

KOESTLER ARTS - ART AID

Koestler Arts produce monthly Art Aid sheets featuring creative tasks that can be done in cell and with just paper and a pencil. New Art Aid sheets are available from the first Monday of every month. This sheet has been made with support from The Arts Society Northleach.

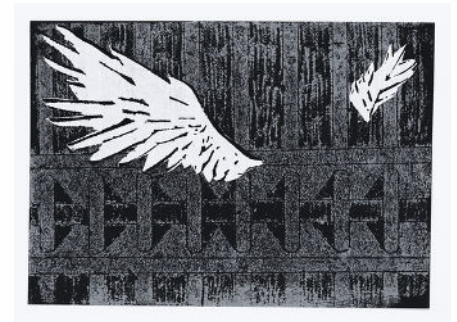
We are now accepting entries to the 2024 Koestler Awards! Send your entries and signed entry forms to 'FREEPOST Koestler Arts' by 12 April 2024. Entry forms should be enclosed with this sheet, and you can contact your education department or Koestler Arts to be sent more. See our guidance notes for full terms and conditions.

MARCH 2024

For each Art Aid sheet, we commission an artist or writer who has engaged with Koestler Arts to set a creative task and share their experience with creativity. This month we asked Koestler Award winner and mentee Joe.

My Story

I was sent to prison in March 2021 amid the covid-19 pandemic. Faced with 23 hours behind the door, I needed something to do to occupy my time so I began to complete the artwork packs that were provided by the education team and Koestler Arts. These rekindled a love both for art and for creative writing, things I had loved doing at school but once I left, life got in the way.

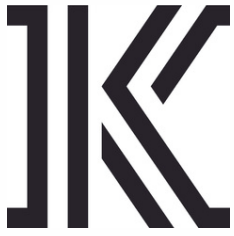


*Bars of Freedom, HMP Frankland,
Printmaking*

Some of my earliest memories are sitting at the table armed with pen and pad, furiously writing away. 'The Fortunate Five' may have been my take on another famous fivesome but to me at least it didn't matter. I just wanted to tell a story.

It was getting feedback from a short story that I had written that let me know about the Koestler mentoring program and I was urged upon my release to apply for it. I was deliberating whether to apply or not when someone said 'What have you got to lose?' There was nothing. I could only gain, and when would I have an opportunity like this again?

I applied for the Koestler mentoring program and was accepted. Working with my mentor has been invaluable. They have helped me in fine tuning my skills and knowledge in writing, from explaining the publishing process to providing feedback on pieces I have written. They also recommended entering writing competitions and I have won two of these. The title of one of my pieces has been used as the title of the anthology it is published in. Koestler has helped me whilst I was inside, on the outside and I know it will have positively changed my future.



My Task: Creative Writing Prompts

I find prompts and suggested first lines really useful for creative writing. Given completely free rein my mind thinks up way too many plots and I have trouble picking one to use and never start writing. Prompts help streamline my thought process so I can get started, and they might do the same for you.

Below are prompts and first lines for you to use as the starting point for short stories. They are open-ended and could lead to stories in a variety of genres. Choose one that appeals to you, try them all out, or try writing multiple different stories starting from the same prompt. Write a flash fiction piece (500 words - around two A4 pages), or a short story (2000 words - around eight A4 pages). I find word counts useful for planning the plot and making edits, but don't be put off or restricted by them if they don't work for you.

Prompts:

Your character makes a birthday wish as they blow out their candles, and it actually comes true. What is it? Is it everything they hoped for? Are there any consequences?

By chance the seat your character usually sits in on their commute is taken, and if that hadn't happened they would never have met...

First Lines:

Whoever that was looking back at me in the mirror, it certainly wasn't me...

I knocked on the door. I couldn't believe I was doing this. Why was I here?

Write something that you would read. There's no point writing a romance if all you read is thrillers.

Plan - it helps to have some knowledge of where your story is going. This can be as simple as knowing the start, middle and end.

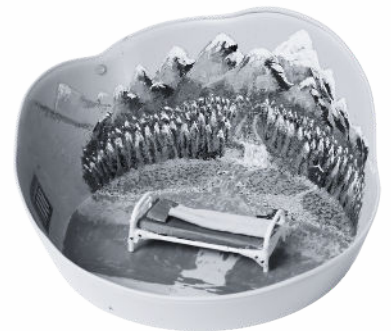
The first draft isn't going to be perfect and no one expects it to be. The important thing is to get something down on paper.

After finishing, wait a day or two before editing to clear your mind.

Read the draft through, aloud if possible. Does it match the theme that you wanted? Are your characters likeable and relatable? Does it flow right? Are there any redundant parts? Make any changes you need.

Read the piece again and fine tune it: Are there any clunky sentences? Could you change any words for better ones? E.g. could 'big' become 'enormous'? Have you repeated yourself? Are you within the word count? Is the spelling and grammar correct?

When you're finished, you could enter your piece to the Koestler Awards Flash Fiction & Short Story category. Stories written from these prompts might also be a good fit for the 2024 themed category 'From Now On'.



Yukon-vict View, HM Prison Garth,
Lady Bishopton Bronze Award for
Sculpture

You don't need to send your responses to these tasks to us at Koestler, we just hope you'll enjoy giving them a go. If you do we'll be very happy to see them but please note they won't be entered into this year's Koestler Awards unless they are sent with a signed entry form.

KOESTLER AWARDS ENTRY FORM



Send a completed form with each entry in the same parcel. Maximum 5 entries per entrant, including group entries.

2024 closing date: Friday 12 April.

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)

For Koestler Arts staff

K. No.	Artform	Supp. docs	No. of items
24K <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Prison or hospital number:

Signature of entrant:

Is this the first year you have entered the Awards?

Yes No

Sales of visual artwork:

Only visual artworks can be sold. Writing and music cannot be sold.

TICK ONE 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.

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:

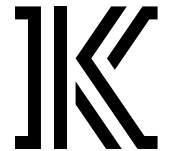
Unlock the talent inside

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.
- ✓ Entrants are limited to 5 entries, including group entries.
- ✓ 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. The signed entry form must be packed with the corresponding work.
- ✓ Do not sign your work. If your artwork is selected for exhibition and has a signature of any kind, Koestler Arts staff will have to paint over or otherwise edit out the signature prior to display.
- ✓ 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

Unlock the talent inside