

# AGE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL 2019

## Creative Challenge, May 2019

### A Guide for Age UK Staff



*Getting crafty with the Friday Friend Group, Thorpe Hesley, Age UK Rotherham*



64 Million  
artists!



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*Members of the COGS Group, Age UK Gillingham*

## 1 Who is this guide for?

This guide is for Age UK group leaders who would like to use the Age of Creativity Challenges in group settings. As well as information about the Challenge, it contains handy tips for running a simple creative session and a guide to materials you'll need for each challenge.

## 2 What is the Age of Creativity Challenge 2019?



As part of this year's Age of Creativity Festival, 64 Million Artists were asked by Age UK and Voluntary Arts to create 31 simple creative challenges anyone can take part in each day of May 2019.

In order to come up with the challenges, we partnered with three local Age UK's across the country and ran creativity workshops with Age UK members, as well as professional practitioners who ran activities related to their own artistic practice. Thank you to all of the Age UK staff, volunteers and participants who took part, as well as the artists who shared their skills with us.

All of the challenges are designed to be:

1. Simple
2. Easily adaptable for a range of physical and cognitive abilities
3. Take no more than ten minutes to do
4. Require few materials, or materials you can easily find around you

People can sign up individually to receive the challenges in their email inbox every morning throughout the month. Here is the link to sign up individually:

<https://dothinkshare.com/age-of-creativity-challenge-2019/>

The 31 challenges for Age UK groups are more or the less the same as the challenges for individuals with some slight tweaks to make them appropriate for group settings.

If you have consent from participants and would like to share any of the work or workshop experiences on social media (Twitter, Facebook or Instagram) you can use the hashtags **#AoCFestival / #64MillionArtists**

### **3 Where can I find the creative challenges?**

You can find PDFs of the 31 creative challenges to print out or write down here:

<http://dothinkshare.com/creative-challenges-for-age-uk-facilitators/>

You may like to choose 4 or 5 challenges to run during a 2 hour session. We recommend using your creative judgement to choose a selection you feel will suit your particular group. Remember, the challenges are a guide, so feel free to adapt or tweak them based on your own knowledge and experience.

Our take on creativity is broad and democratic. We believe we're all creative and that anything that helps us express ourselves, feel good, have fun and be connected counts as a creative activity. You'll find there's everything here from mindfulness to gentle stretching to storytelling to craft.

## 4 Types of challenges and materials required

#	Type	Title	Materials
1	Drawing	Treasure Chest	Pens, paper, colouring pens/pencils
2	Drawing/conversation	Buds of May	Pens, paper, colouring pens/pencils
3	Gardening	New Shoots	Seeds, soil, small gardening pots, labels - or instructions for participants to do activity at home
4	Puzzle	Words Words Words	Crosswords, Word Searches etc (Newspaper?), board games
5	Craft	Creative Collage	Newspapers, magazines, paper, glue, scissors, pens and pencils
6	Writing/conversation	Reach Out	Pens and paper for letter writing
7	Movement	Stretch It Out	Chairs, speakers for music
8	Play	Game On	Pens, paper, tables, printed instructions for games if necessary
9	Creative thinking	SuperPowers	N/A
10	Drawing/Creative thinking	My Favourite Tree	Pens, paper, colouring pens/pencils
11	Creative writing	Finish the Story	Pens and paper
12	Design/ drawing/ creative	Four Seasons	Pens, paper,

	writing		colouring pens/pencils, collage materials
13	Design/ drawing	Something Fishy	Pens, paper, colouring pens/pencils, collage materials, fish templates if necessary
14	Local exploration	Love Libraries	Group trip/walk to library/research into local library events and offers
15	Mindfulness	Music Feels	Speakers and chairs
16	Poetry	A Poem of You	Pens and paper
17	Local exploration	Local Explorer	Group trip/walk
18	Nature connection	Bird Spot	Art materials if necessary
19	Interactive/conversational	Club Together	N/A
20	Creative thinking/writing	How To?	Pens, paper, scissors, glue
21	Design/drawing/creative writing	Cover Story	Pens, paper, scissors, glue, collage materials
22	Creative thinking/drawing	Animal Kingdom	Colouring pens and paper if necessary
23	Mindfulness	Mindful Magic	Chair and speaker (if music wanted)
24	Interactive/conversational	Flattery Gets You Everywhere	N/A
25	Creative thinking/writing	Sweet Treat	Colouring pens and paper
26	Creative thinking/drawing/design	Moment in Time	Pens and paper, newspaper and masking tape (to create mini statues)

			(if necessary)
27	Singing	Sing Along	Speakers
28	Drawing	Coat of Arms	Colouring pens and pencils, paper
29	Interactive/conversational, creative thinking	Recipe for Friendship	N/A
30	Dancing	Dancing Through Life	Speakers
31	Interactive/conversational	Celebrate!	Pens, paper, speakers,

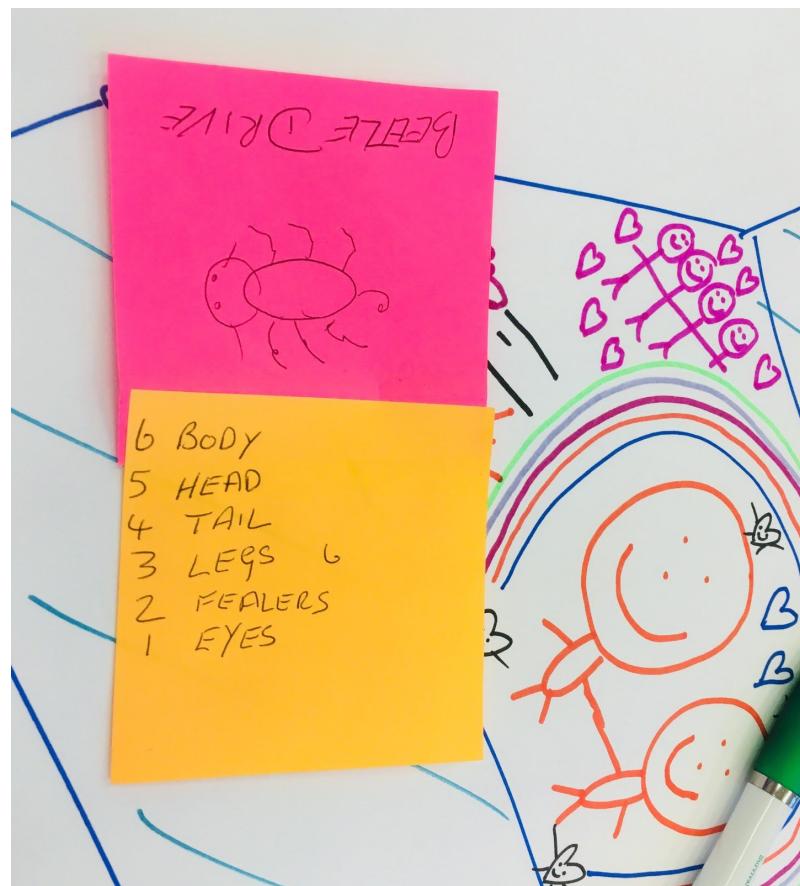


*Members of the Friday Friend Group, Thorpe Hesley, Age UK Rotherham*

## 5 People with physical and cognitive challenges

All the challenges have been created for people with a range of physical abilities and cognitive challenges, including dementia. In fact, one of our co-creation workshops was with a COGS (cognitive stimulation) group with members experiencing early stage dementia. Some of our workshop participants had hand tremors and found drawing hard. Others had mobility issues.

We hope that anyone who has made it to a group would be able to take part in a challenge, but feel free to adapt an activity if you feel it would exclude or overly tax some participants. Everyone should do what they what they can and have a go. Sitting out and observing is also totally fine. You will know your group members' individual challenges and needs.



*Crafty ideas from of Age UK Banbury*

## 6 Handy hints for running a great creative session

At 64 Million Artists, we run creativity workshops all over the country. Whether we're running them in care homes, hospitals, schools, businesses or prisons, the principles are more or less the same...

### ★ Mix it up!

Some of the challenges involve music and movement, some involve drawing and craft. You could run a successful session by choosing 4 or 5 of the different challenges to create a really diverse and engaging workshop. The idea is to cater to all tastes and abilities. Everyone has something they're good at.

*Avoid: choosing activities just because you like them or feel comfortable doing them.*

*Do: choose activities which are going to appeal to a range of tastes and abilities.*

### ★ Model being imperfect

The key to any creative session is to have a go. There's no such thing as a mistake. If people see that you're not Michaelangelo with a pencil, or a bit awkward doing a dance move, they'll feel much able to have a go, fail and have fun!

*Avoid: making judgmental or competitive statements.*

*Do say: "Well done, Bert, for having a go. I loved your contribution."*

### ★ Be prepared

We find the key to a great session is preparation! Know the activities you are going to do in advance and what materials and instructions people will need to take part. Try to keep explanations to a necessary minimum and get people doing something as soon as possible.

*Avoid: turning up without the right materials or an idea of what order you're going to do things in.*

*Do: have all materials and a simple plan prepared.*

## ★ Encourage but don't badger

We all hide how nervous we're feeling about being 'arty' or 'creative'. People who seem fine may in fact be very anxious about looking silly. Encourage everyone to take part and share their work and experiences - but use your intuition. Derek might need a gentle prod to open up and take part, while Beryl might be really anxious. Sometimes we're happier just observing. That's fine.

*Avoid saying: "Come on... why don't you try."*

*Do say: "Do whatever you feel like. You can just watch if you'd rather."*

## ★ It's about doing and sharing

Research shows that it's the company and sharing aspects of group creativity that people respond to. Make sure that equal time is given for sharing, reflection and positive encouragement at the end of each activity. Just remember: Do, Think, Share.

*Avoid: making it just about the activity.*

*Do say: "I love the way you interpreted the challenge. Very creative!"*

## ★ Stay flexible and adapt for all abilities

All the challenges have been designed to be accessible or adaptable for people with physical or cognitive challenges. A movement exercise can be adapted for someone who has trouble standing, for example, or a drawing exercise can be modified for someone with hand tremors. Use your own imagination if you think Angela might need an adaptation.

*Avoid saying: "Why don't you do it like this..."*

*Do say: "Do whatever you feel like. You can stay in your seat if it's easier."*

## ★ Keep to time

Go with the flow, but don't let things go on too long. Use your judgement. If an activity is flagging, don't worry about moving on... On the other hand, don't rush people if something is fun and going well. Keep an eye on the clock and know roughly what your schedule is. Let participants know how long you're going to give them. Creativity thrives when there are clear boundaries.

*Avoid: letting things drift or cutting people off.*

*Do: have a schedule, aim to stick to it, but give things space if people are enjoying themselves.*

## ★ Tea and loo break

Who doesn't love a cuppa and a slice of lemon drizzle cake?! There's nothing like a nice 10 minute break to give people time to reflect, recharge and get ready for more creative adventures. A tea and loo break halfway through the session always goes down well. For a one hour session you might not need a break but a two hour session definitely benefits from one.

*Avoid: pushing on through if people are flagging or feeling a bit overwhelmed.*

*Do: have a tea/loo break and come back recharged.*

## 7 Looking for more inspiration?



If you would like to join a free network of 1000 professionals from all sectors working to support more older people to get creative and celebrate then check out [www.ageofcreativity.co.uk](http://www.ageofcreativity.co.uk)

or contact [hello@ageofcreativity.co.uk](mailto:hello@ageofcreativity.co.uk)



Small Things and the Baring Foundation have produced a fantastic *Treasury of Arts Activities for Older People* which we've contributed to.

You can download a Pdf of it here:

<https://baringfoundation.org.uk/resource/treasury-of-arts-activities-for-older-people/>

64 Million Artists partnered with Leicester Ageing Together to create an online toolkit of age-friendly creative resources. The result is [www.dothinkshare.com](http://www.dothinkshare.com) which contains some great ideas and is having new activities, 'How-To's' and galleries added to it all the time. Check it out!



## 8 Any questions?

If you would like more information and support about developing your local creative offer for older people then join the Age UK Creative Network for local Age UKs by contacting:

Farrell Curran  
Head of Cultural Partnerships  
Age UK Oxfordshire  
[farrellcurran@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:farrellcurran@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk)

If you have questions or comments about the challenges, we'd love to hear from you at 64 Million Artists.

Contact us at [hello@64millionartists.com](mailto:hello@64millionartists.com)

Find out more about 64 Million Artists at [www.64millionartists.com](http://www.64millionartists.com)

