poem. The more questions you can think of the more bones to the body of your poem:

- Who lives in the house/ building/ land opposite?
- Are they alone?
- How does their body fit the room they are in?
- What is their secret?
- What job do they usually do?
- How do they fit into the current political climate?
- Do they communicate with you? How?
- What would the shadow puppetry of night-time windows be?

Confine your poems to 9 lines so that form follows the context in some way and adds another layer of meaning.

*This was set as a poetry task but you can respond to Koestler's themed category, 'window', in any medium!*



## A Very English Apocalypse - Joelle Taylor

(i) coronavisa

Having repelled foreign bodies  
foreign bodies invaded  
our bodies, now foreign  
slipping between border rails  
they drifted over high walls  
seeped beneath the carpets of Parliament  
teaching us anatomy of loss  
the universal theory of alone  
the mathematics of survival  
the weight of air  
how visa it all is.

We should have checked our temperatures years ago.

(ii) a very English apocalypse

This fever-empire this other this better  
all rogue all unjoin all apart this width  
we have invaded ourselves, and queued to do it

what is the distance between two people

walking away from one another?

Hacking up headlines  
a cough of white crows circle the city's bloodstream

& two friends walk too close together  
their kisses unexploded

The birds teach us new songs, and we follow  
reading closely typed manuscripts in crow, and we follow

oh look/ & now  
there are dolphins in Venice canals, goats in Llandudno gardens  
& lions reporting the news in Moscow.

in Britain/ the bulldog has returned  
but each of our doors are closed

hear him now  
his midnight howl,  
the sound of wrong  
an ambulance bawling.

(iii) the empire of us

& all of our beds, desert islands  
the empires of us; I lie there  
my body, foreign  
no longer speaking the same language;  
one of my hands does not understand the other  
& my blood ticks

& then there is you, my darling  
We are two dogs tethered, biting at our own umbilical, &  
there are 7 cracks across the living room ceiling, darling  
the windows are laboratory slides, darling  
darling  
teach me the shape of your happy  
teach me Galway, 1974  
teach me this love wassailed between tower blocks  
teach me an earthquake of handclap teach me  
to dance on the edge of

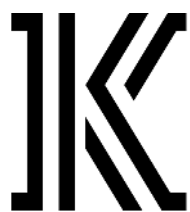
everything

my darling

it took this to show us the air



Image:  
Bird of Warren Hill  
HM Prison Warren Hill  
Needlecraft, 2019



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## **Idea #18: 247**



This challenge has been set by First Story, a creative writing charity for young people, as part of National Writing Day - 24 June 2020:

As we emerge from lockdown, the power of words to give voice and agency to our stories couldn't be more pertinent.

This National Writing Day we're launching the simple writing call to action: the 247 challenge. The challenge is intended as a moment of unity, of freedom and - most importantly - of fun where anyone who wants to be involved can enjoy writing together and take a moment to express themselves.

The challenge has three simple rules:

1. Write a story or poem in 24 words.
2. Start with the words 'One day'.
3. You only have 7 minutes to write!

Koestler staff will be taking part in the 247 challenge too!

### **SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES:**

- 3 - Flash Fiction and Short Story / 5 - Non-Fiction, Blog, Essay, Article and Review / 6 - Life Story /  
8 - Poem / 14 - Song Writing



***We Will Find Solace***

HM Prison and Young Offender Institution Littlehey  
Silver Award for Poem, 2016

We will find solace  
here in this moment  
among our friends  
in creativity and invention  
in the rhythms  
of the tide

We will find solace  
in the wildness  
of places  
in the rumbling stones  
on the soaring hills

We will find solace  
by the meadowed fields  
by whispering streams  
north by northwest  
beside the stone-shod lake.

***When you find where I live...***

HM Prison Usk  
Platinum Award for Poem, 2017

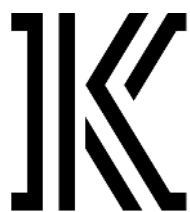
'When you find where I live  
will you love me enough?'  
he asked.

Years passed without a  
visitor, no polite conversation,  
tea time chat.

Where I lived shifted;  
Love shifts, I know that.

***Another Chapter,***  
HM Prison Peterborough  
Gold Award for Themed Category:  
Interlude, 2019





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## Idea #19: Art Matters



Art offers a powerful way to spread your message. During the coronavirus lockdown members of the public have not been able to interact with each other as normal. More and more people have been making posters to display in their windows to build a connection with each other.

These posters convey messages of support during the Covid-19 pandemic; gratitude for NHS keyworkers; and solidarity with the Black Lives Matter protests across the globe.

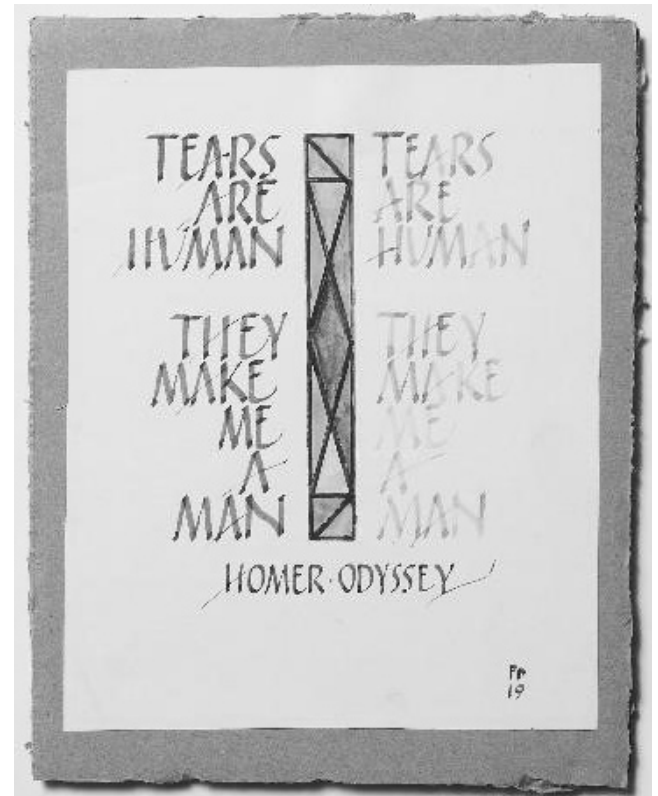
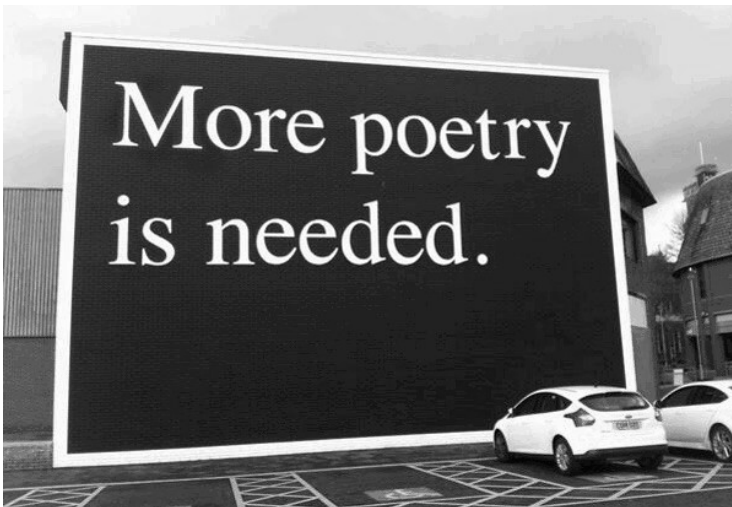
Artists have frequently used slogans in their work to convey their messages. Sometimes these messages are political, sometimes they are playful and funny - sometimes they are all of the above! The artists Bob and Roberta Smith and Jeremy Deller - who are both confirmed 2020 Koestler Awards judges - are known for the use of slogans in their work. You can see some examples of their work on the other side of this sheet.

For this task, use your creativity to write your own slogan(s) about something you care about. It could be about something serious like supporting NHS workers, BLM protests or LGBTQ Pride, or it could be something more lighthearted - perhaps you want to share your love of sunshine or ice cream!

Once you have your slogan, think about how you want to use your creativity to share it with the world. You could turn it into a poster and think about how you design your text in a way that is appropriate to your message. Alternatively, use your slogan as a headline and write an article on the subject or use your slogan to inspire your poetry.

Remember, your art matters.

SUGGESTED KOESTLER AWARDS CATEGORIES: 5 - Non-Fiction, Blog, Essay, Article and Review / 8 - Poem / 42 - Calligraphy



## Images

Top Left:

Jeremy Deller, *More Poetry is Needed*, Swansea, 2014

Top Right:

Bob and Roberta Smith, *Art Makes Children Powerful*, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, 2013

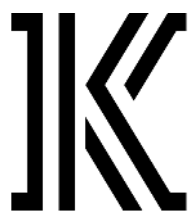
Bottom Left:

*We Made This*, Koestler Exhibition Poster, 2019

Bottom Right:

*Tears Are Human*, HM Prison and Young Offender Institution Exeter, First-Time Entrant Award for Calligraphy, 2019





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## Idea #20: Mundane Memoirs

This challenge has been set by It's Not Your Birthday But... (INYBB) - an organisation that believes in the power of connecting people through letters, visual art and words.



As part of their Lost Letters project with Surrey History Centre, INYBB are inviting you to reflect on a task or activity that has helped you get through lockdown to create your own 'Mundane Memoir'.

Lots of history becomes interesting when a personal lens is applied - including the mundane tasks that we do every day.

Looking at the archives, we can take comfort from how our ancestors made it through difficult times. The example here is written from a mother to a son at war in Europe in 1941. She shares her experience of trying to get food for herself and her friend Phyllis:

*"Some food is very short, like lemons & oranges & eggs & cheese, 2oz per head at Sainsbury's but do we mind, NO, not if we can possibly win through."*

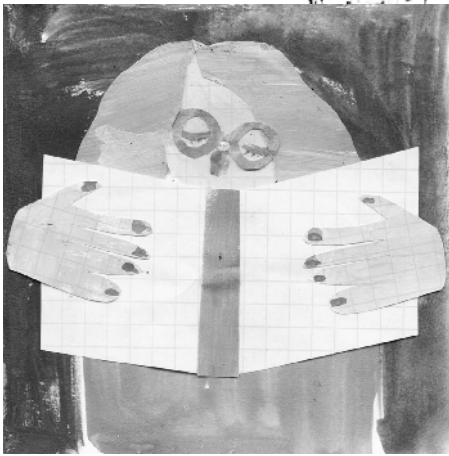
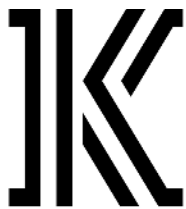
For your own Mundane Memoir, use the 10 x 10cm template on the other side of this sheet and draw or write about something that you've done during lockdown. It might be gaming, writing letters, day dreaming, listening to music, sketching, watching tv, or speaking to loved ones on the phone. You can use whatever materials are available to you.

INYBB have also set this task for members of the public. They would love you to share your work with them as they will be piecing together all the Mundane Memoirs they receive to create a mass artwork. This will be included in their Lost Letters exhibition in 2021, and contributions will be shared online. If we all contribute a small artwork of our time in lockdown, together we will create a powerful and insightful visual record of how we as a nation got through this difficult time.

INYBB will also write feedback for the pieces contributed from prisons. To take part please send your Mundane Memoir along with your name, prison number and address to: Fina, FREEPOST KOESTLER ARTS (no stamp required).

**Please note:** Your work will not be returned to you.

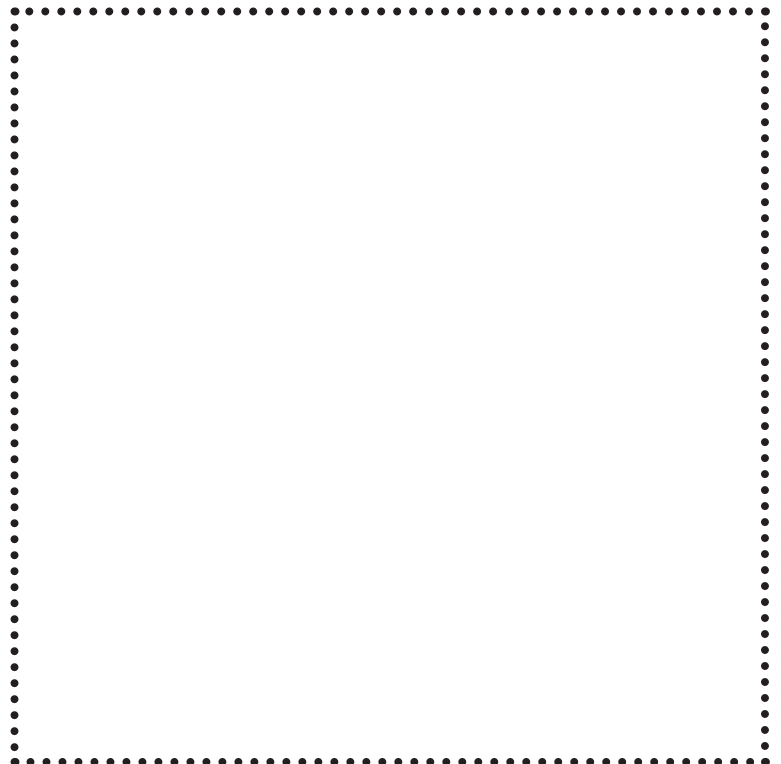


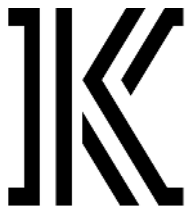


Here are some examples made by INYBB and the 64 Million Artists network. We hope they will inspire you to make your own!

Use the template below (or a piece of paper of the same size) to share your own lockdown experience.

We can't wait to see the results!





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## **Idea #21: Self-Portrait**

This challenge was originally set by a Koestler Mentee for Koestler staff. We had so much fun doing it that we are now setting it as this week's Art Aid task!

Draw a self-portrait with your non-dominant hand. If you are right-handed, draw yourself with your left hand. If you are left-handed draw with your right.

You could do it as a line drawing or a tonal drawing. Experiment and have fun!



Above are a few examples done by Koestler staff members.

***Where I Sit***

HM Prison and Young Offender Institution Littlehey  
Bronze Award for Poem, 2017

When the unfairness of the storm  
Gathers about you  
And blankets you overhead  
Pitifully  
Pouring its rain upon your closed doors

You should light the fire

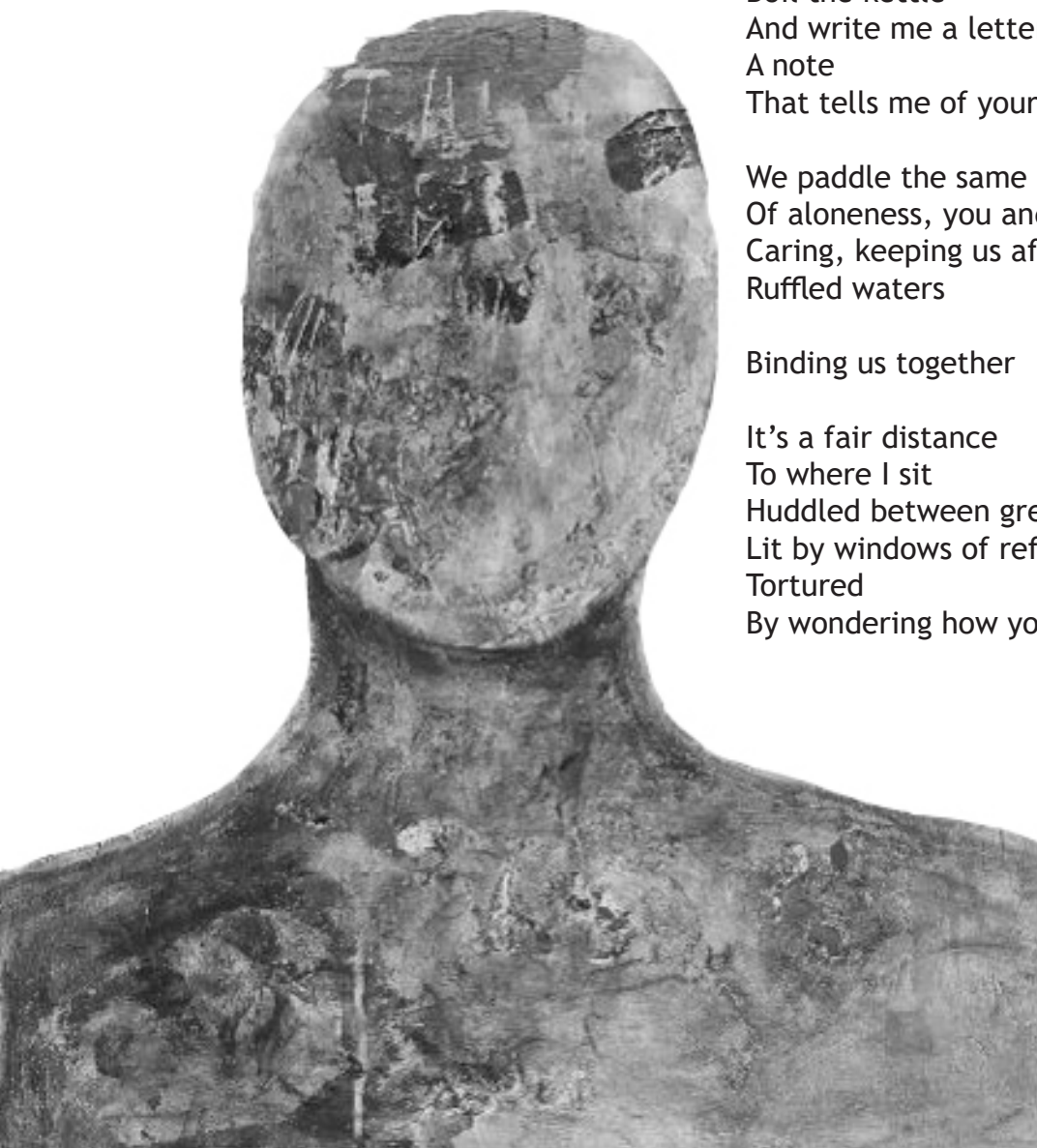
That burns the logs  
Which summons the warmth  
That melts the pain  
And the fright that fogs

Boil the kettle  
And write me a letter  
A note  
That tells me of your present plight

We paddle the same craft  
Of aloneness, you and I  
Caring, keeping us afloat  
Ruffled waters

Binding us together

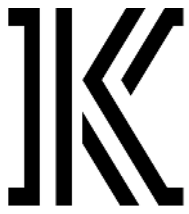
It's a fair distance  
To where I sit  
Huddled between grey walls  
Lit by windows of refracted light  
Tortured  
By wondering how you are.



**Image:**

*All Messed Up (A Self Portrait)*  
HM Prison Full Sutton  
Marie-Louise von Motesiczky  
Platinum Award for Portrait  
2019





*Hello from all of us at Koestler Arts!*

*Koestler Arts have partnered with Novus to be here each week during lockdown to suggest creative tasks that can be done in-cell. All you need is paper and a pencil - though if you have further materials please use them.*

*You might want to keep whatever you make or share it with someone. The deadline for the 2020 Koestler Awards has now passed (7 July 2020), however, we are continuing to send out Art Aid sheets as we hope they will continue to inspire you.*

*If you don't feel like making anything right now, on the back of this sheet is something to look at from the Koestler back catalogue.*

*With best wishes from the Koestler Team.*

## Idea #22: Animal Kennings

A kenning poem is a bit like a riddle. It describes something without saying what it is. Each line is made up of only two words which are joined using a hyphen. For example, a kenning describing the sea is 'whale-road'.

For this task, choose an animal that you feel connected to. It could be your favourite animal or it could be an animal you could imagine being. Think of different pairs of words to describe your animal to write your own kenning poem.

You could choose to make the lines of your poem rhyme or just let the description guide you.

Here is an example by a Koestler staff member:

### *Cat*

Sofa-scratcher  
Mouse-catcher  
Hungry-eater  
Lap-heater  
Pest-deterrer  
Rumbling-purrer  
Graceful-leaper  
Carefree-sleeper



**Image:**  
*Surreal Ginger Tom*  
HM Prison Lewes  
Carmina Commended Award for Sculpture, 2016





**Images:**

**Above:**

*Savanna*

HM Prison Bure

Hope Commended Award for Sculpture, 2015



**Right:**

Hound

HM Prison Ford

Berwick Silver Award for Painting, 2018

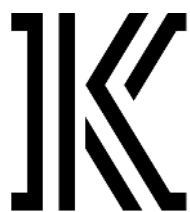
**Below:**

*Piggin Out*

St Mary's Hospital

Painting, 2019





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*With best wishes from the Koestler Team.*

## Idea #23: This Might Be Art

We are really excited that the artist Jeremy Deller is going to be judging some of the entries to the 2020 Koestler Awards again. These short tasks have been set by him and the artist Fraser Muggeridge via a past Koestler exhibition venue, Firstsite, Colchester.

They are designed to push the boundaries of what art is so don't take them too seriously!

### 1. Write a poem

in praise of the  
**t o i l e t r o l l .**

2. Make a **cartoon**  
**strip** of a dream  
you have had.

3. Write a diary  
as if you were an  
**animal.**

4. DESIGN 'A  
MONUMENT TO  
THE **KEY WORKER**'.

5. Draw or make a model of what's going  
on inside your **BRAIN.**

## *The Tear*

From the poetry collection *Loss*  
HM Prison Isle of Wight (Albany)  
First-Time Entrant Award for Poetry  
Collection, 2019

A  
drop  
of water  
salty in taste  
cold on warm skin  
an unrequested event  
a leakage that flows free  
a single small silvering trail  
that can say so much in its journey  
that can pour for both pleasure  
and pain the same a natural  
occurrence that can cause us  
such embarrassment or reveal  
a request unspoken yet  
we always wipe away  
the truthful  
TEAR

### **Image:**

#### *Brave Face*

HM Prison & Young Offender Institution Exeter  
Commended Award for Sculpture, 2019



# KOESTLER AWARDS ENTRY FORM

Send a completed form with each entry.  
Maximum 10 entries per entrant (previously 5).  
2020 closing date: Tuesday 7 July.

## ENTRY

Is this the first time you have entered the Awards?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Establishment: (Name of prison, hospital or probation service)

Title of entry:

Artform: (Choose one artform from the 2020 Awards Guidance)

Visual description of entry:

**Using your name:** (Authorised staff must agree)

If my entry is exhibited or published, I give permission for my first name to appear alongside it. ☐ Yes ☐ No

**Sales of visual artwork:** (Tick one choice only)

- ☐ My entry is for sale. The lowest amount I'd be willing to receive is £  (maximum £250)
- ☐ My entry is not for sale.
- ☐ I donate my entry to Koestler Arts.

**ENTRANT** (For groups – see the next page)

First name of entrant:

Last name of entrant:

Date of birth:

Prison or hospital number:

Signature of entrant:

For Koestler Arts staff			
K. No.	Artform	Supp. docs	No. of items
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

## AUTHORISED MEMBER OF STAFF

Full name:

Job title:

Department:

Telephone number:

Email:

Probation area: (For CRCs only)

Can the entrant's first name be made public?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Can the entry be sold? (Visual arts only)

☐ Yes ☐ No

Who should any cheques be payable to?

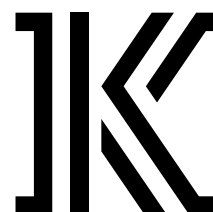
I confirm that this entry is the entrant's own original work.

Signature of staff: (Entries can't be accepted without staff sign-off)

Date:

Turn for page 2 →

**Unlock the talent inside**





## GROUP ENTRIES ONLY — TELL US ABOUT YOUR GROUP

Name of group:

Number of people excl. staff:



First name: Last name: Date of birth: Prison or hospital number: Release date if in 2020, and home address:


Continue on a separate sheet if needed. If there are over 4 people in the group cheques will not be split.

### ENTRANTS WHO ARE IN THE COMMUNITY OR DUE FOR RELEASE IN 2020

Please notify us if these details change

Date of release:

Home address:

Postcode:

Telephone number:

Email:

### ASSOCIATES PROGRAMME

Associates benefit from more contact with us, through the Koestler Associates newsletter.

☐ I would like to be part of the Associates Programme.

### REMINDERS

Entrants agree to the terms and conditions in the 2020 Awards Guidance. These are available on our website, from your establishment, or you can write to us to request a copy.

- ✓ Information submitted on this form will be held on the Koestler Arts secure and confidential database.
- ✓ All work is handled with care, but Koestler Arts and its agents accept no liability for loss or damage to entries.
- ✓ Pack your work carefully. It must be under 15kg.
- ✓ Koestler Arts and its agents can exhibit, publish, and reproduce artworks in reasonable ways in print, online, film, audio etc to promote the charity's work. Artists retain copyright of their work.
- ✓ Koestler Arts can try to sell visual entries, if we have both your permission and that of the 'authorised member of staff'. Most work sells for under £100.
- ✓ Non-visual entries will not be returned to you. These include writing, performance, audio, film and animation entries – so please make copies.

### MONITORING FOR DIVERSITY OPTIONAL

This anonymised data will not be used to judge your work. It is for research and monitoring purposes only.

#### Ethnic group

- ☐ Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi
- ☐ Asian/Asian British: Indian
- ☐ Asian/Asian British: Pakistani
- ☐ Any other Asian background
- ☐ Black/Black British: African
- ☐ Black/Black British: Caribbean
- ☐ Any other Black background
- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Irish Traveller/Gypsy

- ☐ Mixed White & Asian
- ☐ Mixed White & Black African
- ☐ Mixed White & Black Caribbean
- ☐ Any other Mixed background
- ☐ White British
- ☐ Any other White background
- ☐ Any other group:

#### Formal education completed

- ☐ No formal qualifications
- ☐ Basic skills level 1
- ☐ Basic skills level 2
- ☐ GCSEs or A Levels
- ☐ Vocational training
- ☐ Degree or post-graduate
- I am:**
- ☐ Ex-armed forces personnel
- ☐ A care leaver

#### Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Transgender
- ☐ Non-binary

#### Age

- ☐ Under 16
- ☐ 16-17
- ☐ 18
- ☐ 19-24
- ☐ 25-29
- ☐ 30-59
- ☐ 60 and over

#### Religion

- ☐ Atheist
- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Christian
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Sikh
- ☐ Other

#### Registered disabled?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No