

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.

We are now accepting entries to the 2023 Koestler Awards!

Please complete a Koestler entry form for every entry and see our guidance notes for full terms and conditions. Entry forms should be attached to this sheet. If not, or if you need more, please ask education, the library, or contact us at FREEPOST KOESTLER ARTS (no stamp or address needed). The deadline for submissions is Thursday 6 April 2023.

For each Art Aid sheet we are commissioning an artist/writer who has directly engaged with Koestler to set a creative task. New Art Aid sheets will be available from the first Monday of every month.

March 2022

This task was set by Will, a Koestler Award winner and current mentee.

Introduction

I was locked up in lock down, and arrived in the midst of a twenty-three hour bang up schedule at Thameside. So how does a father and recent grandfather in his late fifties deal with this? I decided my survival strategy was to 'write' my way through this sentence and reinvent myself.

I am indebted to my fellow cellmate from Highpoint, a DJ and poet, who introduced me to the Koestler Awards. Koestler provided both a focus and a much needed deadline for my creative endeavours. Astonishingly, I picked up Platinum and Silver Awards for my scripts. Bowled over by this success, I felt that just for once I'd made some sound decisions. I was beginning to take back control. I was determined to prove myself and not be beaten by the system.

I should mention that I'd picked up some basic writing insights, from a friend and leading European playwright. These concepts definitely helped me with my writing and I feel are worth sharing.

What to Write

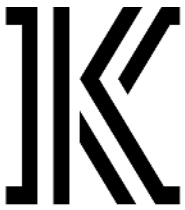
You might be thinking, that's easy, write about what you know. Write your story. My problem was, and it might be the same for you, my experiences felt too close and too raw. I really had to put myself 'at a distance' and step into the shoes and wear the clothes of invented characters.

Developing Characters

Start by creating a biography for each character, factual stuff: name (is this significant - a family connection?), where were they born, who are their parents, do they have siblings, where did they go to school/college, what jobs have they had etc. Then think about their ambitions and worst fears. What are their favourite hobbies and clothes? All this material reveals the character to you. You can base this character research on you, or someone you know. Add any embellishments you like.



Image: *Figures in a Row*, Ann House, Elysium Healthcare Platinum Award for Drawing



Structuring your Story

The primary driving forces for drama are **opposites**, **contrasts** and **contradictions**. Dramatic tension is created by bringing these opposing forces together within a setting.

Plays are made up of scenes, each scene moves the narrative forward. The dramatic structure of a play, short story or film is one of conflict and change.

Once you have your character and setting, write out a short summary:

THIS IS A STORY ABOUT (character): _____

WHO WANTS TO DO SOMETHING (motivation/action): _____

THEY STRUGGLE BECAUSE (conflict): _____

AND ENDS UP WITH (success /failure /change): _____

I have given you a few suggested starting points below. There is no 'right' or 'wrong' way to approach these tasks. The point is simply to write.

Task 1:

Find some pictures in a book or magazine, of a person and a place. Study them. Make a written description of what you see. Write in as much detail as you can to bring the scene to life. This will help develop your descriptive skills and observational skills. This person or place, now reimagined by you, could become the basis for your drama.

Task 2:

Create a scene (dramatic response) to one of the following dramatic situations...

- Discover who you were in your past life.
- Gatecrash a funeral/wedding.
- Forget who you are for a day.

Developing your Craft

If you're writing plays, it really helps to read what has gone before. Make use of the library. The Highpoint library did take requests and sent me classic plays by Bertolt Brecht, David Hare, Arthur Miller and Harold Pinter.

I also came across a number of books on how to write plays, they're not always easy reads, but the most useful ones were: David Edgar, *How Plays Work*; Stephen Jeffreys, *Playwriting: Structure, Character, How and What to Write*; and David Mamet, *Three Uses of the Knife: On the Nature and Purpose of Drama*.

Please consider entering your response to the Stage Play category in the 2023 Koestler Awards.

Image: *A Private Business* (detail), HM Prison Leeds, Drawing, 2018

Contact: FREEPOST KOESTLER ARTS
020 8740 0333

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KOESTLER AWARDS ENTRY FORM



Send a completed form with each entry.
Maximum 5 entries per entrant.
2023 closing date: Thursday 6 April.

For Koestler Arts staff			
K. No.	Artform	Supp. docs	No. of items

ENTRANT (For groups – see the next page)

First name of entrant:

Last name of entrant:

Date of birth:

ENTRY

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

Title of entry:

Artform: (Choose one artform from the guidance booklet)

Visual description of entry:

AUTHORISED MEMBER OF STAFF

Full name:

Job title:

Department:

Telephone number:

Email:

Office postcode: (Probation only)

Prison or hospital number:

Signature of entrant:

Is this the first year you have entered the Awards?

Yes No

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)

- 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.

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, and approve it for entry into the Koestler Awards.

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

Date:

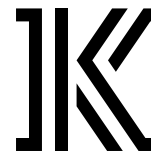
Unlock the talent inside

Turn for page 2 →

GROUP ENTRIES ONLY

Name of group:

Number of people excl. staff:



First name: Last name: Date of birth: Prison or hospital number: Release date if in 2023, 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 2023

Please contact 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 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.
- ✓ We do not return written entries or work on CDs/ DVDs. 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

- Arab
- 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

- Gypsy/Roma/Traveller
- 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
 - Registered disabled

Gender

- Man
- Woman
- Other

Age

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

Religion

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