

FRIENDSHIP JEWELRY EXTRAVAGANZA

AGES

Tweens 9–12

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Making friendship bracelets is a classic tween activity, and they love to share their creations with their besties. This program includes instructions for the classic technique as well as three variations: Binary code friendship bracelets, puzzle piece necklaces, and the Kumihimo knotting technique, which may also appeal to teens and adults. All of these friendship jewelry variations are easily adapted to take-and-make kits. Instead of bracelets, you could also use the same techniques to make backpack dangles or bookmarks. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Classic Friendship Bracelets

Materials: See Printables.

Binary Code Friendship Bracelets

Materials:

- Beads in at least two colors
- String or pipe cleaners
- Binary code alphabet sheets (see printable)
- Trays or cookie sheets (optional)

For a STEM twist, create bracelets the express initials in binary code! Binary code is a series of 1s and 0s. Using beads of your choice, designate one color to represent “1” and another color to represent “0.” This program might spark tweens’ interest in coding!

Puzzle Pieces Friendship Necklaces

Materials:

- Puzzle pieces (two interlocking pieces per participant)
- Paint, brushes, and containers
- Push pins to make holes
- String for the necklace chains (two per participant)

Before the program, assemble a section of the puzzle and give it a per-



Image source: Lawren Dodson of Lafayette Public Library, Lafayette, LA

TIP:

Friendship bracelets bring good luck! Legend has it that if you make a wish while tying on a bracelet, it will come true once the bracelet falls off of its own accord.

TIP:

To allow those with disabilities to accomplish tasks without feeling pressure to ask for assistance, offer a variety of materials and art tools for any craft you choose.

ADAPTATION:

For visually impaired patrons, creating a bracelet with beads is more feasible than working with floss.

TIP:

For book displays, consider knotting techniques from around the world or fictional characters you would give a friendship bracelet to.

ADAPTATION:

For children 5–8, skip the binary code and provide beads with letters.

TIP:

If you provide beads, give each child a tray or cookie sheet to keep them off the floor.

TIP:

For another STEM topic, use UV (aka solaractive) beads for “1” and rainbow beads

functory pass with sand paper. Then paint this section with a base layer of paint. Separate the pieces while the paint is still wet to prevent them from sticking together. This base layer makes it easier for children to paint and prevents the old design from showing through. During the program, children paint two interlocking puzzle pieces, then turn each piece into a necklace. Encourage them to give the second necklace to a friend.

Kumihimo Bracelets

Materials: See Printables.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Extra staff members or volunteers to help with crafts, depending on the size of your group.

RESOURCES

Web

Classic friendship bracelet instructions from *DIY to Donate*:

<https://bit.ly/3MGRUYn>

Puzzle piece necklace on *Instructables*: <https://bit.ly/3QdSfEY>

Kumihimo video from *The Dream Lab* on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3xBAYyd>

Kumihimo beading technique from *Beadaholic*: <https://bit.ly/3ml44Wg>

Craft Books

Craft Books Beginner's Guide to Japanese Braiding: The Art of Kumihimo (2020) by Jacqui Carey

A Beginner's Guide to Kumihimo (2018) by Donna McKean-Smith

Friendship Bracelets: The 10 Essential Bracelets Everyone Should Know! (2020) by Keith Zoo

Printables

Classic Friendship Bracelet Instructions (in English and Spanish)

Binary Code Alphabet

Kumihimo Friendship Bracelet Instructions (in English and Spanish)



Image source: Azita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI



Image source: Martha Matthews, MidPointe Library, Middletown, OH

for "0." UV beads look white indoors, but they change color outside (in daylight). You could go into the science of different types of solar rays to explain why the beads change color.

TIP:

This is a great way to reuse puzzles that may be missing some pieces.

TIP:

Prepare an activity for the children to do while the paint dries.

TIP:

If running an in-person program, precut the cardboard pieces, and precut the string into 24-inch lengths (or provide an easy way to measure string length, such as tape on a table).

TIP:

For Kumihimo knotting (or any other knotting technique), use thick yarn to demonstrate, which will be easier for a group to see.

TIP:

Check your collection for any classic friendship bracelet-making books by Suzanne McNeill.

TIP:

For children's books about coding and Scratch, see *Scratch + micro:bit* on page 86.

TIP:

For friendship fiction, see the *Friendship Fiction Book List* on page 44.

Classic Friendship Bracelet Instructions

Materials:

- Safety pins or tape
- Embroidery floss in assorted colors (3–6 stands of 30 inches per bracelet)
- Scissors
- Sandwich bags for take-and-make kits (optional)

Steps:

Step 1: Place the three strands together.

Step 2: Tie a knot roughly 1–1.5 inches from the end.

Step 3: Safety pin or tape down the knot.

Step 4: Pick up one strand of floss furthest to the left and place it over the next strand creating a “4”.

Step 5: Pull the end of the working strand through the loop and pull up creating a knot. (This knot is called the forward knot.) Repeat again.

Step 6: Continue with the same working strand until the row is finished.

Step 7: Pick up the next strand further to the left and repeat steps 4–6 until the desired length is reached. Tie a knot to finish the bracelet.

Instrucciones Para La Pulsera De La Amistad Clásica

Materials:

- Hilo para bordar en colores variados (3–6 hebras de 30” por pulsera)
- Alfileres de gancho o cinta adhesiva
- Tijeras
- Bolsas de sándwiches para llevar los kits a todos lados (opcional)

Pasos:

Paso 1: Coloca las tres hebras juntas

Paso 2: Haz un nido aproximadamente 1–1.5 pulgadas del extremo.

Paso 3: Sujeta el nudo con el alfiler de gancho o la cinta adhesiva.

Paso 4: Toma la hebra de hilo más a la izquierda y colócala sobre la siguiente hebra creando un “4”.

Paso 5: Mete el extremo de la hebra trabajada a través del bucle y tira de él creando un nudo. (Este nudo se llama forward knot). Repite de nuevo.

Paso 6: Continúa con la misma hebra trabajada hasta que se termine la hilera.

Paso 7: Levante la próxima hebra de más a la izquierda y repita los pasos 4–6 hasta lograr el largo deseado. Haga un nudo para terminar la pulsera.



Image source: Shutterstock

LETTERS IN BINARY CODE

LETTER	BINARY CODE
A	01000001
B	01000010
C	01000011
D	01000100
E	01000101
F	01000110
G	01000111
H	01001000
I	01001001
J	01001010
K	01001011
L	01001100
M	01001101
N	01001110
O	01001111
P	01010000
Q	01010001
R	01010010
S	01010011
T	01010100
U	01010101
V	01010110
W	01010111
X	01011000
Y	01011001
Z	01011010

Kumihimo Friendship Bracelet Instructions

Materials:

- Cardboard disc 4 inches in diameter (one per participant)
- Embroidery thread cut into 24-inch pieces (seven per participant)
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Instructions handout

Steps:

Step 1. Prepare 4-inch cardboard squares, one per participant.

Step 2. Cut a circle out of the cardboard using the template provided.

Step 3. Make a hole in the center.

Step 4. Divide the circle into eight parts (or any number of parts up to 32!)

Step 5. Cut 1 inch into the cardboard on each part.

Step 6. Tie the seven strings together. Push the knot below the hole.

Step 7. Distribute the seven strings one per slot (there will be a vacant slot).

Step 8. With the vacant slot towards you, move the third string to the right into the vacant slot.

Step 9. Rotate disk so the new vacant slot is towards you. Repeat step 8.

Step 10. Continue steps 9 and 10 until you reach the desired length.

Step 11. Remove braid and tie the ends together around your wrist.

Instrucciones Para La Pulsera De La Amistad Kumihimo

Materials:

- Disco de cartón de 4 pulgadas de diámetro (uno por participante)
- Hilo de bordado en pedazos de 24 pulgadas (siete por participante)
- Tijeras
- Lápices
- Instrucciones

Pasos:

Paso 1. Prepare cuadrados de cartón de 4 pulgadas, uno por participante.

Paso 2. Corte un círculo del cartón usando la plantilla proporcionada.

Paso 3. Haga un hueco en el medio.

Paso 4. Divida el círculo en ocho partes (¡o cualquier número hasta el 32!)

Paso 5. Corte 1 pulgada en el cartón en cada parte.

Paso 6. Ate las siete hebras juntas. Empuje el nudo por debajo del hueco.

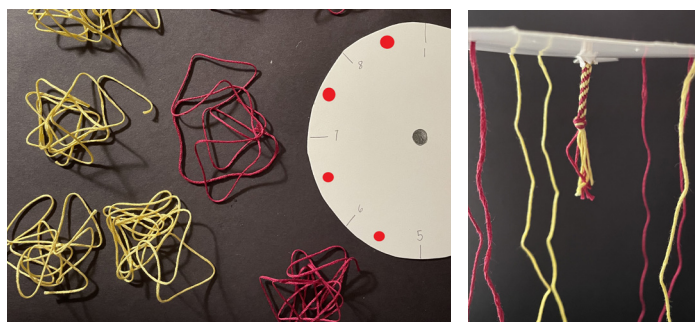
Paso 7. Distribuya las siete hebras, una por ranura (habrá una ranura libre).

Paso 8. Coloque la ranura libre hacia usted, mueva la tercera hebra hacia la derecha en la ranura libre.

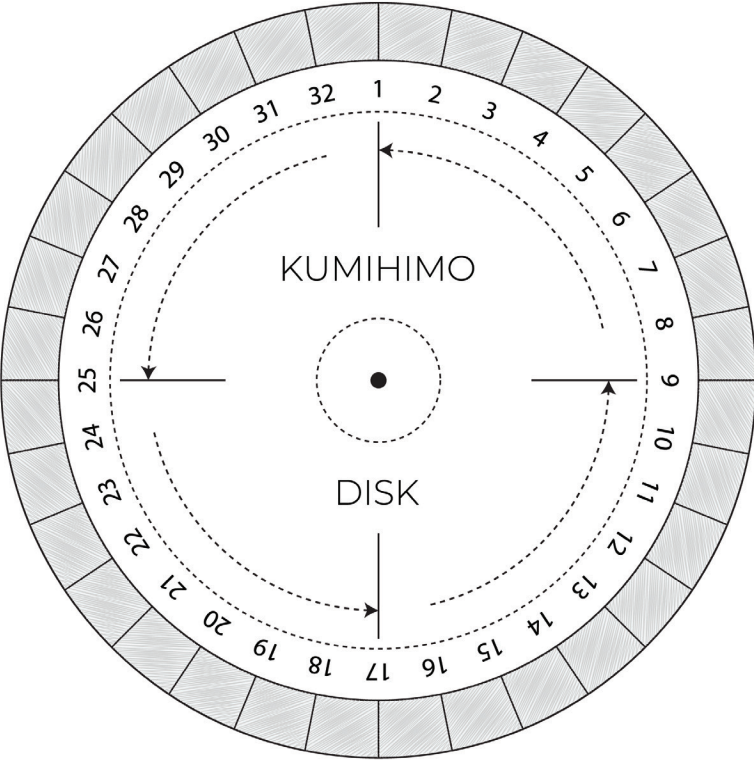
Paso 9. Rote el disco para que la nueva ranura libre esté hacia usted. Repita el paso 8.

Paso 10. Continúe haciendo los pasos 9 y 10 hasta lograr el largo deseado.

Paso 11. Retire la trenza y ate los extremos juntos alrededor de su muñeca.



Images source: Alzita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI



DONUTS AND ART: A PERFECT PAIR

AGES

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Donuts and art make a perfect pair! This art project mashes the works of Vassily Kandinsky (specifically *Color Study, Squares with Concentric Circles*) and Wayne Theibauld (specifically *Cakes*) to create an artfully arranged wall of donuts. Every participant paints their own donut on canvas or paper; when arranged together, the pieces become a work of friendship and collaboration. To emphasize friendship, pair up participants and ask them to make two donut paintings that complement each other in some way (color, form, layout, style, etc.). Registration recommended. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Canvas (one per participant)
- Acrylic paints and paint brushes
- Tablecloths, paper towels, cups, and water
- Donuts for snacking (optional)

Before painting, give a brief art history lesson on the works of Vassily Kandinsky and Wayne Theibauld. Guide the discussion by asking questions: What colors do you see? How do the paintings make you feel? Do you think these paintings could be paired together? Do they represent a theme?

Explain that you will be working together to create a giant wall of donuts. After the paintings have dried, hang them up. Be sure to share examples for those who would rather copy a donut design than come up with their own.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly. In-person programs may require a microwave (for Rice Krispy treats).

ADAPTATION:

For a passive program that can be aged down, provide donut coloring sheets. Turn the finished pages into a donut wall quilt that grows over the summer.

TIP:

For more famous artist-inspired projects, see ideas from the Art with Jenny K. blog here: <https://bit.ly/3NN79QX>

TIP:

You can also include a lesson on color mixing! Consider reaching out to local artists to help run this program.



Image source: Shutterstock

RESOURCES

Web

“Wassily Kandinsky” from *The Art Story*: <https://bit.ly/3MD1nQt>

“Wayne Thiebaud” from *The Art Story*: <https://bit.ly/3ttBVq0>

Books

Donut Fiction

Donut the Destroyer (2020) by Sarah Graley and Stef Purenins (middle grade)

Donuts and Other Proclamations of Love (2021) by Jared Reck (YA)

The Doughnut Fix (2018) by Jessie Janowitz (middle grade)

The Doughnut King (2019) by Jessie Janowitz (middle grade)

Nonfiction

The Art of Graphic Communication (2019) by W.L. Kitts (YA)

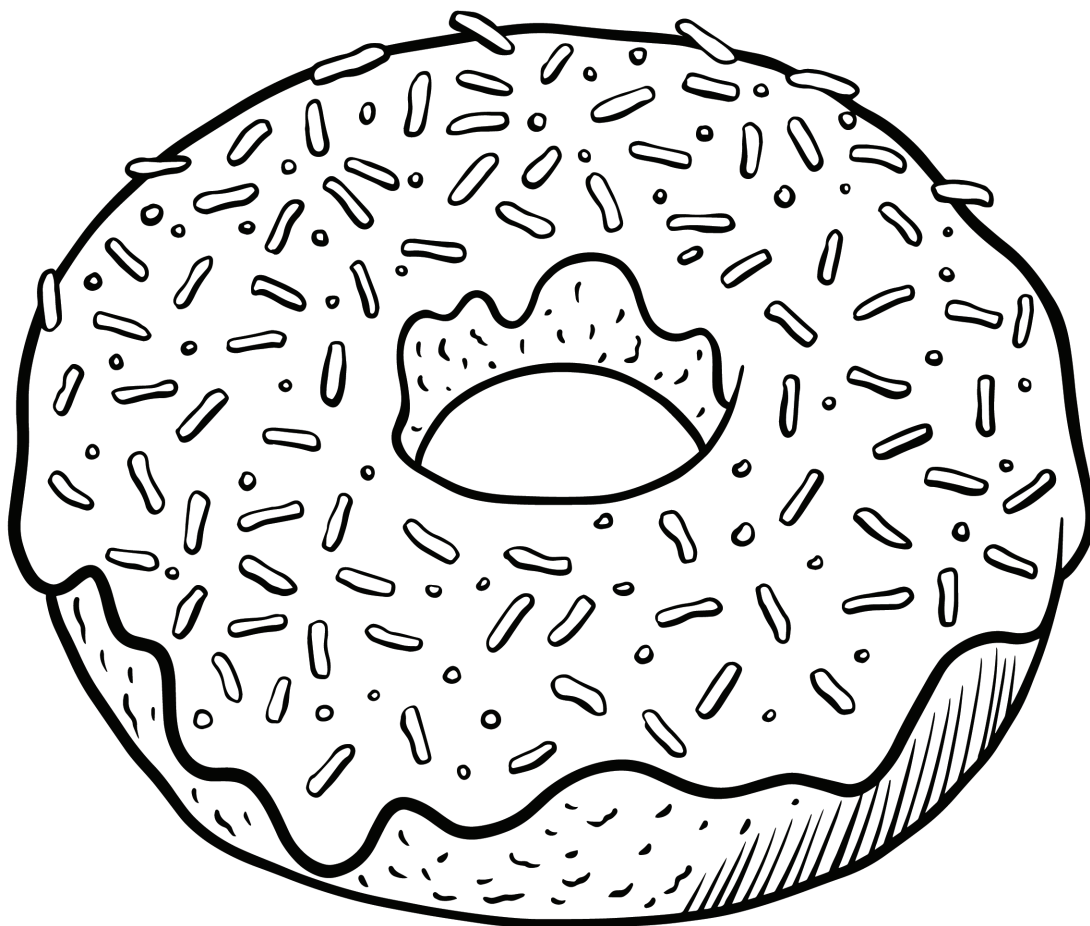
Art Matters (2018) by Neil Gaiman (YA)

Delicious Metropolis: The Desserts and Urban Scenes of Wayne Thiebaud (2019) by Wayne Thiebaud (adult)

The Life and Art of Wassily Kandinsky (2016) by Adam Simpson (YA)

Printables

Donut Coloring Page



ARTS & CRAFTS

BASQUIAT JOURNAL COVERS

AGES

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Teens reimagine book covers inspired by the American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat. Pair up participants and ask them to share cover image(s) of their favorite book with their partner/friend, who will then reimagine a new cover à la Basquiat! While they work, they can chat about their favorite books.

Basquiat was a Brooklyn-based artist of Haitian/Puerto Rican descent; he was fluent in Spanish, English, and French by age 11, and an avid reader. Consider running this as a bilingual program both to inspire language-learners and attract Spanish-speaking patrons. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- White pastel paper (thick)
- Tissue paper
- Crayon pastels
- Glue sticks
- Napkins or paper towels, and water

Ask teens to look up the cover(s) of their favorite book, and to think of some words to describe that book. Alternatively, ask teens to bring their favorite book from home. Show some examples of Basquiat's work (and your own examples) before starting the art project.

Steps:

- Glue pieces of tissue paper onto white pastel paper.
- Wet a piece of paper towel to rub over the tissue paper.
- Let the tissue paper dry.
- Draw over the tissue paper with crayon pastels. Leave space for words (optional).
- When finished drawing, write the book title and author, and any descriptive words.

ADAPTATION:

This program could also be followed by a book-making program in which teens make their own journals with Basquiat-inspired covers.

ADAPTATION:

Basquiat's art style would also make a good prompt for the Field Guide to Your Life program on page 66. Instead of book covers, teens make Basquiat-style collages for their field guides.

TIP:

Be sure to show images of Basquiat's original work and make project examples.

TIP:

For more contrast, use light colored pastels on dark tissue paper, or use dark pastels on light tissue paper.

ARTS & CRAFTS

- Put a symbol next your signature and sign your piece (optional).

RESOURCES

Web

“Jean-Michel Basquiat” from *Brittanica*: <https://bit.ly/3O2BSck>

“Jean-Michel Basquiat Art History Workbook” from *Teachers Pay Teachers*: <https://bit.ly/3xo2hec>

Nonfiction on Jean-Michel Basquiat

Basquiat: Art Masters Series (2019) by Søren Glosimodt Mosdal and Julian Volij (graphic novel)

Jean-Michel Basquiat, 40th Edition (2020) by Eleanor Nairne and edited by Hans Werner-Holzwarth

Life Doesn't Frighten Me, 25th Anniversary Ed. (2018) by Maya Angelou and Jean-Michel Basquiat, and edited by Sara Jane Boyers (picture book)

The Life of/La Vida de Jean-Michel Basquiat (2021) by Patty Rodrigues and Ariana Stein, and illustrated by Citlali Reyes (picture book)

Radiant Child: The Story of Young Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat (2016) by Javanka Steptoe (picture book)

PLIX & CSLP: SPATIAL POETRY

AGES

Children 5–8

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Make poems out of street names in your community! Poems have historically influenced many of the place names we know today, and many contemporary poets rethink the ties between language, place, and belonging. In this program, children or teens re-imagine local maps with poetry to renew their understanding of place. Participants expand their local data research skills as well as develop their expressive writing. Choose from a wide variety of workshop prompts below, or come up with your own to best suit your audience. These ideas could work as either structured workshops or passive activities. Suggested group size: 10–15. Suggested runtime: 45–60 minutes.

WORKSHOP IDEAS:

- **Main street memories:** Invite patrons to bring a photograph that features a specific place in your community, and encourage them to share stories about that place with the group. This could also be a Zoom program. Invite them to digitize their photographs in a shared database.
- **Street shape poem:** Trace the shape of a particular street, and use that street and its intersections to write a poem.
- **Found map poem:** Take a map and create a poem by erasing, collaging, and/or drawing over the top of it.
- **Walking poem:** Take a walk around your area and write down notable places and street names. Write a poem incorporating these words in the order you saw them on your walk.
- **Renaming poem:** Write a poem where each line renames a particular street or place in a different way. The new names can be words, phrases, or even sentences.
- **Site-specific:** Choose a location for a site-specific reading series and/or compile an e-book or zine out of patrons' poems about that place.
- **Open mics:** Host a community open mic night (for families or a specific age group). Participants read their own poems or poems by famous regional poets. Alternatively, invite local poets to read from and discuss their work.



Image source:
Shutterstock

The Public Library Innovation Exchange (PLIX) is a project of the MIT Media Lab Digital Learning & Collaboration Studio. This program was adapted by CSLP with permission and remains under a CC BY-SA 4.0 license. Link to original PLIX program here: <https://bit.ly/3MlyLW5>

ADAPTATION:

For teens and older, emphasize place-naming in America, particularly its historical ties to colonization. Connect with local renaming campaigns. Draw on current topics in geography, poetry, and journalism, and media-making. See link in Resources for the original Spatial Poetry program from PLIX.

GAME/ACTIVITY | ARTS & CRAFTS | PASSIVE

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Various printed local maps, historical and contemporary
- Printed Spatial Poetry zines (one per participant)
- Paper, with or without grids
- Supplies for collaging (if applicable)

RESOURCES

Web

“Spatial Poetry” from PLIX: <https://bit.ly/3MUI3zw>

Mapping resources (by state) from PLIX: <https://bit.ly/3xpBPR8>

Books

Adventures to School: Real-Life Journeys of Students Around the World (2018) by Miranda Paul and Baptise Paul, and illustrated by Isabel Muñoz (picture book NF)

A Map Into the World (2019) by Kao Kalia Yang and illustrated by Seo Kim (early reader F)

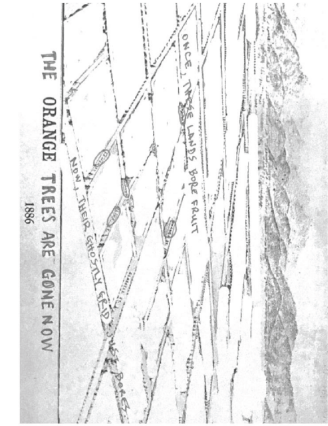
My Two Border Towns (2021) by David Bowles and illustrated by Erika Meza (picture book F)

Printables

PLIX Spatial Poetry Zine

TIP:

If it exists in your area, consider partnering with mass transit. Participants can add bus routes to their maps (or take a bus to new places). Volunteers could also donate books for bus book racks for children to peruse while riding. See example from *Portland Press Herald*: <https://bit.ly/3aMY4sK>



Shaping Space

Some poets simply reflect on a place and their own thoughts and feelings on its name.

PLIX Spatial Poetry



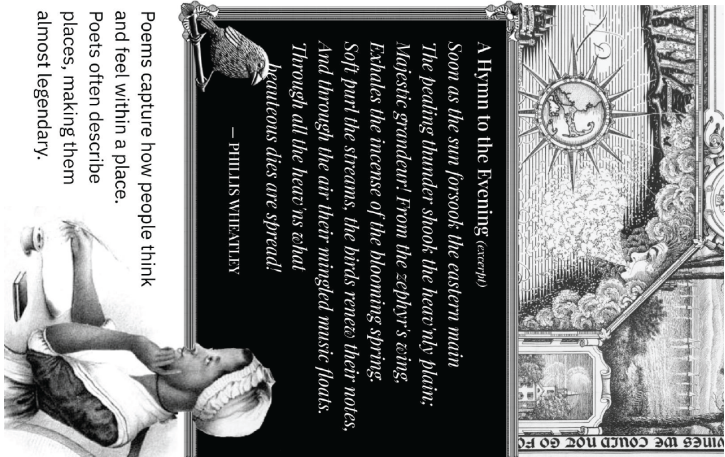
Remix this!
CC BY-SA 4.0

This zine was created by the MIT Media Lab Public Library Innovation Exchange (PLIX) and Hua Xi of the Spatial Poetry Project.

Display your spatial poems on its website — visit spatial-poetry.com for more details.

Map examples courtesy of David Rumsey Map Collection, David Rumsey Map Center, Stanford Libraries (non-commercial CC license).

Share your creations using #heyplix #PLIXSpatialPoetry (and tag @heyplix) plix.media.mit.edu



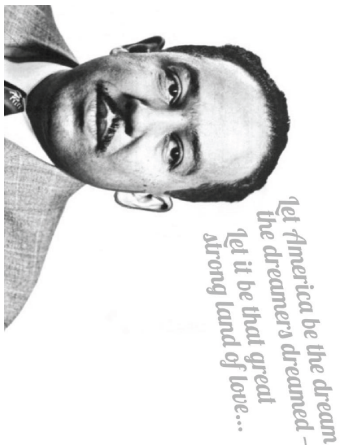
Finding Your Way

Look at a map of where you live. What do all the words mean? Are the words easy to pronounce? Where do these names come from?

Streets, buildings, rivers, lakes, mountains, even countries all have their own names.

The names in a landscape make up their own kind of language.

These place names have their own history and cultural associations.

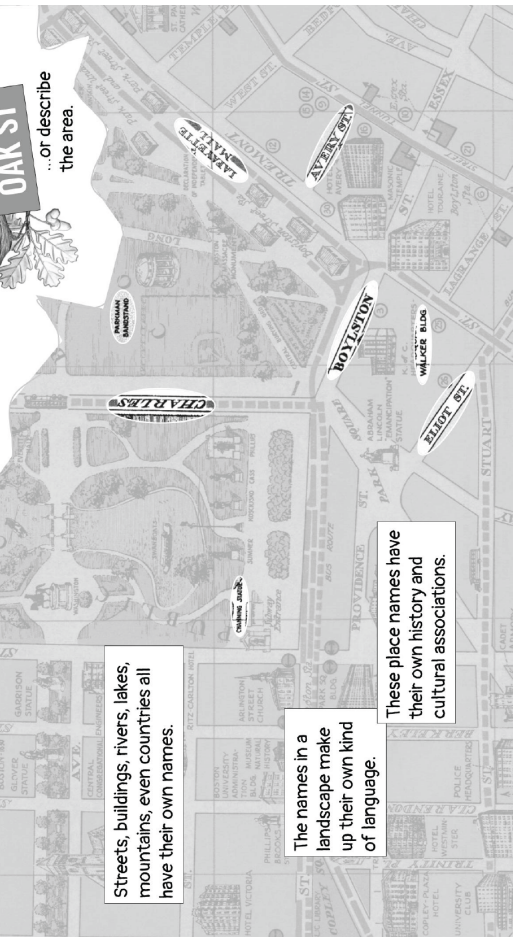


Poetry and Place

The language of places has inspired and informed poets — from Homer to Langston Hughes. By writing poems about a landscape, they made sense of what it meant to live there.



OAK ST
...or describe the area.



MULTIGENERATIONAL BRAINSTORM: PEN PAL PROGRAMS

Looking for some fresh ideas for a pen pal or letter-writing program? See the collaborative brainstorm from CSLP's manual committees below!

CHILDREN

- Challenge children to write letters to their favorite characters in books. Hold a party for whichever fictional characters get the most letters by the end of the summer. Read some of their letters during the celebration.
- The Flat Stanley Project: Partner with a school to exchange artwork (flat visitors), postcards, and more! <http://www.flatstanleyproject.com/>
- Have children write/draw notes to seniors at a local retirement home. You could also do this as part of an intergenerational storytime. If you ask seniors to write back, be sure to screen the letters.
- Partner with another library. Have a mailbox and letter-writing station where children can write or draw (and "send") their letters.
- Hold a contest to see who can make the most colorful/creative/realistic greeting card art related to your theme. Display the cards and mail them off at the end of the summer.

TWEENS/TEENS

- Hold a passive program where teens design (and write) their own greeting cards. This can be made to fit any theme, and the cards can be sent to any group of people. In addition to paper, envelopes, and craft supplies, you could also set out stickers and copies of poems, quotations, or royalty-free images for teens to use. Consider providing origami paper (and instructions) so teens can include origami creatures as well.
- Take a field trip to deliver cards to community recipients, and pair this delivery with a group activity such as coloring, Bingo, or retro board games.
- Set up a table for writing letters (or drawing pictures) to recipients of your choosing (e.g., troops overseas, elders in your community, etc.). Include prompts for what they could write about. Teens submit their letters, and a staff member screens them for appropriateness before sending. This could be a one-off program or a passive program that lasts the whole summer.

MULTIGENERATIONAL

- Offer postage-paid postcards that feature special things about your city or state. Invite patrons to write kind notes, then collect the

TIP:

To accommodate different ages and abilities, be sure to emphasize that patrons can either write a letter or make art.

TIP:

For recipients, consider troops overseas, folks in nursing homes, children in hospitals, schools in other countries, and health care heroes. A letter-writing program can be modified to suit almost any theme.

TIP:

Be sure to include some ideas for what participants could write or draw!

TIP:

Asking in the CSLP Facebook group for potential library partners is a great place to start.

cards and send them to libraries and schools all over the country or world. You can let patrons choose where to send them, or choose yourself based on your connections with partners. Be sure to make a bulletin board with maps of where cards were sent (and/or to display postcards received from other places!). (See Early Literacy Standalone Printables for a blank postcard template.)

- Request that patrons who take summer vacations send a postcard with a kind note for a library bulletin board. See how many states and countries your patrons collect!
- Do a cultural exchange with a library in another country. Each library sends crafts (made by patrons) that represent something about your community and letters/postcards describing those things. You can start by create a Google form to ask patrons what they think is important/unique about your city or town. The Dalkey Library in Dalkey, Ireland made an online display about such an exchange: <https://bit.ly/3NJ1Vpq>
- Ask patrons to do an act of kindness. Give them a list of simple ideas that work for your community.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Introduction to letter-writing for children 5–9 from *Reading Rockets*: <https://bit.ly/3mA7n1R>

Letters Against Isolation program: <https://www.lettersagainstisolation.com/>

Where to send greeting cards from *Doing Good Together*: <https://bit.ly/3OdkIZX>

Guidelines for sending letters for elders: <https://loveforourelers.org/letters>

Letter guidelines from *Operation Support Our Troops*: <https://bit.ly/3QdTqnS>

Tips for letter-writing from *Maya Smart*: <https://bit.ly/3QiSE95>

TIP:

Teens love junk art, so making cards is a great way to use up your leftover crafting supplies!

TIP:

Be sure to have examples of card designs to help teens visualize the possibilities. You can also encourage teens who want to create digital cards (try Canva) by making it easy to print their designs.

ARTS FOR HEARTS

AGES

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Team up with local artists or art teachers to explore different art styles! Children or teens create original pieces of art based on what they learn, and the art is placed in a show for community members to purchase. All proceeds from “Arts for Hearts” are then donated to a local hospital, senior center, assisted living community, or rehabilitation center. If you cannot partner with an organization in your area, hang the show in your library and donate proceeds to the American Heart Association (or other organization). You could also make this a two-part program with an art opening. Provide snacks and beverages, and encourage patrons to dress up for the unveiling of the artwork. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Preparation:

- Contact local artists, teachers, organizations, or galleries in your community. Once you have confirmed a workshop teacher, ask them for a supply list.
- Mount the artwork on black backgrounds so all the pieces pop. Promote the gallery launch or virtual gallery, and specify where the proceeds will be donated.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

You will need a large wall space—in the library or in the community—on which to hang the finished artwork.

RESOURCES

Web

“Top 19 Famous Artists to Teach Preschoolers” (can be aged up) from *Orange Easel Art*: <https://bit.ly/3xFHwvN>

“Kandinsky Inspired Heart Art” from *Arty Crafty Kids*: <https://bit.ly/3NJLoI8>

Printables

Anatomical Heart Coloring Sheet

Art Deco Heart Coloring Sheet

TIP:

You might also be able to partner with a local art gallery to display the show.

ADAPTATION:

Make a virtual art gallery online, and enable online purchases.

ADAPTATION:

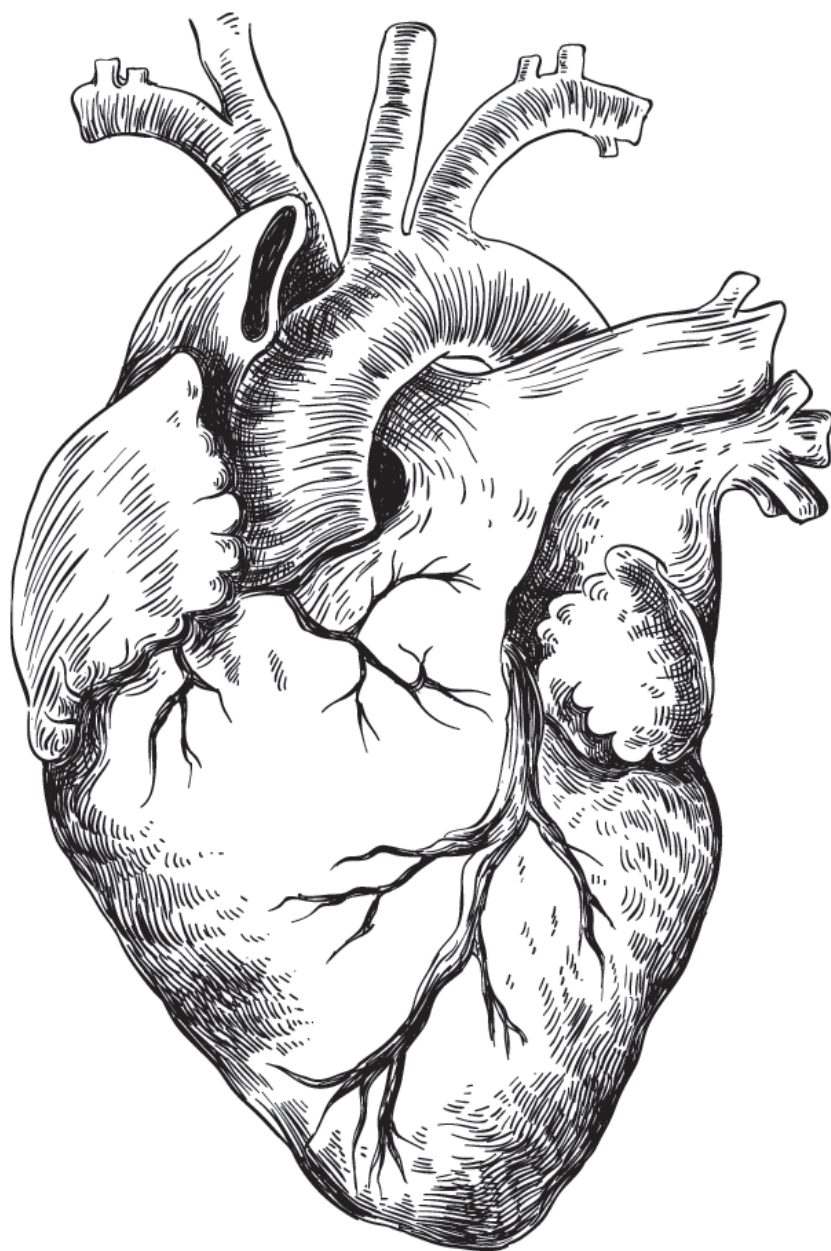
This program could also be a week-long arts camp. Participants learn a different art style every afternoon for a week.

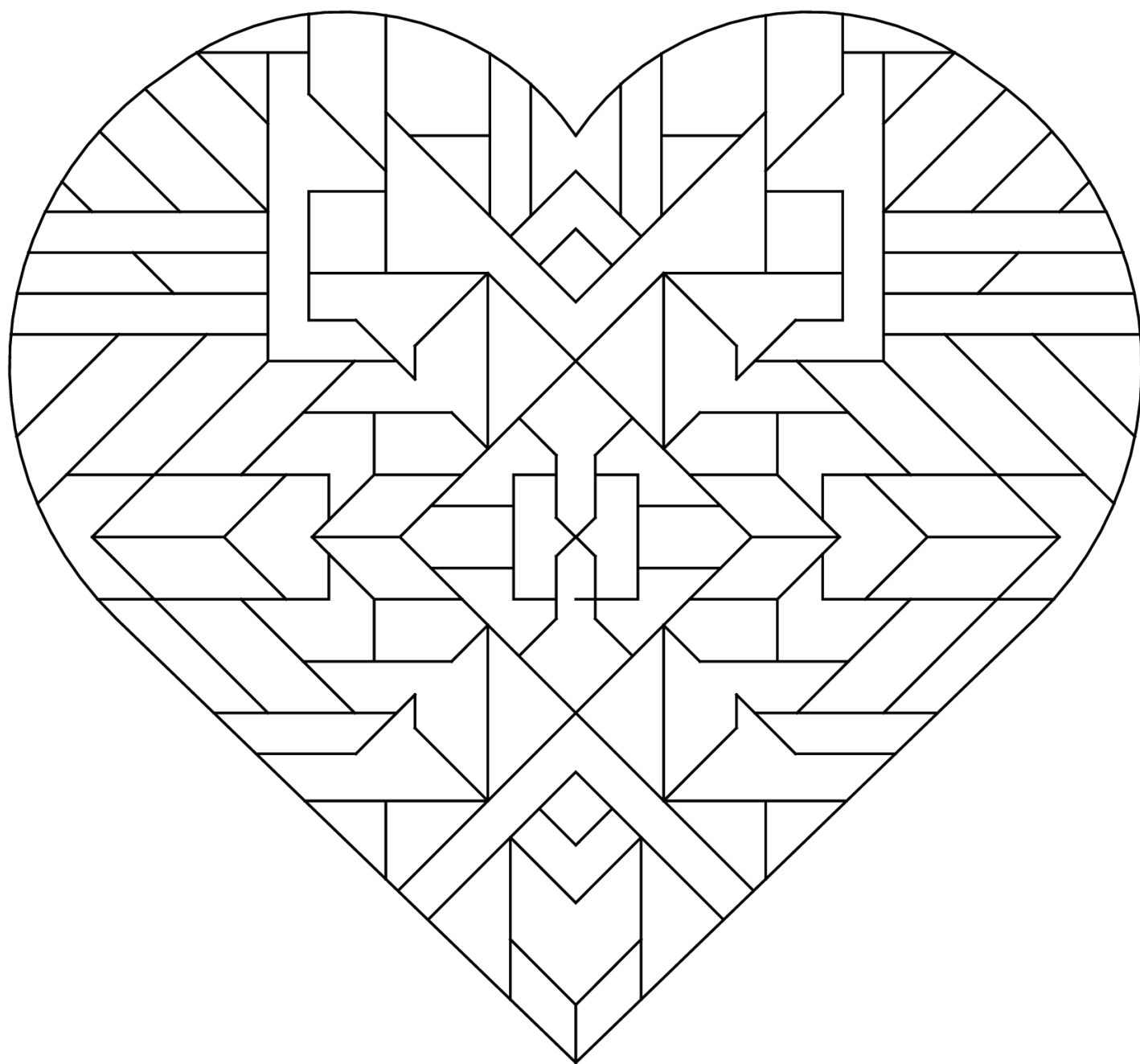
ADAPTATION:

For a passive program, provide instructions and let participants create their art at home rather than in the library.

TIP:

See also the Basquiat program for teens on page 36.





FIELD GUIDE TO YOUR LIFE

AGES

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Teens often feel like nobody understands them. This program lets them showcase their lives and unique personalities by creating field guides...to themselves! Tie this program to your community by encouraging teens to include the locations of their most formative moments, as well as people who have helped them along the way. This program is best suited to a passive program or a longer series in which teens work on specific elements every week. Alternatively, send them home with kits and activities to explore on their own. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials to consider:

- Scrapbook paper
- Three-ring binders and folders
- Washi tape
- Cricut machine
- Printer and photo paper
- Whatever art supplies you have on hand

This program is highly customizable. If accepting digital submissions, no materials are required. If accepting paper submissions, you could distribute journals or field guide creation kits for teens to take home. Alternatively, set up a table in the teen section with supplies.

Preparation:

- Create a book list, display, LibGuide, or webpage about memoirs and how to write them, and/or traditional field guides.
- Create an instruction sheet for how to complete the field guide. The requirements can be as rigid or flexible as you like, or leave it open ended and see what you get!
- If part of a program series, choose a different prompt and specific materials for each session. Encourage teens to share their work and ideas with one another.
- Set a deadline for receiving field guide submissions. Consider a way to showcase the guides (with permission) once they are submitted, such as creating flip-through videos or holding a gallery opening at the library.

Outcomes:

- Teens will engage in self-reflection and practice expressing themselves in a multimodal format;
- Teens will be introduced to field guides and how they are used;

ADAPTATION:

For virtual field guides, consider holding a workshop on how to use a free design program (such as Inkscape, Photoscape X, Gravit, or Canva) as part of this program.

TIP:

This program could also include elements from the PLIX & CSLP: Spatial Poetry program, where teens map out their most important locations and/or rework place locations into a poem.



Image source: Shutterstock

TIP:

Consider reaching out to local artists, galleries, and schools.

TIP:

You could also kick off this program with a book-binding program where teens create their very own blank journals to house their field guides.

ARTS & CRAFTS | GAME/ACTIVITY | PASSIVE

- Teens will learn about memoirs and what the library has in the collection.

RESOURCES

Web

“Field Guides Made Easy” from Cornell Cooperative Extension: <https://bit.ly/3NJut1Q>

Books

Middle Grade Memoirs

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me 'Round (2022) by Kathlyn J. Kirkwood and illustrated by Steffi Walthall

Be Prepared (2018) by Vera Brosgol (graphic novel)

Hurricane: My Story of Resistance (2021) by Salvador Gómez-Colón

This Is Your Time (2021) by Rube Bridges

Just Pretend (2021) by Tori Sharp (graphic novel)

Permanent Record (Young Reader's Edition) (2021) by Edward Snowden

Someone Like Me: How One Undocumented Girl Fought for Her American Dream (2018) by Julissa Arce

YA Memoirs

All Boys Aren't Blue (2020) by George M. Johnson

Almost American Girl (2020) by Robin Ha (graphic novel)

Apple: Skin to the Core (2020) by Eric Gansworth

Brave Face (2019) by Shaun David Hutchison

It's Trevor Noah: Born a Crime (Adapted for Young Readers) (2019) by Trevor Noah

Ordinary Hazards (2019) by Nikki Grimes

Passport (2021) by Sophia Glock (graphic novel)

Reaching for the Moon (2020) by Katherine Johnson

Shout (2020) by Laurie Halse

Soaring Earth (2019) by Margarita Engle

YA Writers and Writing

Final Draft (2018) by Riley Redgate (F)

Find Your Voice: A Guided Journal for Writing Your Truth (2020) by Angie Thomas (NF)

Off the Record (2021) by Cameryn Garrett (F)

Teen Writer's Guide (2020) by Jennifer Jenkins (NF)

Write Your Own Poems (2019) by Jerome Martin (NF)

Printables

Field Guild to Your Life: Prompts (in English and Spanish)

FIELD GUIDE TO YOUR LIFE: PROMPTS

- Make a map of your life, your bedroom, or your town.
- Make a map of your bedroom or town.
- Make a graph of how you spend your time.
- List your top 10 favorite moments or places.
- List your top 10 favorite songs or musicians.
- List your top 10 favorite books or comics.
- Make a collage that represents your personal style.
- Make a collage out of found 2D objects.
- Make a collage out of items in your favorite color.
- Write yourself into the script of your favorite TV show or movie.
- If you were a superhero, who would you be? What would you do?
- Rank the games you play, from most to least favorite.
- Trace your hand and fill in the outline with poetry.
- Go for a walk around your neighborhood and record 10 observations
- Make a list of things you notice that other people do not.
- Draw a portrait of your family and your pets.
- What will your life look like in five years? Ten years?
- Draw your favorite dance moves with your eyes closed.
- If you could visit any country, where would you go and why?
- Who is your favorite teacher and why?
- Record yourself singing your favorite song.
- Make a digital mashup of your personal photos or videos.

GUÍA DE CAMPO PARA TU VIDA: INDICACIONES

- Haz un gráfico de cómo pasas tu tiempo.
- Haz una lista de tus 10 mejores momentos o lugares.
- Haz una lista de tus 10 canciones o músicos favoritos.
- Haz una lista de tus 10 libros o cómics favoritos.
- Haz un collage que represente tu estilo personal.
- Haz un collage con objetos 2D encontrados.
- Haz un collage con elementos de tu color favorito.
- Escríbete a ti mismo en el guión de tu programa de televisión o película favorita. Si fueras un superhéroe, ¿quién serías? ¿Qué harías?
- Clasifique los juegos que juega, de mayor a menor favorito.
- Traza tu mano y completa el contorno con poesía.
- Sal para caminar por tu vecindario y registra 10 observaciones
- Haz una lista de las cosas que notas que otras personas no notan.
- Dibuja un retrato de tu familia y tus mascotas.
- ¿Cómo será tu vida dentro de cinco años? ¿Diez años?
- Dibuja tus pasos de baile favoritos con los ojos cerrados.
- Si pudieras visitar cualquier país, ¿a dónde irías y por qué?
- ¿Quién es tu profesor favorito y por qué?
- Grábate cantando tu canción favorita.
- Haz un (mashup) tritura y pega digital de tus fotos o videos personales.

MULTIGENERATIONAL BRAINSTORM: COMMUNITY ART PROJECTS

Looking for some fresh ideas for community art projects? See the collaborative brainstorm from CSLP's manual committees below!

CHILDREN

- Sticker art. Using the annual CSLP Stick Together stickers from <https://letssticktogether.com>, children or teens who ask at the front desk get a few stickers to add to the sticker pixel puzzle. Alternatively, give out random stickers and see what patrons come up with, or prepare a “sticker by numbers” design for them to fill in with specific colors.
- Cupcake paint-along. During an in-person program, the librarian (or local artist) guides patrons step-by-step in how to paint a cupcake. Provide options for how participants can modify the paintings (e.g., different colors, frosting, or sprinkles). Optionally, let everyone snack on cupcakes (and provide options for those with food allergies). Display the cupcake art in the library for the summer. (See also Donuts and Art: A Perfect Pair on page 31.)
- Collaborative mural game. Prepare wall space for a mural; individuals (or teams) take turns adding their own touches. Avoid difficult-to-clean-up art supplies. If doing this indoors, remember drop cloths!
- Coloring quilts. Provide coloring sheets with quilt patterns (or other geometric patterns). Children color a square to add to a display in the children's section of the library. Or provide squares where children can write something nice about their best friend and decorate it as desired. Hang the finished squares together in a grid by punching holes along the sides of each square and tying them together with string. See Standalone Printables (page 243) for a geometric option.

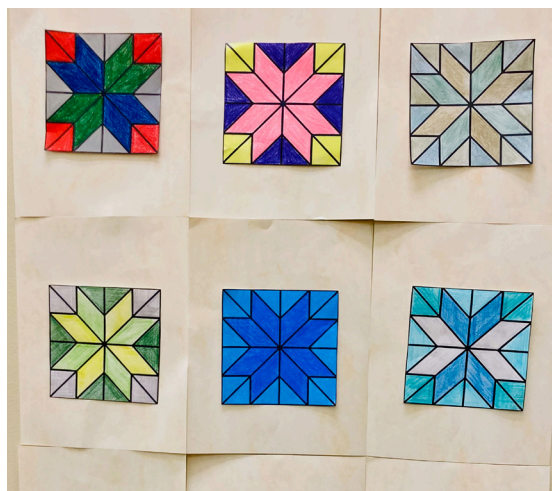


Image source: Lawren Dodson of Lafayette Public Library, Lafayette, LA.

TEENS

- Online literary magazine Teens submit art, writing, photography, etc. for the library to put online or compile into a printed zine. Tie submissions to your theme (or not). Here is an example using Flip Snack (<https://www.flipsnack.com/>) from the Spartanburg County Library in South Carolina: <https://bit.ly/3zAcZ3R>
- Bad art night. Invite teens for a bad art night. Have them create the worst art they possibly can around a given theme. Let them vote on the worst.

TIP:

See also The More We Paint Together on page 148; Chalk the Block with Kindness on page 183; and Grow, Evolve, Transform: Collaborative Origami Display on page 152.

TIP:

Maybe Something Beautiful / Quizás algo hermoso (2016) is a slightly older picture book (available in both English and Spanish editions) that makes an excellent companion to community art programs.

TIP:

If patrons cannot get enough of cupcakes, host a multigenerational cupcake decorating party! Cupcakes tend to motivate those who might not otherwise participate in an art program.

TIP:

For a passive community mural, select a theme and cover a wall with white or brown kraft paper. Invite families to sign up for a time slot to work on it together. The mural can be displayed all summer long.

MULTIGENERATIONAL

Optionally, run an informal discussion afterwards. Did they have fun making it? What makes art “bad?” Is there really any such thing?

- Digital word clouds. Choose a word for your theme—such as kindness, community, or friendship—and ask teens to submit words on a slip of paper. Have a volunteer screen the words before entering them digitally into Slido or Survey Monkey. Print out a giant version of the resulting word cloud to see which words were most popular.

MULTIGENERATIONAL

- Flickering “tree” art. Run string zig-zag across large library windows (or those of community partners), and invite patrons to use clothes pins to attach shipping tags they have decorated. Patrons can make art or write words; shipping tags are sturdy and come in various sizes. Be sure to make examples to elicit interest, and set up an art-making table near the tree. You could also send tags home with patrons so they can create art at home to bring back when they return their books. Optionally, set up a small fan in the window to keep the tags flickering. If you build a “tree” outside, be sure to use sturdy rope that laminate the artwork so it does not turn into litter before you take it down.
- Community squares. Give out squares, and ask community members to draw their favorite place in your community. Alternatively, provide take-and-make kits with art supplies and squares of paper or canvas. Hang them up together during a community event.
- Give patrons a large (10–12-inch) blank jigsaw puzzle piece made of watercolor paper, butcher paper, or cardstock. Individuals return their decorated puzzle piece to the library, where it will be interlocked and displayed.
- To promote local businesses, provide them mini canvases and host a tiny art gallery of their work. At the end of the summer, hold an art auction and donate the proceeds to the organization of your choice.
- Paper quilts. Provide 8 x 8-inch canvases or poster board to library patrons. Let them paint, collage, or decorate them. Alternatively, ask them to decorate them using only materials you provide, such as uniform squares and triangles in different colors. This also makes a good passive program for adults while their children are engaged in other programming. Once you have gathered your quilt squares, donate the grid to a local nursing home or hospital.
- Quilting parties. If you have an adult quilting club, request that they work together to create a library-wide quilt. Invite community members to quilting sessions where the quilters teach basic techniques. Consider partnerships with senior centers to find and engage quilters.



Image source: Janet Reynolds of Library District #2 of Linn County in La Cynge, KS

BOOK:

Consider *The Creative Instigator's Handbook: A DIY Guide to Making Social Change Through Art* (2022) by Leanne Prain.

TIP:

Community art programs are ideal outreach opportunities! Send art-making kits to new organizations, or table at community events with examples.

TIP:

Ask your local newspaper to photograph your community art projects and/or publicize their launch

FLOWER POWER

AGES

Children 5–8
Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Invite a local master gardener or extension office to teach kids about plants and flowers that grow in your area and their importance to the local wildlife or environment. Alternatively, partner with a community garden. After the speaker's presentation, pass out small clay pots for participants to decorate. Provide flower seeds of native plants or those that are beneficial to pollinators for children to take home and plant. If your library has the space, you could also do the planting inside. For a take-and-make program, provide kits with seeds, dirt in a plastic bag, and a pot. Also consider including a handout from your local extension office about local flora. Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Small clay flowerpots (4-inches wide)
- Acrylic paint and paint brushes, or paint pens/sharpies
- Clear coat spray paint (optional)
- Flower seeds (milkweed or another pollinator seed mix)
- Potting soil
- Tablecloth or tarp for covering workspace

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Depending on the type of art materials, this program may be best done outdoors.

RESOURCES

Web

Pots out of Play-doh containers from *Projects with Kids*: <https://bit.ly/3xR-3JHt>

"Pollinators" from *The National Wildlife Foundation*: <https://bit.ly/3mSuuok>

TIP:

Make a book display for books on gardening, habitats, flowers, insects.

ADAPTATION:

If you are creating a community garden at the library, be sure to include raised boxes for accessibility.

ADAPTATION:

You could also make a seed library for patrons to share seeds from home. Enlist teens to help organize the seeds

ADAPTATION:

Teach teens how to build their own window boxes or raised beds at home. Invite a guest speaker to demonstrate, and send teens home with printed instructions for window boxes, such as those available from *My Outdoor Plans*: <https://bit.ly/3NSAZ6G>

ADAPTATION:

If your library has a terrace, patio, or garden space, you could also do this as a small flower garden program. Children learn from a local farmer or gardener, then plant flowers; they sign up to be "gardener of the week" throughout the summer to care for the communal garden.

Books

1001 Bees (2021) by Joanna Rzezak (picture book)

The Bee Book (2018) by Charlotte Milner (picture book/early reader)

The Extraordinary Gardener (2018) by Sam Boughton (picture book)

Forest Magic: A Guidebook for Little Woodland Explorers (2021) by Sarah Grindler (picture book)

Garden Day! (Step into Reading 1) (2019) by Candice Ransom and illustrated by Erika Meza (picture book/early reader)

I Have the Right to Save My Planet (2021) by Alain Serres, illustrated by Aurélia Fronty, and translated by Shelley Tanaka (picture book)

Miguel's Community Garden (2022) by JaNay Brown-Wood and illustrated by Samara Hardy (picture book)

Tokyo Digs a Garden (2016) by Jon-Erik Lappano and illustrated by Kellen Hatanaka (picture book)

Yasmin the Gardener (2021) by Saadia Faruqi and illustrated by Hatem Aly (early reader)

TIP:

Free pollinator seeds are available from www.saveourmonarchs.org

PLIX & CLSP: BEAUTIFUL SYMMETRY

AGES

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Welcome to PLIX Beautiful Symmetry! Explore a branch of mathematics that is profound yet accessible to creative learners. This program adopts symmetry as a foundation around which to create works of art, and it works in both physical and digital formats. For inspiration, show examples of symmetry in nature or in art and religious iconography from around the world. This works as a structured workshop or a passive activity. Choose from the list of prompts, or come up with your own! Suggested runtime: 60–90 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

Prompts:

- Design a textile, gift wrap, or wallpaper pattern using customized stamps.
- Model the infinite by making patterns with algorithms (in Scratch, in a spreadsheet, or on paper) or printing continuous patterns with cylindrical roller stamps.
- Explore the built and natural worlds to capture imagery of the way symmetry provides form and function.
- Build a sculpture or tapestry using symmetrical elements found in the environment.
- Combine patterns into a community quilt or art display.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Potential materials:

- Rolls of butcher paper (for wrapping paper)
- Stamps (potatoes, erasers, or sponges to carve) and stamp pads
- Toilet paper rolls and rubber bands (for roller stamps)
- Stencils or cookie cutters
- Rulers or protractors
- Various art supplies
- Graph paper or PLIX pattern grids (see Resources)
- PLIX Beautiful Symmetry Zine (see Printables)

The Public Library Innovation Exchange (PLIX) is a project of the MIT Media Lab Digital Learning and Collaboration Studio. This program was adapted by CSLP with permission and remains under a CC BY-SA 4.0 license. Link to original program here: <https://bit.ly/3mLuMxl>

ADAPTATION:

Have participants make symmetrical art out of found natural materials. See artist Andy Goldsworthy for more inspiration.



Image source: Shutterstock

RESOURCES

Web

Printable pattern grids from PLIX: <https://bit.ly/3QoV0TS>

Books

Anywhere Artist (2018) by Nikki Slade Robinson (picture book F)

Sacred Geometry for Artists, Dreamers, and Philosophy (2018) by John Oscar Lieben (adult NF)

The Complete Pattern Directory: 1500 Designs from All Ages and Cultures (2018) by Elizabeth Wilhide (adult NF)

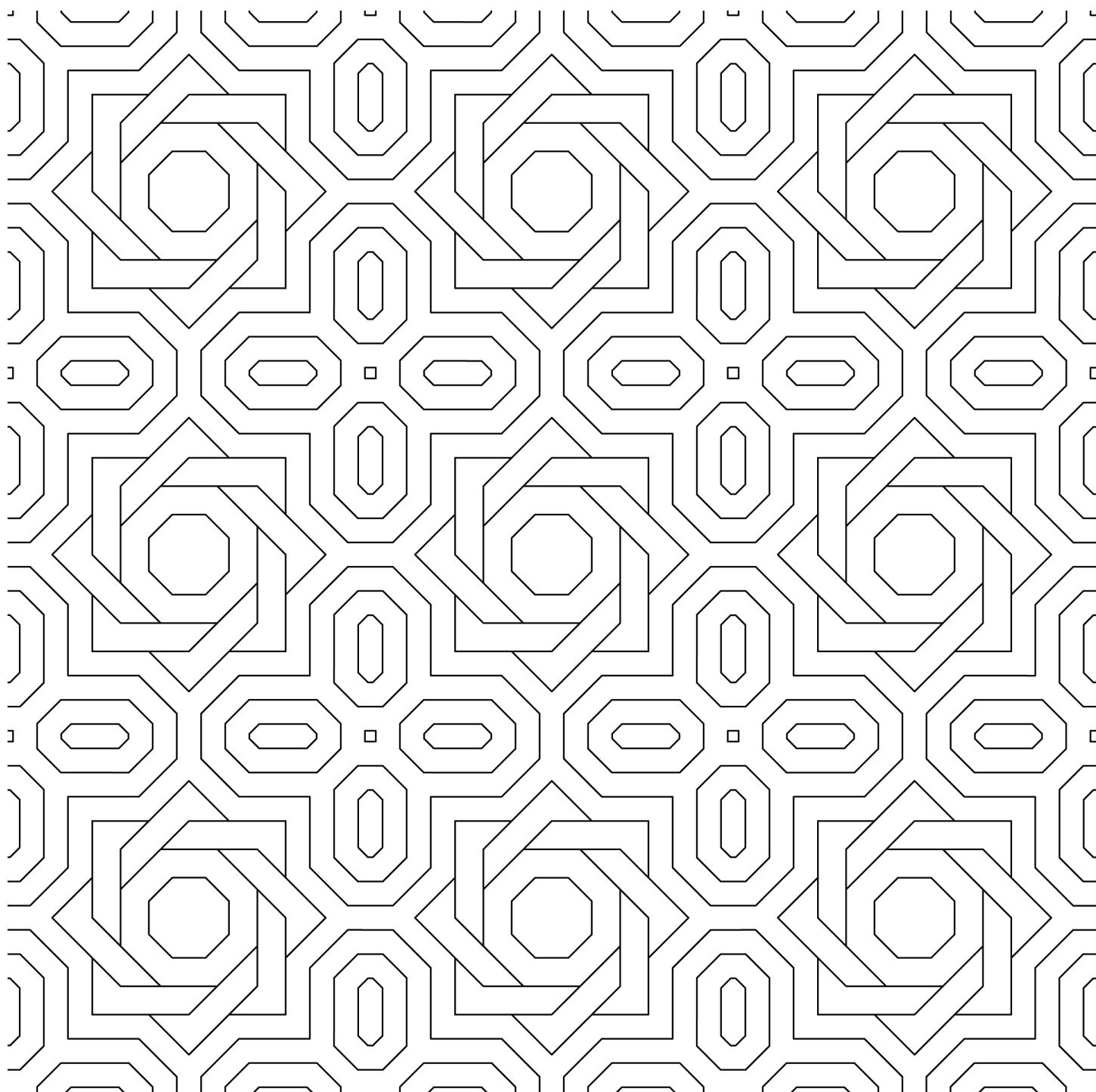
Architecture of the Islamic West (2020) by Jonathan M. Bloom (adult NF)

Printables

PLIX Beautiful Symmetry Zine

Geometric Coloring Sheet

The printable zine for this program is reprinted with permission from the Public Library Innovation Exchange (PLIX) at MIT.



TRANSLATION: BOOKMARKS FOR ALL

AGES

Children 5+

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program is about brightening others' days in multiple languages! What languages are spoken in your community? Translate some common words and phrases related to friendship and kindness into each of those languages. Print them onto bookmarks, and let patrons decorate them. Bookmarks can be part of a take one/give one project, or you can place them in books at checkout. Suggested runtime: 45 minutes for an in-person program.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Bookmark templates with quotes about friendship or reading (consider making black and white designs in Canva)
- Plain cardstock in light colors
- Scissors or paper cutter
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils, etc.
- Hole punch and ribbon/string (optional)
- Laminator (optional)

Preparation: Be sure to make a few examples so children can visualize the project before putting their own spin on it. If using Canva, choose a letter-sized template and divide the page into four equal sections with the outline tool. Type out some short friendship quotes (with their attributions), and print out your designs. Be sure to also provide blank bookmarks for those who want creative freedom.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

Printables

Friendship Quotes

TIP:

Set out both blank bookmarks and preprinted designs so patrons of all ages can decorate according to their ability.

TIP:

Accompany this passive program with a book and movie display that features positive friend relationships (or friends from different cultural backgrounds).

ADAPTATION:

For maximum simplicity, provide bookmarks in English and Spanish.

ADAPTATION:

For teens, provide a list of phrases in different languages and let them choose which ones to use into their designs. They hide finished bookmarks in their favorite books. This is also a great program for directing teens to your library's language-learning resources.

FRIENDSHIP QUOTES

“The only way to have a friend is to be one.” -**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

“I would rather walk with a friend in the dark than alone in the light.” -**Helen Keller**

“No person is your friend who demands your silence or denies your right to grow.” -**Alice Walker**

“I don’t need a friend who changes when I change and who nods when I nod; my shadow does that much better.” -**Plutarch**

“There is nothing I would not do for those who are really my friends. I have no notion of loving people by halves, it is not my nature.” -**Jane Austen**

“Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.” -**Anaïs Nin**

“The best mirror is an old friend.” -**George Herbert**

“Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: ““What! You too? I thought I was the only one.”” -**C.S. Lewis**

“Don’t walk behind me; I may not lead. Don’t walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend.” -**Albert Camus**

“You can’t stay in your corner of the forest waiting for others to come to you. You have to go to them sometimes.” -**A.A. Milne**

“A friend is someone who knows all about you and still loves you.” -**Elbert Hubbard**

DIY MUSIC MAKERS

AGES

Children 5–8

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A program that celebrates DIY music-making of all kinds! To make music using their bodies, encourage children to clap, tap, and sing. This program also provides a few craft ideas for DIY musical instruments—jingle sticks, kazoos, and harmonicas—that can be made out of common household items such as cardboard, rubber bands, and pipe cleaners. Make them in the library or prepare take-and-make kits. If you run these stations in the library, be sure to hold a jam session with the finished instruments! Suggested runtime: 45–60 minutes.

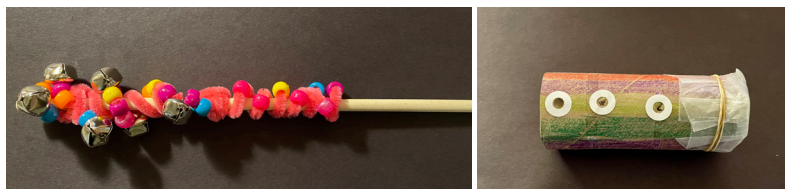


Image Source: Azita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Jingle Sticks

Materials:

- Dowel rods, popsicle sticks, or pencils
- Pipe cleaners
- Glue or duct tape (optional)
- Jingle bells
- Optional: Art supplies to decorate the stick.

Assembly:

- First, decorate the dowel rod, if desired.
- String two–six jingle bells onto a pipe cleaner, making sure to leave room the top and bottom.
- Wrap the pipe cleaner around the dowel rod, twisting and securing at the top and bottom. Glue or duct tape to secure it is optional.
- Twist and secure additional chenille stems with jingle bells onto the dowel rod if desired.



Image Source: Azita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI

Kazoos

Materials:

TIP:

For another simple instrument craft, see the mini maraca craft on page 113.

TIP:

See Instruments Across Borders on page 114 for another music program idea.

TIP:

Play music amongst the stacks! Or have musicians perform at a central point, then scatter the stations throughout the library.

ADAPTATION:

Provide materials for participants to invent their own instruments, such as boxes, rubber bands, and other recycled materials.

ADAPTATION:

For older patrons, make more complex instruments. See *Making Poor Man's Guitars* (2018) by Shane Speal for a solid project example.

TIP:

If you prepunch kazoo holes, tell children not to cover the holes with their decorations.

ARTS & CRAFTS | GAME/ACTIVITY | PASSIVE

- Cardboard tubes, such as toilet paper rolls paper towel rolls cut in half
- Rubber bands
- Wax paper
- Scissors
- Sharp pencil or other object to poke holes
- Optional: Art supplies to decorate the tube

Assembly:

- First, decorate the cardboard tube, if desired.
- Cover the end of the cardboard tube with a piece of wax paper and secure with a rubber band.
- If using a toilet paper roll, poke one or two holes in the middle of the tube about 1-inch apart. If using a paper towel roll, poke two or three holes in the middle of the tube about 2-inches apart.

Harmonicas

Materials:

- Two jumbo popsicle sticks per harmonica
- One wide rubber band per harmonica
- Two small rubber bands per harmonica
- Plastic (or strong paper) straws cut into 1-inch pieces
- Scissors

Assembly:

- Cut straw into two 1-inch pieces.
- Wrap the wide rubber band lengthwise around one popsicle stick.
- Tuck one straw piece under the rubber band on one end of the popsicle stick.
- Place the other piece of straw on top of the rubber band on the other end of the popsicle stick.
- Place the remaining popsicle stick on top lengthwise and wrap small rubber bands around each end of the popsicle sticks.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

If running all three stations, you will need an extra volunteer or staff member at each station.

RESOURCES

Web

DIY jingle sticks video [4 min] from Craft2Care on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3OdKgG3>

Kazoo tutorial from Today's Parent: <https://bit.ly/3mODP0I>

"Popsicle Harmonica" from C.S. Mott Children's Hospital: <https://bit.ly/3xP-wXWW>

TIP:

Collect cardboard tubes from staff in the weeks leading up to the program.



Image Source: Azita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI



Image Source: Azita Frattarelli of Riverview Veterans Memorial Library, Riverview, MI

Music Picture Books

How to Build an Orchestra (2020) by Mary Auld and illustrated by Elisa Paganelli

Music Is in Everything (2022) by Ziggy Marley and illustrated by Ag Jatkowska

The Oboe Goes Boom, Boom, Boom (2020) by Colleen A.F. Venable and illustrated by Lian Cho

Plinka Plinka Shake Shake (2019) by Emma Garcia

When Julia Danced Bomba / Cuando Julia Bailaba Bomba (2019) by Raquel M. Ortiz and illustrated by Flor de Vita

NO-SEW BLANKETS

AGES

Tweens 9–12

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Work together to make no-sew blankets to donate to a local charity or organization. You can use this as a way to address the problem of homelessness, and talk about different organizations dedicated to helping homeless youth and teens. Pair up participants, especially if you are running this program with younger children. This easy program can also help tweens earn volunteer hours for their National Junior Honor Society. Make it more fun by supplying pizza and/or snacks to keep them motivated. Buy the fleece or purchase kits from places like Joann Fabrics and Crafts. Suggested runtime: 45–60 minutes.



Image source: Stephanie Burr of Los Lunas Public Library, Los Lunas, NM

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Fleece (60 x 60 inches—two pieces per blanket)
- Scissors



Image source: Anna Foote of Northeast Kansas Library System, Lawrence, KS

Assembly:

- If you are buying the fleece yourself, make sure it is cut to 60 x 60 inches.
- Line up the fabric pieces with the right (fuzzy) sides out, and trim as needed to ensure they are the same size.
- Cut a 5-inch square in each corner
- Cut the fringe along all four sides. Fringe pieces should be a little wider than the width of your finger; cut them 5 inches from the edge. Make sure you are cutting through both fleece fabrics at the same time.
- With fringe pieces lined up, begin tying the knots.
- Continue all around the edges until the blanket until finished.

TIP:

You can also make this a multigenerational program by pairing tweens with senior citizens, or holding a family event.

TIP:

If you make this a family program, you will not need as many volunteers.

TIP:

To distribute blankets, pair up with local nonprofits that serve homeless populations. They could also be distributed to youth mental health groups or facilities.

ADAPTATION:

For younger children, precut everything so all they have to do is tie the fleece together.

TIP:

Buy fleece in at least two different colors. Pair a light color with a dark color, or a print with a solid, for maximum contrast.

TIP:

For accessibility, project slides of visuals that change with every step.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly for tweens and above; you will need volunteers to assist younger children. Make sure you have enough table space for multiple blankets to be made at once. If space is an issue, limit the number of participants and pair them up two to a blanket.

RESOURCES

Web

“No Sew Fleece Blanket” by bunycraft on *Instructables*: <https://bit.ly/3zzG0wJ>

Donate blankets to children in need with *Project Linus*: <https://www.projectlinus.org/>



Image source: Anna Foote of Northeast Kansas Library System, Lawrence, KS

THE MORE WE PAINT TOGETHER

AGES

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Tweens or teens collaborate on large works of art or murals, but make it a relay and give instructions in both Spanish and English! They do not need to speak the same language to make art together. Divide participants into two or more teams, and give everyone the same amount of time to work on their team's collaborative masterpiece. When they admire their artwork at the end, everyone wins! Award small prizes to participants. Be sure to take pictures of teams with their masterpieces, and send the artists home with inspirational art books. Suggested runtime: 45–90 minutes. guages.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Mural supplies:

- Kraft paper or other large paper
- Art supplies of your choosing
- Drop cloths to cover the floor (if using paint)
- Aprons (optional, if using paint)

To play:

- Divide participants into mixed-language teams of four to six.
- Give teams 5–10 minutes to strategize what they will draw (through both talking and sketching).
- When they are ready to begin, start your timer! The first artist from each team works on the piece for anywhere from 30 seconds to 10 minutes.
- When the timer goes off, the artists switch so everyone gets a turn.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

You will need a wall space large enough to display multiple murals. If you are not bilingual, you will also need one Spanish-speaking volunteer to give instructions and be on hand to answer questions.

TIP:

Provide art supplies so participants can sketch their ideas, or simply pass the time, while they wait for the relay to finish. This is especially important for longer relays.

ADAPTATION:

For a virtual adaptation, provide art prompts, and time artists while they work at home. Be sure to leave time for everyone to share their speedy artworks.

ADAPTATION:

Cover library tables with butcher paper, and hold movie night where participants draw/doodle during the movie.

ADAPTATION:

Provide fabric paint and t-shirts, and let tweens paint each other while wearing the t-shirts.

TIP:

Avoid difficult-to-clean up art materials, such as glitter, unless you have the staff and equipment needed for a thorough cleanup.

RESOURCES

Books

Read-Aloud Books for Children 5+

Ablaze with Color: A Story of Painter Alma Thomas (2022) by Jeanne Walker Harvey and illustrated by Loveis Wise

How Art Transformed a Neighborhood (2016) by F. Isabel Campoy, Theresa Howell, and illustrated by Rafael López

Hey, Wall (2018) by Susan Verde and illustrated by John Parra

The Masterpiece (2019) by Jay Miletsky and illustrated by Luis Peres

The All-Together Quilt (2020) by Lizzy Rockwell

Nonfiction

All the Things: How to Draw Book for Kids (2020) by Alli Koch

Art Making with MoMA: 20 Activities for Kids Inspired by Artists (2018) by Cari Frisch and Elizabeth Margulies

Kids Create Together: Hands-On Projects for Collaborative Art Making for Kids' Groups of Every Size (2022) by Editors of Quarry Books

Recycled Paper Projects (2021) by Marcy Morin and Heidi E. Thompson

LARP AT THE LIBRARY

AGES

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Teens collaborate through live action role play (LARP)! Announce a theme beforehand and encourage teens to attend dressed for role play. Work on character development, combat practice, and prop creation before the role-playing begins. This program may need volunteers for non-player characters (NPCs) to provide obstacles during gameplay. It can be run as a day-long event or broken into a series. Suggested runtime for a day-long event: 4–7 hours (1–2 for character design, 1–2 for prop construction, 1 hour for stage combat practice, 1–2 hours for gameplay).

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Preparation:

- Gather craft supplies such as pool noodles, recyclables, paint, duct tape, scissors, etc.
- Design or choose the scenario for gameplay.
- Modify the scenario for age-appropriateness if necessary.
- Hold a mini meeting with volunteer NPCs before gameplay.

First, help them design their characters. You could use a basic D&D character sheet, create a simpler character design page for your themed activity, or premake gender-neutral characters to select from). Share YouTube videos of how to perform basic stage combat and let them practice outside. Then provide art supplies or recycled materials for them to craft props of their choosing. Once their props are complete, read the scenario for teens to work through together.

UNIQUE SPACE AND PERSONNEL NEEDS

You will need a large program (or outdoor) space with tables and chairs. You may also need extra staff members or volunteer NPCs.

RESOURCES

Web

Free LARP scenarios wiki: <https://bit.ly/3zBnT9s>

Free character sheet from D&D 5e Character Sheet: <https://bit.ly/3mLIAJh>

Books

The Adventure Zone series (2018–21) by Clint McElroy et al. (YA F)

Don't Read the Comments (2020) by Eric Smith (YA F)

TIP:

If someone in your community knows basic stage combat, ask them to present and/or assist.

ADAPTATION:

Character design, stage combat practice, and prop creation are easily be adapted to virtual programs. Gameplay would a little less interactive, but teens can still work together to problem solve.

TIP:

If you adapt this program for tweens or families, teens make great volunteer NPCs.

GAME/ACTIVITY | ARTS & CRAFTS | OUTDOORS | LOW COST

Even If We Break (2020) by Marieke Nijkamp (YA F)
Glitch Kingdom (2020) by Sheena Boekweg (YA F)
In the Hall with the Knife series (2019–21) by Diana Peterfreund (YA F)
The Inheritance Games series (2020–22) by Jennifer Lynn Barnes (YA F)
The Life and Medieval Times of Kit Sweetly (2020) by Jamie Pacton (YA F)
The Perfect Escape (2020) by Suzanne Park (YA F)
Power Play: How Video Games Can Save the World (2017) by Asi Burak and Laura Parker (adult NF)
Slay (2019) by Brittney Morris (YA F)
Truly Devious series (2018–21) by Maureen Johnson (YA F)

GROW, EVOLVE, TRANSFORM: COLLABORATIVE ORIGAMI DISPLAY

AGES

Adults

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This is an ideal passive program for adults! Folding origami is relaxing and a great conversation starter for those waiting for children participating in other library programs. The butterfly pattern is easy to master; once learned, butterflies can be made in under three minutes. Patrons attach their finished butterflies to a wall or bulletin board to make a beautiful collaborative display. The butterflies can be the focus of the display or an embellishment. Use the inspirational phrase “Grow. Evolve. Transform.” or select another phrase with meaning in your community. Suggested runtime for an in-person program: Passive.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- 6 x 6-inch origami paper in rainbow colors (on both sides)
- Glue dots, tape, or staples to hang butterflies
- Printed instructions that links to a YouTube video
- Bulletin board or wall space, decorated as desired

Preparation: Prepare your bulletin board or wall space. Consider covering your bulletin board with a color that complements the color of the origami paper. Add an inspirational slogan and whatever images will enhance the display (such as an open book from which paper butterflies can emerge). Alternatively, reach out to a community organization to which you can donate the completed butterflies. Stock a station with origami paper, instructions, and a bin for participants to leave their completed butterflies (or tape or glue dots for them to hang their own).

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly. If running an in-person program for all ages, additional staff members or volunteers could help teach

ADAPTATION:

Include origami paper and instructions in take-and-make kits, with a link to a YouTube video for those who need visual instructions. Remember the due date if you want patrons to return their butterflies for a collaborative display!

ADAPTATION:

Also consider outreach to a community organization or facility to which you can donate the butterflies.

ADAPTATION:

Enlist tween/teen volunteers to cut pages out of old books for use as origami paper.

TIP:

For more ideas, see the Community Art Projects Brainstorm on page 76.

TIP:

Provide different sizes of origami paper. The smaller the paper, the more difficult it will be to fold.

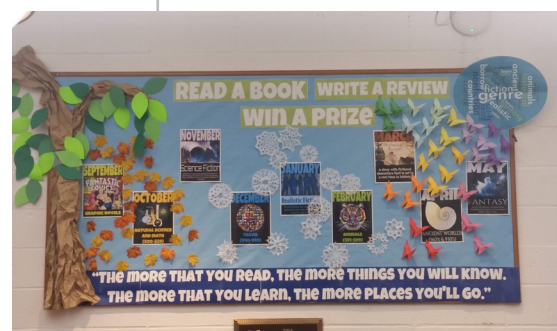


Image source: Marcia Literati, Tenafly Public Library, Tenafly, NJ.

ARTS & CRAFTS | PASSIVE | DECORATION/DISPLAY | LOW COST

the origami pattern (or show a video using a laptop/projector).

RESOURCES

Web

“How to Make an Easy Origami Butterfly” [3 min] from PPO on YouTube:

<https://bit.ly/3mSD5r6>

“History of Origami” from Georgia Tech: <https://b.gatech.edu/3xRRpq8>

“Step by Step Origami Instructions and Diagrams” from Origami.me: <https://bit.ly/3zCHoOV>

“Origami Master Robert J. Lang” [5 min] from ChristopherHelkey on YouTube: <https://langorigami.com/>

The Peace Crane Project: <https://peacecraneproject.org/>

Origami Books

The Complete Story of Sadako Sasaki and the Thousand Paper Cranes (2020) by Masahiro Sasaki and Sue DiCicco (middle grade NF)

First Art Kit (2021) by Boo Paterson (adult NF)

Origami Classic Paper Folding (2019) by Rachel Thomas (middle grade NF)

Paper Joy for Every Room (2020) by Laure Farion (adult NF)

Realistic Origami Animals (2021) by Fumiaki Kawahata (adult NF)

Tomoko Fuse’s Origami Art (2020) by David Brill (adult NF)

Printables

Easy Origami Butterfly (in English and Spanish)

TIP:

Encourage participants to make another butterfly every time they visit the library, or to make a butterfly for every book they read.

TIP:

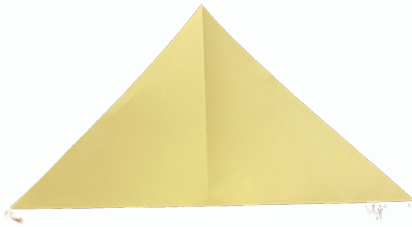
Search “butterfly bulletin boards” on Pinterest for design inspiration.

Easy Origami Butterfly instructions courtesy of Marcia Literati of Tenafly Public Library in Tenafly, NJ.

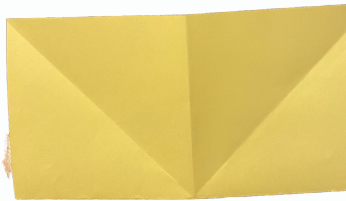


EASY ORIGAMI BUTTERFLY

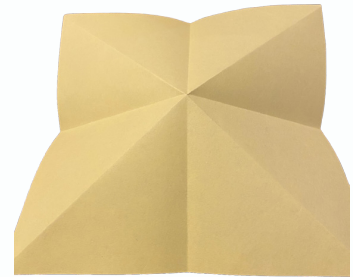
Start with a 6 x 6" piece of origami paper, or cut any paper to size.



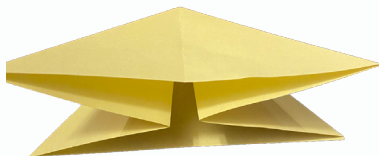
1 Fold diagonally. Open. Fold diagonally in the opposite direction. Open.



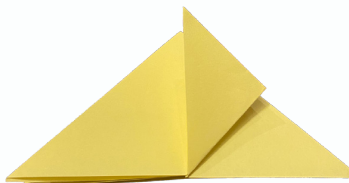
2 Flip paper over. Fold it in half. Open. Fold in half the other way. Open.



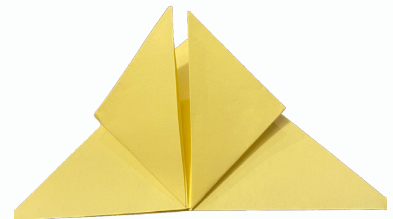
3 You will have diagonal "mountain" folds in the corners and "valley" folds in the center of each side.



4 Push against the valley folds until you have a flat triangle



5 Fold one side point of the triangle to the center point.



6 Fold the second side point to the center point.



7 Flip paper over.



8 Curl the center point over the long edge.

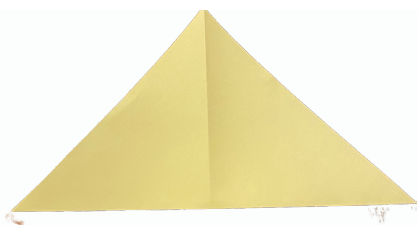


9 Fold the tip over the long edge. Pinch the wings together.



MARIPOSA DE ORIGAMI FÁCIL

Comience con un pedazo de papel de origami de 6 x 6" o corte cualquier papel a esa medida.



1

Doble en diagonal. Doble en diagonal en la dirección opuesta.



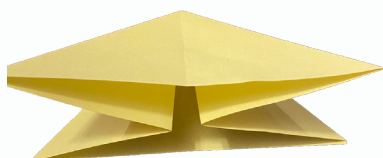
2

Voltee el papel. Doble por la mitad. Ábralo. Doble por la mitad en la dirección contraria.



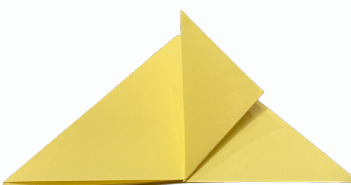
3

Usted va a tener pliegues de "montañas" diagonales en las esquinas y pliegues de "valles" en el centro de cada lado.



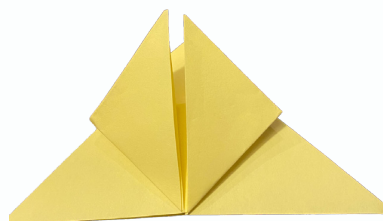
4

Empuje en contra de los pliegues de valles hasta que tenga un triángulo plano.



5

Doble un lado de punta del triángulo al punto del centro.



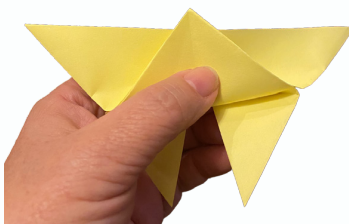
6

Doble el segundo lado de punta al punto del centro.



7

Voltee el papel.



8

Enrosque el punto del centro sobre el borde largo.



9

Doble la punta por encima del borde largo. Pellizque las alas para juntarlas.

LOVE BUG CLIPS CRAFT

AGES

Children 5–8

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Who can we show more kindness to? These love bug clips are a simple craft that children personalize and modify however they wish. Encourage them to clip their love bugs on a person of their choosing after they leave the library. You can begin this program with an age-appropriate picture book about kindness and a discussion about ways to be kind to each other, or use this craft as a filler. For a passive program, print instructions and set materials on a craft table (or create take-and-make bags with enough materials for one–two clips). Suggested runtime: 20–30 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Paper and a 2-inch heart punch or
- a heart template and scissors (see Printables)
- Pompoms, pipe cleaners cut into thirds, and googly eyes
- Clothespins
- White glue
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons

Assembly:

- Cut out a paper heart (using a punch or template).
- Write a kind note on the heart.
- Wrap a pipe cleaner through the hole in the front of a clothespin, twisting it on top. This will be the bug's antennae.
- Glue two eyes on a large pompom for the bug's head.
- Glue the large pompom to the front end of the clothespin.
- Glue the small pompom behind the antennae to form the body.
- Glue the heart to the back of the clothespin to form the wings
- When the glue is dry, clip your love bug to someone you care about!

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

ADAPTATION:

For younger children, use only one pompom for the head, no pipe cleaners, and provide glue dots. You could also prewrite the messages on the hearts for them, or allow them to draw on or color the hearts instead of a writing a message.

TIP:

Encourage children to have fun with the materials and come up with different looks for their love bug! As long as the bug expresses kind words to share with someone, the craft is a success.

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 186.



Image source: Debbie Barr of Lebanon Public Library, Lebanon, IN

ARTS & CRAFTS | PASSIVE | LOW COST

Web

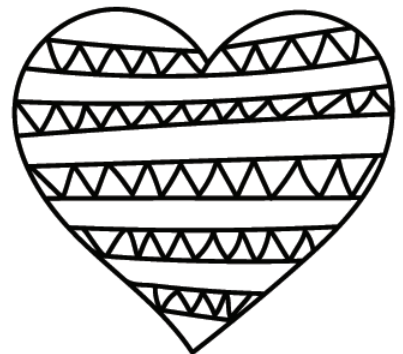
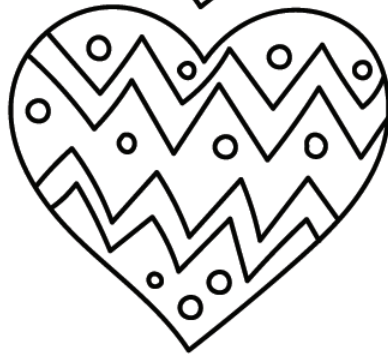
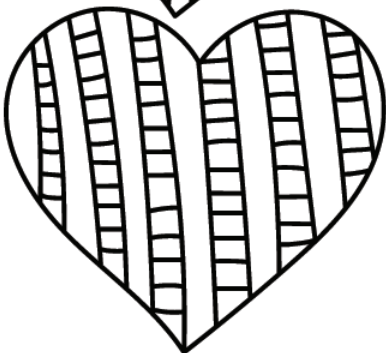
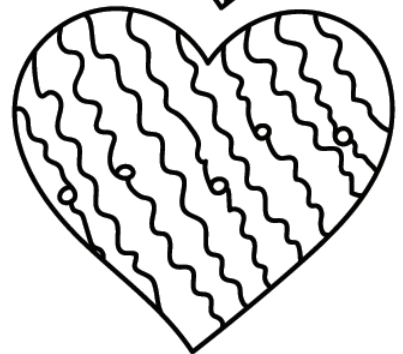
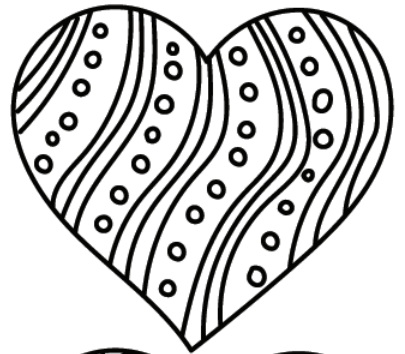
“The Power of Words” [3 min] from Common Sense Education on YouTube:

<https://bit.ly/3HCWN45>

“Dragon Fly Clothespins” from Crafty Morning: <https://bit.ly/3b4anBi>

Printables

Heart Template



KINDNESS TREES AND PAPER CHAINS

AGES

Children 5–8

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This program describes two different crafts—paper chains and kindness trees—that remind children to do acts of kindness. Either craft can be run in-person, as a passive program, or as a take-and-make kit. As library decorations, paper chains and kindness trees can keep growing all summer long! For a take-home kit, the acts of kindness could be chores that children do at home, such as washing the car, or they could be compliments for family members, such as “I love that you help you with my homework.” Suggested runtime: 45 minutes for in-person programs.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials for paper chains (passive):

- Colored paper cut into strips
- Markers or crayons
- A sign with instructions
- A basket for completed strips

Preparation: Cut 1.5 x 8.5-inch strips of colored paper before starting the program. Leave out strips with markers or crayons, and create a sign with instructions. Provide a basket in which children can leave their completed strips. To get the chain started, create a few examples.

Materials for kindness trees (in person)

- Brown kraft paper (for an in-person program)
- Construction paper cut into leaf shapes
- Markers and tape

Materials for kindness trees (take-and-make)

- Printed tree silhouette (see Printables)
- Printed leaf silhouettes (see Printables)
- Pencils and glue sticks

For a passive program, affix a large tree silhouette to the wall (or simply a long rectangle for the trunk and smaller rectangles for a few branches). Provide pens, tape, and leaf-shaped pieces of construction paper. Children write kindness messages—or choose from a preprinted selection—and tape



Image source: Debbie Barr of Lebanon Public Library, Lebanon, IN

ADAPTATION:

Pair children up and ask them to write nice things about each other. Display the paper chains in the library!

ADAPTATION:

Run kindness challenges for older patrons using ideas from Random Acts of Kindness Foundation: <https://bit.ly/3HnjR6q>

ADAPTATION:

For take-and-make kits, provide 5–10 slips of paper for children to make their own kindness chain at home. You could also add a virtual component by reading a book about kindness and demonstrating how to make the paper chain.

TIP:

Remember books about kindness for a book display!

TIP:

Check the table daily to refill supplies and add new paper strips to the library's chain.

ARTS & CRAFTS | PASSIVE | DECORATION/DISPLAY | LOW COST

their leaves to the tree. Be sure to make a few kindness leaves for examples.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

Web

“Create a Kindness Tree” from PBS: <https://to.pbs.org/3xQOYE5>

Picture of a finished tree from *First Palette*: <https://bit.ly/3zDyr80>

“Printable 100 Acts of Kindness” from *Coffee Cups and Crayons*: <https://bit.ly/3NUeu10>

101 more acts of kindness ideas from *Care.com*: <https://bit.ly/3xl6vTO>

Printables

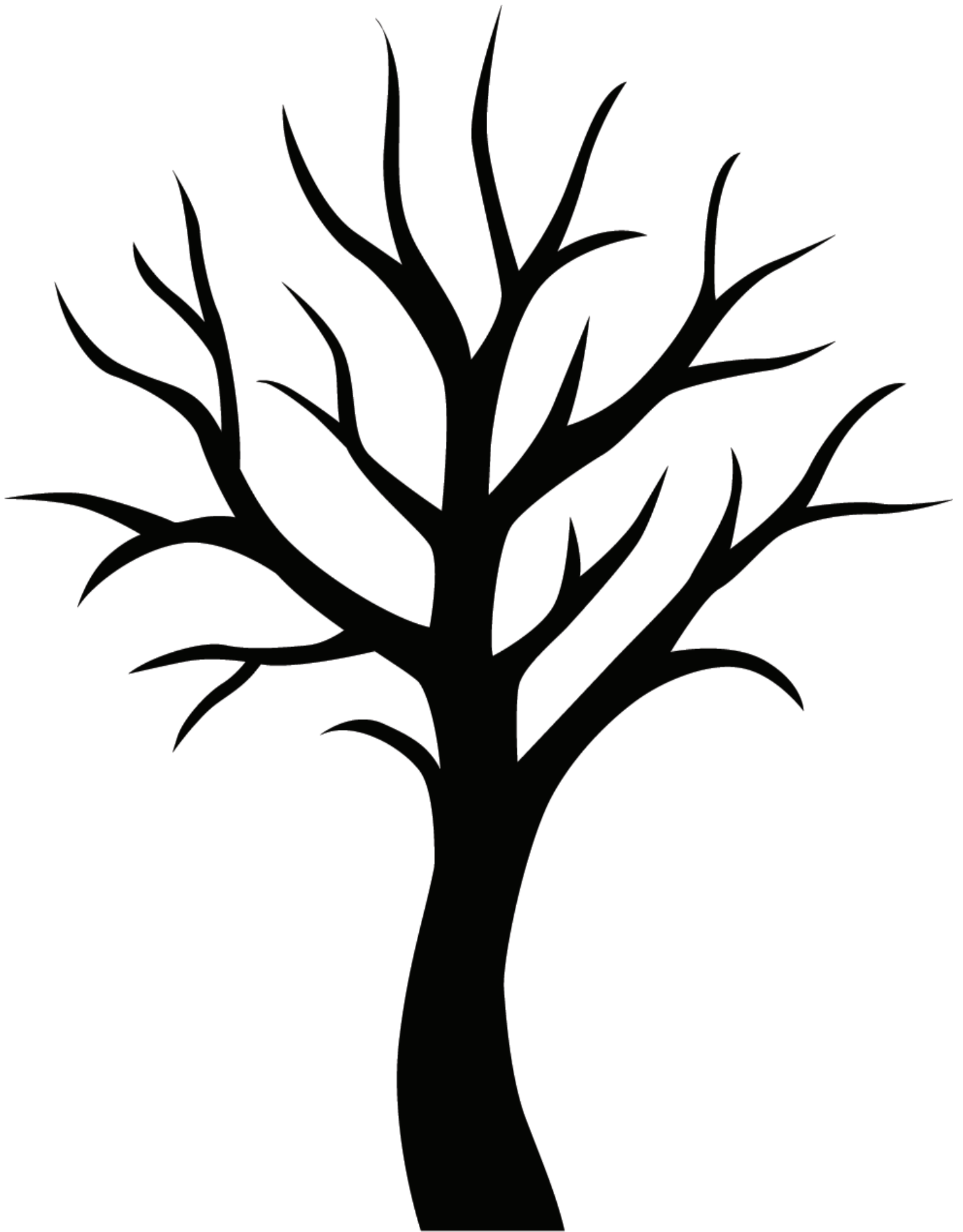
Kindness Tree Silhouette

Leaf Silhouettes

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 186.





TWEEN SELF-AFFIRMATIONS JARS

AGES

Tweens 9–12

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Discuss why it is important to love and be kind to ourselves, even though it can be difficult. Explain what affirmations are: Phrases we repeat to ourselves to help our brains think more positively about who we are. They are exercise for our minds and for our self-esteem. Choose a few affirmations to repeat as a group (be sure to include some silly ones to break the ice!). Optionally, pass out small hand mirrors so tweens can look at themselves as they say the phrases. Provide a list of affirmations to get them started, and encourage them to create their own! Tweens cut their affirmations into strips and put them in their mason jars to be pulled out whenever they need a self-esteem boost. Suggested runtime: 30–45 minutes.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- Mason jars or small boxes (one per tween)
- Paper strips with printed affirmations
- Blank paper strips and pens
- Art supplies of your choosing: Washi tape, paint markers, puff paint, stickers, etc.
- Hand mirrors (optional)

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

Web

“Cute DIY Mason Jar Crafts” from *DIY Projects for Teens*: <https://bit.ly/3zK-TI58>

67 positive affirmations for teens from *Happier Human*: <https://bit.ly/3tDktiN>

“Positive Post-it Day” from *Cyberbullying Research Center*: <https://bit.ly/3H-qoH2N>

Printable calendars from the *Random Acts of Kindness Foundation*: <https://bit.ly/3Hmg9Kt>

Mental health resources from *Mental Health Literacy*: <https://mentalhealthliteracy.org/>

TIP:

If tweens are uncomfortable saying affirmations out loud, amp up the silliness factor, but avoid pressuring them to join in.

ADAPTATION:

For a virtual program, make jars into take-and-make kits, or email participants a PDF of affirmations to print or copy at home. Lead the discussion over Zoom while tweens decorate their jars.

TIP:

To lower costs, ask tweens to bring their own jars, boxes, and/or favorite art supplies from home.



Image source: Debbie Barr of Lebanon Public Library, Lebanon, IN

Printables

List of Affirmations for Tweens (in English and Spanish)



Image source: Melissa Causey of Bartow
Public Library, Bartow, FL

TIP:

For kindness books,
see the Kindness
Book List on page
186.

LIST OF AFFIRMATIONS FOR TWEENS

“You look great today. Is that a new haircut?”
“I am strong for listening to my heart.”
“I am wearing the most amazing t-shirt I’ve ever seen.”
“I am lovable exactly the way I am.”
“I am perfectly imperfect.”
“More people love me than I can even think of.”
“There is only one me in the entire world.”
“I look very huggable today.”
“I deserve to do something extra fun today.”
“There’s no such thing as a mistake if I learn from it.”
“Is it time to reread my favorite book?”
“Today is a good day to give myself a break.”
“I deserve to spend time with people I have fun with.”
“I can change the world.”
“Asking for help when I need it makes me strong.”

LISTA DE AFIRMACIONES PARA PRE- ADOLESCENTES

“Te ves increíble hoy. ¿Te hiciste un nuevo corte de pelo?”
“Soy fuerte porque escucho a mi corazón”.
“¡Estás usando la camiseta más increíble que he visto!”
“Yo soy digno de amor exactamente de la manera que soy”.
“Yo soy perfectamente imperfecto”.
“Me aman más personas de lo que puedo pensar”.
“Sólo hay un yo en el mundo entero”.
“Me veo muy abrazable el día de hoy”.
“Me merezco hacer algo extra divertido el día de hoy”.
“No existe tal cosa como un error si aprendo de él”.
“Creo que es tiempo de volver a leer mi libro favorito”. “Hoy es un buen día para darme un descanso”.
“Me merezco pasar tiempo con las personas con las que me divierto”. “Yo puedo cambiar el mundo”.
“Pedir ayuda cuando la necesito me hace fuerte”.

SPREAD THE LOVE

AGES

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

There are few things better than a nice surprise. In this program, tweens or teens write positive, uplifting messages to place in their favorite books (either YA books or books they liked when they were younger).

You can go simple by providing Post-its and markers, or you can use whatever paper and art supplies you have on hand. Be sure to make examples beforehand to kick things off. While crafting their messages, teens discuss their favorite books, watch videos, or listen to music. For a passive program, create a supply table with signage and examples. Be sure to require teens to submit their messages for approval before hiding them in books. Suggested runtime: 60 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials:

- A variety of art supplies
- Premade templates for those who do not want to draw
- A computer and printer for those who want to work digitally
- Spreadsheet to track which books have messages (optional)

Be sure to make a few example messages beforehand. They should be positive and cute, but not too young. Decide if you will track (anonymously) which books the teens select so they can see whether the messages/cards ever reach another reader.

RESOURCES

Web

Quotes from Random Acts of Kindness Foundation: <https://bit.ly/3tDFsBX>
 “What Is Kindness? Teens Respond” [4 min] from Random Acts of Kindness Foundation on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3Hvc2Mb>
 Art and books from The Latest Kate: <https://www.thelatestkate.art/>
 Teen kindness ideas from Channel Kindness: <https://bit.ly/3Qz9pgH>

Printables

Pride Icons

ADAPTATION:

Rather than hiding messages in books, you can also create a designated bulletin board.

TIP:

See also Bookmarks for All for a similar program that uses bookmark templates.

TIP:

This would be perfect for any LGBTQIA+ teen groups/clubs you may have, or as a bonding activity for a teen advisory board or advocacy group.

TIP:

Promote mental health groups in your area by putting out a stack of flyers.

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 44.

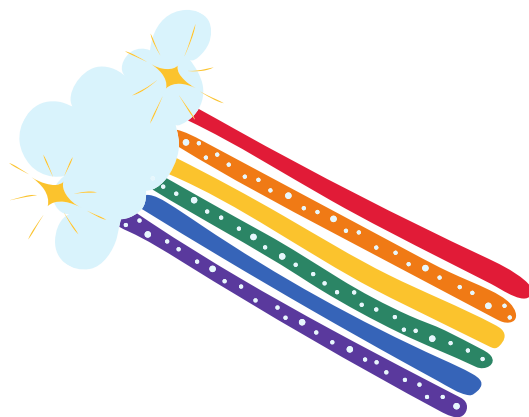
TIP:

For YA fiction that features mental health, see Self-Care Bath Bombs and Sugar Scrub on page 180.

Pride printable created by Laura Erwin of Chillicothe & Ross County Public Library.

YOU
ARE
LOVED

live
your
dream.



SELF-CARE BATH BOMBS & SUGAR SCRUB

AGE

Tweens 9–12

Teens 13–18

Adults

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Patrons make fun DIY bath products and personalize containers. Great for a self-care theme, or encourage participants to give them as gifts. The bath bombs are made up in a single batch, while participants mix their own sugar scrubs. This program works well for tweens and up, and can be adapted for children. Suggested runtime: 45–60 minutes.



Image source: Jennifer Bishop of East Bank Regional Library, Metairie, LA

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Bath Bombs

Materials (makes 12–18):

- 1 cup baking soda (sodium bicarbonate)
- ½ cup Epsom salt
- ½ cup corn starch
- ½ cup citric acid
- 2½ tbsp vegetable oil
- About 1 tbsp water
- About 20 drops essential oils
- 4–6 drops food coloring
- One large bowl and one small bowl
- One whisk
- Small spoons
- 12–18 paper cups (3-oz capacity)

Procedure:

- Whisk dry ingredients in the large bowl until clumps are removed.
- Whisk wet ingredients in the small bowl. Add food coloring and essential oils.
- Add wet ingredients to the dry by whisking in 1 tbsp at a time. If the mixture begins to fizz, slow down. The resulting mixture should be the consistency of wet sand.
- Divide mixture into small paper cups, pressing firmly.
- Let dry completely (up to 24 hours) before using.
- When ready to use, tear off the paper cup and drop the bath bomb in water. Watch it fizz!

ADAPTATION:

For children, premeasure sugar scrub ingredients so they can focus on decorating their jars.

TIP:

Essential oils can cause allergic reactions, so make sure to mention in any publicity that essential oils are involved.

TIP:

Bath bombs can also be added to small containers with warm water for a hand/foot soak.

STEM | GAME/ACTIVITY

While making these, you can talk about the science behind the fizz. It is all about pH levels! The baking soda has a high pH level. When combined with citric acid, which has a low pH level, they react to create carbon dioxide gas, which creates bubbles. (The reaction is similar to mixing baking soda and vinegar for homemade volcanos.) You can also discuss the importance of self-care and let children sniff different essential oils for some in-library aromatherapy.

Sugar Scrub

Materials (per jar):

- ½ cup coffee
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup coconut oil
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- Jars and craft sticks
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Microwave to soften coconut oil
- Art supplies for decorating the jars
- Condiment cups (for take-and-make kits)

Procedure: Be sure to make an example. Before an in-person event, set up stations with prepped ingredients. Give each participant a recipe and a jar, and have them measure out their ingredients. Then guide them in putting it together. Step 1: Add dry ingredients together. Step 2: Soften the coconut oil, then add it. Step 3: Stir the mixture with a craft stick. Step 4: Decorate the jar.

UNIQUE SPACE AND PERSONNEL NEEDS

Cover work tables for easier cleanup. For younger tweens, additional staff members or volunteers may be helpful.

RESOURCES

Web

Bath bombs tutorial from *Popular Science*: <https://bit.ly/3aYzRjs>

Coconut/coffee body scrub tutorial [2 min] from *A Wildflower Life* on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3xO0Abm>

Self-care tips for teens and young adults from *Psychology Today*: <https://bit.ly/3MPqajp>

Teenagers and self-care from *Reach Out Australia*: <https://bit.ly/3NO6SNE>
 “What Are Acids and Bases?” [3 min] from *American Chemical Society* on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3OinNrF>

Books

Young Adult Mental Health Fiction

Baby and Solo (2021) by Lisabeth Posthuma

TIP:

If you have leftover bath bombs, store them in a sealed container.

TIP:

For take-and-make bags, put premeasured ingredients in condiment cups, and provide printed instructions.

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 186.

STEM | GAME/ACTIVITY

Between the Bliss and Me (2021) by Lizzy Mason
An Emotion of Great Delight (2021) by Tahereh Mafi
Our Way Back to Always (2021) by Nina Moreno
Slip (2022) by Marika McCoola and illustrated by Aatmaja Pandya (graphic novel)
Starfish (2018) by Akemi Dawn Bowman
Tell Me My Name (2021) by Amy Reed
Turtle Under Ice (2020) by Juleah del Rosario
When We Were Infinite (2021) by Kelly Loy Gilbert
The Words We Keep (2022) by Erin Stewart

Young Adult Mental Health Nonfiction

All the Feels for Teens (2021) by Elizabeth Laing Thompson
The Mindfulness Journal for Teens (2019) by Jennie Marie Battistin
Stuff that Sucks: A Teen's Guide to Accepting What You Can't Change and Committing to What You Can (2017) by Ben Sedley
A Year of Positive Thinking for Teens (2020) by Katie Hurley

CHALK THE BLOCK WITH KINDNESS

AGES

Multigenerational

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Over the course of one day (or several days), invite families to create sidewalk chalk with messages encouraging kindness. Stick to a small area or expand throughout your town or neighborhood. When possible, aim for tie-ins with other community and/or school events and festivals. Distribute kits containing sidewalk chalk, ideas, and a map, and follow up by photographing the sidewalk chalk art and sharing it on social media or in library displays. This also works great with rainbow chalk for Pride in June! See below for a recipe to make chalk yourself (or turn this into a two-part program by making the chalk together). Suggested runtime: 90–120 minutes.



Image source: Shutterstock

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials for the day of the event:

- Sidewalk chalk
- Templates/stencils (optional)
- Maps of preapproved areas for chalk art
- Handouts with message ideas and tips

Preparation:

- Contact local businesses and organizations to get approval for chalk art in front of their buildings.
- Put approved sidewalk chalk locations on a map.
- Print maps and handouts for participants.
- Source lots of chalk (or let participants make it).

Materials for making sidewalk chalk:

- Warm water
- Plaster of Paris
- Tempura paint or food coloring
- Toilet paper or paper towel rolls, or silicon molds
- Disposable masks

TIP:

Be sure to monitor the weather and reschedule as necessary. Be sure to check in with local business owners before the program to approve messages that might appear in front of their place of business.

TIP:

Consider partnering with schools, local chamber of commerce, parks department, daycares, or Spanish-language organizations.

TIP:

For a virtual program, participants brainstorm messages to write on Post-it notes, then stick them all over town.

ADAPTATION:

Make this a two-part program: Before hitting the streets, participants make their own chalk using plaster of Paris and toilet paper rolls.

TIP:

Make the library the ending location, and gather everyone for treats!

TIP:

If your map has participants cross busy streets, enlist volunteer crossing guards to help families across.

GAME/ACTIVITY | DECORATION/DISPLAY | OUTDOORS | LOW COST

- Paper towels (for cleanup)
- Plastic bags for covering tables (optional)

Assembly:

- Mix 3 cups plaster of Paris with 1.5 cups warm water, and stir.
- Add tempura paint or food coloring, and stir.
- Spoon mixture into toilet paper rolls, wiping off any drips.
- Let chalk dry for 24 hours before peeling off paper rolls.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly if the event is held in a contained area with little-to-no traffic. Volunteers would be helpful to photograph chalk art and to monitor safety during larger events.

RESOURCES

Web

Sidewalk chalk tutorial from Craft Warehouse: <https://bit.ly/3xQrY8v>

Tips for chalk art festival from Lasso the Moon: <https://bit.ly/3NQR1Od>

Chalk art (grid method) from Chalk Artists Guild: <https://bit.ly/3mO3g2w>

Tips for neighborhood chalk art from Learn with Mochi: <https://bit.ly/3MP-JYeb>

“Sidewalk Chalk Art Tutorial: Elephant” [2 min] from STL ZooTube on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3aXGCBU>

“Chalk the Walk” from the ALSC Blog: <https://bit.ly/3OgYwy4>

Books

The Case of the Missing Chalk Drawings (2018) by Richard Byrne (picture book F)

The Chalk Art Handbook (2021) by David Zinn (middle grade NF)

The Chalk Giraffe (2020) by Kirsty Paxton and illustrated by Megan Lotter (picture book F)

Printables

Kind Message Ideas (in English and Spanish)

TIP:

During the program, be sure to have staff members or volunteers document the art, which you can then share on social media or in the library!

TIP:

Remember disposable masks! Plaster of Paris is non-toxic, but the dust can irritate lungs.

TIP:

Work quickly. Plaster starts to dry in 20–30 minutes.

TIP:

For kindness books, see the Kindness Book List on page 186.

KIND MESSAGE IDEAS / IDEAS DE MENSAJES AMABLES

ENGLISH	SPANISH
Dream big!	¡Sueña en grande!
Shine bright.	Brilla.
Believe in yourself.	Cree en ti.
Be the change	Sé tú el cambio.
You've got this.	Puedes hacerlo.
Never stop learning	Nunca dejes de aprender.
It gets better.	Se pone cada vez mejor.
Aspire to inspire.	Aspira a inspirar.
You rock!	¡Eres lo máximo!
Follow your dreams.	Sigue tus sueños.
Make today amazing	Haz de hoy un día especial.
Stay true to you.	Sé fiel a ti.
Never give up	Nunca te rindas.
Never stop learning	Nunca dejes de aprender.
It's cool to be kind.	Es genial ser amable.
You make the world a better place.	Haces del mundo un lugar mejor.
We're all in this together.	Estamos todos juntos en esto.
Be a rainbow to someone's cloud.	Sé el arcoíris de las nubes grises de
Every day is another chance.	Cada día es otra oportunidad.