

KOESTLER ARTS + ART AID

Hello from Koestler Arts!

Koestler Arts + Art Aid sheets suggest creative tasks that can be done in-cell. For most all you need is paper and a pencil - though if you have further materials please use them.

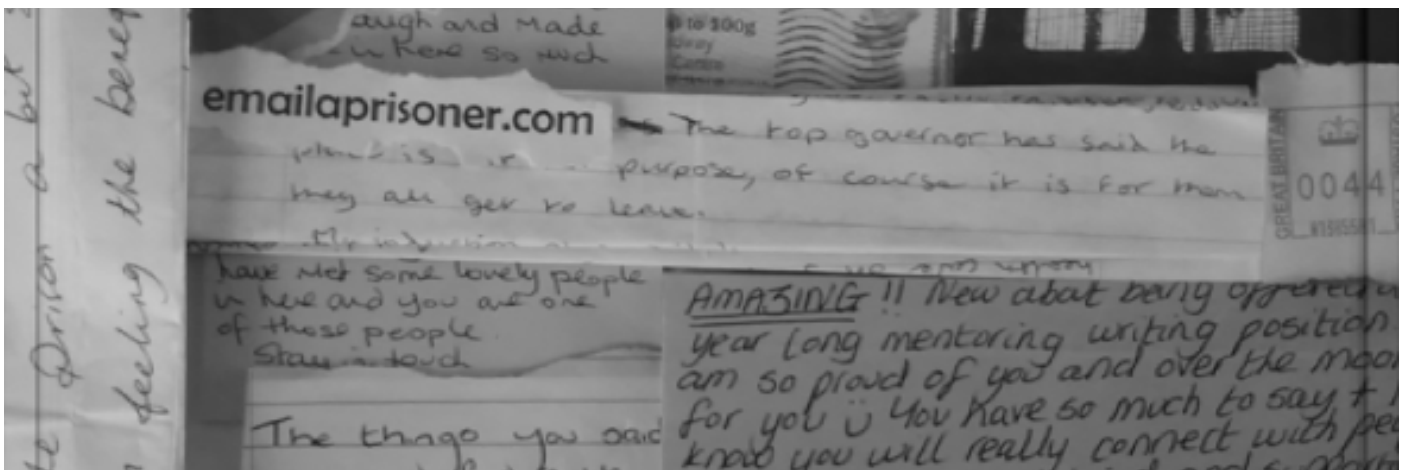
Please note that as the 2020 Koestler Awards deadline has now passed (7 July 2020) Art Aid sheets will be produced monthly rather than weekly.

Each month from now on Koestler Arts will be commissioning an artist/writer who has directly engaged with Koestler to set a creative task. Our entrants have told us that they would like to hear more from other people with experience of being creative in the criminal justice system. We hope that Art Aid will become a platform to share personal stories and sources of inspiration.

New Art Aid sheets will be available from the first Monday of each month.

October 2020

This task is set by Koestler Award winner, former mentee and writer, Charlotte.



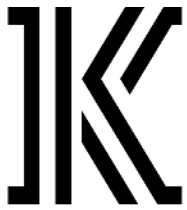
Collage (detail) by Charlotte

My Story

I'd always wanted to write and I used prison as an opportunity to finally do something about it. I kept a diary and wrote furiously every day. Fast-forward several months; the daily writing continued and I had used my time wisely by writing, researching, and getting ideas together. Whilst still in prison I was involved in a creative writing project and seeing this work published gave me the confidence to carry on writing.

Not long after my release, I was encouraged to apply to Koestler Arts for their mentoring programme and was fortunate to be accepted. Thanks to the support and encouragement I received, I achieved more than I ever thought possible. I went from telling myself I could only write short stories to writing a novel and much more.

It's inspiring to see creative talent being unlocked. Writing is a great way of coping with what is a chaotic existence in an environment where emotions run high. The escapism becomes personal, you can express feelings that have been bottled up for months, sometimes years.



Stamp Duty

The Letter

What is the letter you really wish you could write?

This is your opportunity to express yourself on paper in a letter that will not be sent.

The unsent letter is both cathartic and therapeutic and encourages you to address a letter to someone you don't feel you can talk directly to. It's a way of putting into words and letting go of a deeply held thought or feeling that has somehow been holding you back.

Your letter could explore feelings of love or loss, hopes and fears, betrayal, abandonment or dreams and determination. It could be about overcoming past hurts or expressing unspoken gratitude. The letter can be to anyone, living or not, real or imaginary. To your past self or future self. It can be to a person or situation in your life.

Tip: If it feels a little uncomfortable then this is the letter you definitely should be writing. Speak the truth. Write about your feelings openly so you process them and keep the pen moving!



Weekly Letter, London CRC - Hackney & Islington, Painting, 2018

The Letter II

What is the letter you would most like to receive?

This is your opportunity to write a letter to yourself expressing your hopes and wishes.

Do you dream of hearing from someone you thought was long gone from your life? Maybe you have felt let down by a former partner, friend, or family member. Imagine how you would feel to hear from someone you never thought would get in touch and write from their perspective. It could be a letter offering advice or a job opportunity or other good news. Write a letter that soothes you and fulfils your longing.

Tip: These letters may well be emotive. It is a good idea to write the letters and then look at them again in a few days. Strong emotions will lose momentum and subside into something more meditative, thoughtful, and creative.