

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.

Calling all final Koestler Award entries - deadline: Thursday 6 April 2023.

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).

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.

April 2022

This task was set by a Koestler Award winner and exhibited artist, whose work was exhibited in 'Our World', a Koestler exhibition at Tramway, Glasgow, co-curated by a group of learners at HMP Shotts.

My Story

I discovered my creativity quite early on, probably before I started school. When I went to prison I found creativity was my biggest escape. I started off on an animation course in HMP Glenochil, which I enjoyed because it took so much of my prison time.

At HMP Grampian, Education was stopped until the last few months of my sentence. I was happy to go to the art class. You're not allowed a lot of things in your cell, so I mostly did drawing and sculpting with toilet paper, but thanks to the Education Department I was able to finish off my artwork.

I started making my piece *Man Looking Out* in cell and I finished painting it and gluing it together in the art class. I began the piece with sketches of the different elements - a stained glass window, bars, somebody sitting on a bed - they were going to be separate pieces and I was going to use the milk carton for parts. Then I realised I could combine everything inside the milk carton. Initially I planned to cut off the top and make it square, but I decided to leave it so that you can still see that it once was a milk carton.

Having *Man Looking Out* selected for the exhibition at Tramway (after it had been exhibited at Koestler's London exhibition) was amazing. It was quite a small exhibition and the curators at HMP Shotts decided that my piece was good enough to be included.

When I visited the exhibition I realised that my piece was the poster image and that it was on the front of all the exhibition brochures. Some of the artwork in the show was really good - the curators could have easily picked one of the other artworks for the poster. I was surprised but proud that they picked mine.



Image: *Man Looking Out*, HM Prison & Young Offenders Institution Grampian, Gold Award for Sculpture, Exhibited in 'Freedom' at Southbank Centre, London and in 'Our World' at Tramway, Glasgow

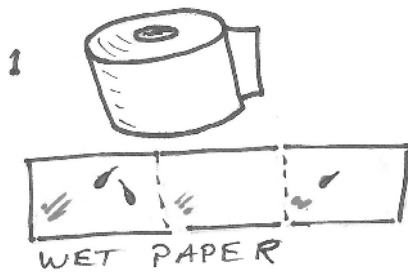
JK



My Task

My task is to make a heart-shaped decoration using tissue paper. Once you've made one of them, you could easily make other shapes like a star by repeating steps 1-3 and then changing the way you shape the circle.

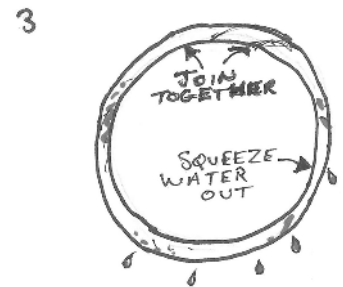
This just gives you an idea of what you could do with basic things in cell. Maybe it's something you could send out to a loved one. Or you could use it as a Christmas decoration.



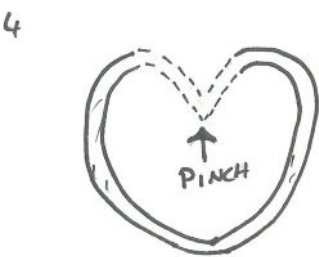
Take a row of 6 connected sheets of toilet roll, fold it in half (so it's the length of 3 sheets) and dampen it slightly with water.



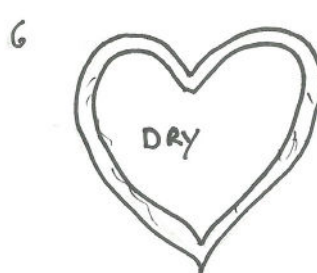
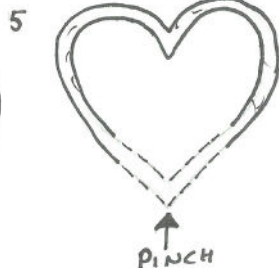
Roll it into a long thin snake shape. I like to crumple it a bit to give it texture but you may prefer a smoother finish.



Shape it into a circle and use the water/paper paste to fuse the ends. Squeeze out any excess water.



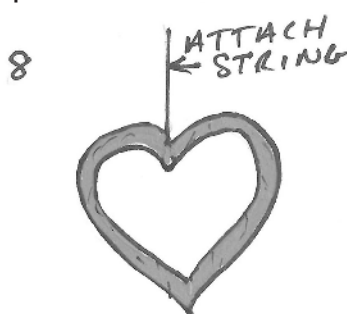
Pinch the top and bottom to shape it into a heart.



Leave to dry for a couple of days. You could put it on a radiator or by a window to speed up the process.



Paint it or decorate it with whatever materials you have to hand. I used gold acrylic paint and then dry brushed it with black to give it a bit more depth. You could cover it in glitter or use acetate to add something to the middle. This is the part where you can really make it your own.



If you can get hold of some thread, tie it round the top so you can hang your decoration up.

