

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.

September 2020

This task is set by long-term Koestler entrant, exhibited artist and mentee, Neil.

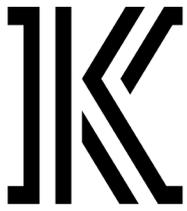
My Story

My artistic journey started whilst I was in HMP Belmarsh. I had no previous experience with art and with hardly any resources I had to improvise and make something out of nothing! Koestler Arts helped me throughout my 11 years in Belmarsh by giving me feedback on my artwork, helping me to improve my skills and even providing a mentor who has continued supporting me after my release. As a result of their help I have won several awards and a mentoring scholarship of several hundred pounds for art materials.

I would say that producing art through Koestler whilst in prison helped me through what seemed like a long, dark tunnel. It gave me purpose and was definitely a means of escape from the isolation and loneliness that I felt.

I am eternally grateful for the continued opportunities provided through Koestler and would like to reciprocate that time and attention by supporting their cause.





Bread Roses

To make these roses you need to make a plasticine like dough by mixing **bread**, **PVA glue** and **acrylic paint**. You will also need an unwound **paperclip** to form a stem.

Take five or six slices of white bread, cut off the crusts and then add a small squeeze of the glue and a little paint. Gradually combine the ingredients until the bread is coloured. This mixture should not be too wet or too dry but must feel pliable.

Mix in red paint for the petals and green for the leaves and stem. Once made these coloured doughs need to be placed into an airtight plastic bag in order to keep them fresh.

Take a piece of the red dough from the bag, making sure the bag is resealed straight away. Mould this piece into a thin petal shape by squeezing it between your forefingers and thumbs. Pinch this gently in the middle to form the petal shape. Then mould a small piece of the red dough to the top of the stem and begin adding the petals one by one, wrapping each petal around the last. There is no need to use glue to attach each petal as they can be pinched on at the base.

Once five petals have been added you need to let them dry before covering the paperclip with the green dough to form the stem. Complete the rose by adding the green leaves, pressing them into the stem and making sure you add a little glue where the leaves touch the dry petals.

Producing beautiful flowers in this way is a very therapeutic task!

Koestler's top tip - remember that bread sculptures are fragile and could go moldy if they get damp. At Koestler Arts we store bread sculptures in air tight containers.



Image:

11 Red Roses
HM Prison Whitemoor
Faye & Malcolm Payne
Commended Award for
Craft, 2015

All other images courtesy of
Neil.