

# 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.*

**You can enter the 2021 Koestler Awards now!**

*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 22 April 2021.*

*Each month Koestler Arts 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 and third Monday of each month as we approach the Awards deadline.*

## **March 2021, Issue 1**

*This task is set by Koestler Award winner, exhibited writer and former mentee, Thomas.*

### **My Story**

Whilst 'away', I used creative writing and art to get me through a very tough period in my life. Previously I had no real experience of poetry. Working in the prison laundry I was inspired to write *Dirty Laundry*, which acted as a springboard. I won a Koestler Award and had the pleasure of being exhibited at London's Southbank Centre. Two years later, following a year of mentoring, I was selected for exhibition again for my *Interlude Haiku*.

#### ***Dirty Laundry***

HM Prison Elmley, Bronze Award for Poem, 2016

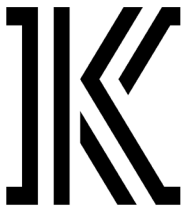
We all arrive soiled, some more than others  
The source of lost pride for so many fathers and mothers.  
The wash programme selected by the judge and the jury;  
But so often injustice - the cause of much fury.

Locked inside the drum, the cycle begins  
The theory is simple - to wash away sins.  
Clean once more, the rinse cycle starts  
Time has been served, a cleansing of hearts.

Freshly laundered, the washing is aired  
Inside for so long, many are scared.  
The final task; it is time for pressing  
Iron out the creases, the fresh start is a blessing.

Hitherto, my poetry experience was not really engaging with it at school; but knowing that the few poems I did like were 'ABCB' format where the second- and fourth-lines rhyme. Haikus (of Japanese origin, 17 syllables over three lines 5.7.5); sonnets (14 lines, traditionally 10 syllables a line with ABAB CDCD EFFE GG rhyme); free verse (some loose structure); blank verse (no structure) and found poetry (words picked out from existing text) were very much alien territory to me. But with the help of my mentor, I started to experiment, with varying degrees of success, it must be said.

Now, I have between 300 and 400 poems that not only do I want to publish, but I want to illustrate too. I'm no Michelangelo and my point is that art does not have to be a masterpiece, it just needs to be genuine. But that's for another story.



## My Task

This task combines writing and drawing to make a calligram, an image made up of words, in the shape of an object.

I wrote a poem about ibex goats, a type of goat that lives in the unforgiving mountain terrain of Africa, Asia and Europe, after watching a programme about them with my cell mate. In text format it read:

Bearded and horned ibex  
Has nimble feet  
On which it copes  
With steep slopes

It was a pseudo-Haiku - it had 17 syllables, but not three lines (I wrote it before I learned about the three-line format). I decided to present the words pictorially as a calligram, and used the animal's eye as the dot in the 'i' as a play on words too.

To write your own calligram you may wish to use word association instead of poetry.

For example, to write a calligram about a giraffe, you might think about where it comes from (Africa); the collective noun for a group of giraffes ('tower'); and the fact that they have blue tongues.

Using these basic facts as a starting point, you may choose to create your calligram using the word 'tower' spelled out vertically down its neck, and the word 'tongue' written in blue, or the word 'blue' in the shape of its tongue and use the words 'Africa' in its body or legs.

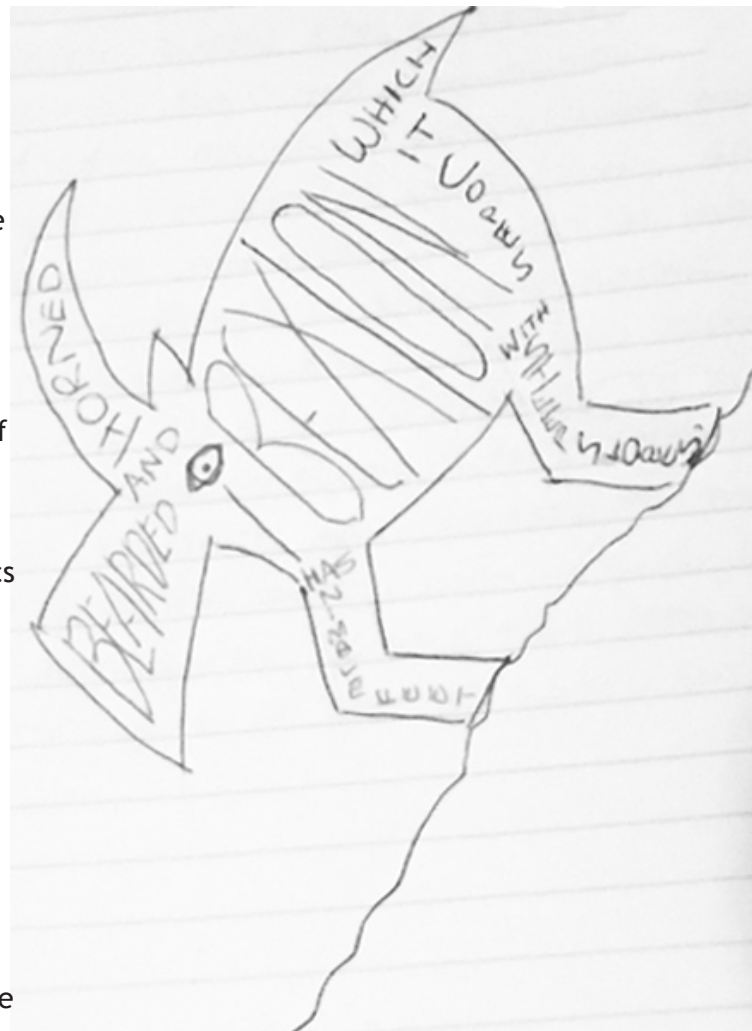
There are a plethora of possibilities to choose from. Perhaps, draw someone you know using their characteristics as features.

### Tools

Three tools that are very useful, if you can get hold of them, via the library, the education department or friends/family on the outside, are: a dictionary, a thesaurus and a rhyming dictionary - a Godsend for would be lyricists too. Additionally, I would encourage you to read as much as possible too. Not only does it help to develop your vocabulary and your grammatical skills, but it is also a great source for reference data, and inspiration. You may also wish to bolster your knowledge with documentaries on TV.

My mentor's guidance gave me the confidence to experiment and my literary skills developed from that. Don't expect every piece of work you create to be fabulous, but keep them all for reference, after all it is from our mistakes that we learn the most. So, if at first not successful, persevere and the rewards will follow.

I wish you every success with your creative writing and artistic pursuits and hope that you can use your voice for positive development. Perhaps you'll even consider entering the 2021 Koestler Awards...



# KOESTLER AWARDS ENTRY FORM



Send a completed form with each entry.  
Maximum 5 entries per entrant.  
2021 closing date: Thursday 22 April.

## ENTRANT (For groups – see the next page)

First name of entrant:

Last name of entrant:

Date of birth: (May be needed for processing payments)

## ENTRY

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

Title of entry:

Artform: (Choose one artform from the 2021 Awards Guidance)

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
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Prison or hospital number:

Signature of entrant:

Is this the first time 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 choice 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 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 — TELL US ABOUT YOUR GROUP

Name of group:

Number of people excl. staff:





First name: Last name: Date of birth: Prison or hospital number: Release date if in 2021, and home address:

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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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 2021

Please notify 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

- 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
- Irish Traveller/Gypsy

- 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

#### Gender

- Male
- Female
- 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

#### Registered disabled?

- Yes
- No