

Volume
two

Liz Postlethwaite

Treasury of arts activities for older people

A year of creativity: 52 accessible and creative activities
for everyone working with older people



**The Baring
Foundation**




**The Rayne
Foundation**

Small Things

About the author

Liz Postlethwaite is a community artist, creative facilitator and writer. She is interested in the way that an open, creative approach can be beneficial as a tool to instigate learning and social change. She has a wide range of experience developing and delivering projects in theatres, galleries and other cultural spaces, but is equally interested in developing work in community settings such as hospitals, schools, care homes and parks.

She is Director of Small Things Creative Projects and a fellow of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and the RSA. She is a member of the British Permaculture Association and has recently completed a Diploma in Applied Permaculture Design.

www.smallthings.org.uk

About NAPA & Arts in Care Homes

Arts in Care Homes is a NAPA initiative aimed at championing the importance of arts, creativity and culture in care settings. The National Day of Arts in Care Homes is an annual event that takes place on 24 September.

napa-activities.co.uk

www.artsincarehomes.org.uk

About the Baring Foundation

We are an independent foundation which protects and advances human rights and promotes inclusion. From 2010 to 2019, the Foundation's Arts programme focused on creative activity by older people. There are a number of publications on creative ageing on our website and a selected list at the end of this Treasury. To find out more about the Foundation, see *A History of the Baring Foundation in 50 Grants*.

www.baringfoundation.org.uk

About The Rayne Foundation

The Rayne Foundation supports work which seeks to tackle entrenched social problems in a creative way or which is nationally innovative by making grants to UK organisations in the arts, health & wellbeing, education and social sectors. The overarching theme is bridge building to connect people and communities and there are three areas of particular interest: arts with a social purpose, improved quality of life for carers and older people, and improved young people's mental health.

www.raynefoundation.org.uk

Editor: Harriet Lowe

Graphic designer: Alex Valy

www.alexvalydesign.co.uk

Liz Postlethwaite

Treasury of arts activities for older people



Volume
two

A year of creativity

52 accessible and creative activities
for everyone working with older people

For care homes, home care, dementia cafés, day centres,
and both occasional and practising artists!

Foreword

NAPA is delighted to share this, the second *Treasury of Arts Activities for Older People*, with you. Designed with facilitators and non-professional artists in mind, we think this is an amazing resource packed full of accessible and creative ideas. We would like to encourage the care sector to work towards providing care setting residents and clients with a daily person-centred offer of art, creativity and culture. This publication provides weekly ideas and inspiration for creative work with older people for a whole year. Offering a range of engagement suggestions using different art forms, we think that there is something here to appeal to everyone. We hope that you enjoy being creative together and that this book stimulates many happy hours of arts activities.

Please let us know what you get up to – we would love to see and hear how you get on!

NAPA / Arts in Care Homes

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Activities are also available online as separate PDFs at:

www.artsincarehomes.org.uk

Introduction

In 2019, Small Things Creative Projects worked with The Baring Foundation to create a *Treasury of Arts Activities for Older People*. This publication was aimed at professional artists and reflected the fact that there were many who would like to develop their practice in the growing field of creative ageing but who needed a little support and inspiration in order to do so. That first Treasury has now been used in countries all over the world by a large range of practitioners, and clearly demonstrates a desire and commitment from professional artists to explore ways to use the arts and creativity to engage the most vulnerable older people.

This new Treasury follows on from the first but focuses upon people working with and supporting older people who would like to develop and grow the creative work that they do. These could be activity coordinators in care homes, dementia café volunteers, domiciliary carers or day centre staff; in fact anybody who would like to bring more art and creativity into the work they do with older people.

This introduction cannot be written without noting that at the earliest stages of this publication taking shape the world was plunged into the Covid-19 pandemic – a global catastrophe which has disproportionately affected the most vulnerable older people, many of whom have been left desperately isolated as a result of lockdowns and other social restrictions. It is also a sobering statistic to note that around a quarter of all people who have died as a result of Covid-19 in the UK have been people who were living with dementia.

The pandemic has created huge challenges for those working with older people. However, it has also overwhelmingly demonstrated the way in which people reach out to engage in the arts and culture in times of crisis and demonstrated the unique and powerful role that this engagement can play in maintaining the health and wellbeing of vulnerable older people, and the people that support them, in the most difficult times.

It is impossible to predict the future but, whatever it does hold, we hope that this new Treasury will provide readers with an arsenal of tools and inspiration that will enable them to embed the arts and creativity at the beating and bold heart of the crucial work that they do with older people.

All of the activities that are included have been kindly shared by individuals and organisations with a commitment to working creatively with older people. It is their generosity of spirit that has made this Treasury possible.

Using this Treasury

This Treasury includes 52 activities created specifically with older people in mind – one for every week of the year. The activities are grouped into seasonal sections that can be followed week by week to take you through a whole year of creativity, but they work equally well if you would prefer to dip in and use them at your own pace. Feel free to take them as a starting point and to make them your own!

All of the activities have been tried and tested and represent the wide and varied knowledge and expertise of the contributors who have kindly agreed to share their work. It is hoped that they will provide ideas and inspiration that will enable you to develop your own creative practice and to introduce new and exciting things to the older people that you support.

For ease of use, the contents are divided into three distinct sections:

Thinking about...

Mini-guides that explore different challenges and possibilities of working creatively with older people.

Seasonal sections

Groups of activities gathered together based upon seasonal suitability. Each section includes a range of activities to take you through each week of the season. They all begin with a selection of inspirations, ideas and themes that may help you develop your creative ideas further at different times of year. These include:

- 1. Celebrations and events** that occur during that season which may serve as a positive focus for creative work.
- 2. A range of themes** that could be a good starting point to develop activities and workshops.
- 3. Music, art and literature or poetry** linked to the season that could add a further dimension to your work.

Themed menus

Menus that draw together groups of activities particularly suited to specific contexts: large groups, one-to-one, make something, dementia friendly and activities that work well online using platforms like Zoom.

For reference: most of these activities are intended to be used by groups of eight to ten people. For activities that are suitable for larger groups or one-to-one, please check **themed menus**.

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➔ **Go to themed menus**

Thinking about... setting the scene

The way you prepare and set up for a session can be just as important as the activities that you are planning. Taking the time to set the scene is key and can really help get people involved, have fun, and make your activity a success. These tips and ideas are all worth considering as you are getting ready to go!

Pick a time

What time of the day works best for you and the people or person that you are working with? Why not try an activity before or after lunch when a group of people are together already?
Or as a morning warm-up?

Numbers of people

A group of eight to ten people is an ideal size for a creative activity. This means that the facilitator can have contact with each participant and everybody can have their voice heard, but also that there are enough people to drum up energy and interaction. However, lots of activities also work for much bigger groups, or on a one-to-one basis. Creative activities work really well with friends and families joining in too and can be a great way of bringing generations together.

A circle

Making a circle of people is a very powerful thing to do as it immediately connects people and brings them together physically and emotionally. If you can, bring chairs close together so participants can see and reach out to each other. This will also create a space in the middle, which can be used as a stage area in some games. Most activities can also be played around a table which can be a really good alternative for some groups with participants who might like a surface to lean on.

Support

If you can, it is good to work with somebody else to deliver a workshop or activity. This means that one facilitator can steer the group whilst the other can see to the needs of individuals who may require additional support. It also allows facilitators to bounce energy and ideas off each other which can entertain and encourage people to participate.

Resources

It may be helpful to think about creating a resource box to support your activities, adding to it when you can with props, photos, costumes, etc. This way you will always have a box of resources to draw upon so you don't have to start from scratch every time that you do an activity. These resources do not need to be expensive things – a lot of the best resources have been picked up in charity shops and jumble sales!

Your box could include:

- a selection of hats
- a couple of feather boas
- a couple of simple items of clothing like bow-ties, beads, sunglasses...
- a range of basic craft materials
- a selection of simple props such as a bucket and spade, beach ball, hula-hoop, some balloons, a couple of bean bags, some simple musical instruments.

Enjoy

It is fun finding out what works with different groups; remember there is no right or wrong. The most important thing is that people are coming together and having fun!

Also worth thinking about...

- Is it possible to work in a quiet, private space where you won't be disturbed?
- If members of a group will be arriving at slightly different times (even over a short period of time), make sure you have an activity set up for those who arrive first. This could be something simple linked to the activity that you are going to do together. It could be a simple craft activity, or looking at images linked to a theme. It can be nice for the facilitator to join in with this activity as much as they can, helping to start conversation and getting people involved.
- Playing music related to the theme or activity as a group settle in can be very atmospheric and a good way to set the mood.

Thinking about... working one-to-one

Working with groups is central to much creative work, but working one-to-one can also be really important. This could be in a care home where a resident may be too unwell to leave their room, by a bedside in a hospital, or in a person's home – anywhere that a person may like to get involved in an activity but can't be part of a group. Here are some suggestions to help make this crucial interaction a success.

Being together

The simplest creative activity is a celebration of the power of being together with somebody in the moment and that in itself is an outcome of huge value. Taking the time to slow down and focus on an activity with another person is a wonderful thing.

Look for response

Every person who tries a creative activity will respond in their own way, and many people will not respond verbally. Acknowledge the diversity of responses and try to identify and embrace the uniqueness of each individual's reaction and engagement.

Keep it simple

Sometimes the simplest things work brilliantly, for example: reading a poem, looking at a piece of art, listening to some music or trying a simple craft together. This could be a standalone activity that you have created specifically to use with one person, or a group activity that has been tweaked to work in this context. One activity that is done well can be just as beneficial as something more elaborate.

Make it sensory

Taking a sensory approach allows people to access an activity or experience in the way that suits them. For example, somebody could look at a bunch of flowers and talk about them, but they could also smell the scent or touch the leaves and petals. They could even listen to bees buzzing around them if you are outdoors. The more ways in, the more inclusive an activity will be.

Let the conversation flow

The conversation that an activity stimulates can be as rich as the activity itself. Sometimes lots of chatting can feel like nothing has been done but if this conversation has triggered response and engagement, or another interaction such as a smile or eye contact, that has great value in itself.

Add wonder to the everyday

How can creative activity enhance the experience of everyday activities? What would happen if a gentle piece of music was added to the interaction while somebody was having their hair brushed? Or how would the mood be changed if a song was sung or a game played together while somebody is getting dressed? Adding a gentle creative aspect can be a fantastic way to reinvigorate the day-to-day mechanisms of care and to make them more special.

Have fun

One of the most valuable outcomes of working creatively one-to-one is the chance for people to have fun together. A bit of laughter enlivens the soul and genuinely improves quality of life. Don't underestimate the power of a quality shared experience that you have spontaneously created together!

Thinking about... celebrating diversity

The activities in this publication represent a snapshot of creative activities that are being used with older people in a range of settings in the UK and beyond. They do not attempt to capture or reflect the range of activities and groups that exist, or the diversity of the individuals and communities that are creating and taking part. On that basis if you are working with people that are not fully reflected in these activities, here are some suggestions of what you could try in order to make the ones that you try more inclusive.

Activities as a starting point

The activities in this Treasury are intended as a starting point and are not set in stone. You may find that making small changes and tweaks will make them much more reflective of the experiences of the people that you are working with.

Festivals and celebrations

Often festivals and celebrations are suggested as focus points – these can easily be changed to reflect things that will be more meaningful for your group. The same is true of countries or other geographical locations that are mentioned. If you would like to try an activity which focuses on a place as inspiration, it can be nice to change it to a place that will have the most resonance for the people that you are working with.

Music

Many of the activities use music and make suggestions of pieces to use. Generally, the music can easily be changed to something that is more relevant for your group. The thing to remember is that music often sets the mood so, for example, if the suggested piece is calm, it's worth trying to find an alternative with a similar tone.

Props and sensory materials

Where activities suggest use of materials or props, these can be changed to something that may better connect with your participants. For example, an activity which invites participants to try picnic food and respond to it could easily be tweaked to use foods that reflect a more relevant event or celebration.

Reach out

If you are working with a group or individual and you are struggling to find ways that are engaging in a culturally relevant way, you could think about reaching out to cultural organisations who are doing work that may resonate. There are amazing culturally diverse organisations all over the country who are working in accessible ways with a huge range of communities who may be able to help you. Many of them even have resources available that you could make use of. We have made a few suggestions below but these are only intended as a starting point – a little research will show you that there are many, many more!

Akademi

www.akademi.co.uk

The UK's leading South Asian Dance organisation. Its website includes a wide range of resources including Dance Well, its dance and well-being programme.

The Black Dementia Company

www.theblackdementiacompany.com

The Black Dementia Company aims to make a contribution towards improving the lives and well-being of persons living with dementia, including, and especially, persons living with dementia from the global African and Caribbean community.

Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art

cfcca.org.uk

Centre for Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA), formerly the Chinese Arts Centre, is the national lead in bringing Chinese contemporary art and visual culture to a UK audience.

Chaturangan

www.chaturangan.co.uk

Chaturangan believes culturally diverse dance to be an integral part of the social and cultural fabric of 21st century British culture. Its initiatives support the development of South Asian dance in particular and other dance forms in general.

Culture&

www.cultureand.org

Culture& is an independent arts and education charity formed in 1988 and based in London. It works in partnership with arts and heritage institutions and artists to develop programmes that promote diversity in the workforce and expand audiences.

Duckie

www.duckie.co.uk

Duckie is a collective of performance artists that produce a mix of “cultural interventions”, such as club nights, new-mode pop, burlesque and performance events. Its Posh Club project is a weekly social and showbiz event for swanky senior citizens, elegant elders and glamorous golden girls.

Essex Cultural Diversity Project

essexcdp.com

Essex Cultural Diversity Project breaks down barriers and promotes cultural harmony in Essex and the wider region. Through arts, cultural and heritage projects, it raises awareness of race equality and cultural diversity, benefiting all people within communities across Essex.

Irish Arts Foundation

www.irisharts.org.uk

The Irish Arts Foundation works to raise the profile of the music and arts of Ireland throughout Britain and to celebrate the many contributions that Irish people have made to life here.

Sampad

www.sampad.org.uk

Sampad’s mission is to connect people with South Asian and British Asian Arts and Heritage, and to play a cutting-edge role in the creative economy. It believes in the power of arts and heritage to impact widely on all communities and to bring people together from all walks of life.

Touchstone BME Dementia Service

touchstonesupport.org.uk/community-services/bme-dementia-service

Touchstone’s BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) Dementia Service provides specialist support to people living with memory problems or a diagnosis of dementia and their carers from ethnic minorities. Its aim is to raise awareness of dementia within BME communities by breaking down the barriers that exist about dementia and bring it out into the open so that people can access the support they need while meeting their language, cultural and religious needs.

Thinking about... working in partnership

A really good way to develop and grow the creative work that you are doing is to reach out to other groups, individuals and organisations that can support you. There are many different ways that you could do this and here are a few suggestions to get you started.

Arts and culture organisations

Most cultural organisations have some kind of community programme you could get involved in. This could be something that you attend in person at their venue, or resources that you can use wherever you are based. Try reaching out to your local theatre, art gallery, museum, orchestra, or arts centre to see how they can support your work. You could also consider connecting with local National Trust properties, heritage sites, gardens and nature reserves to see how they may be able to help you. And if you don't have any based locally, remember that national organisations, many of which are based in London, will have activities which are aimed at people all over the country and which you can often find online in the first instance.

Professional artists

Engaging professional artists to work with you can be a brilliant way to add a new spark to your creative projects. A good way to find suitable artists can be to seek recommendations from others who have engaged artists in their work. A simple internet search will also probably bring up many practitioners working locally to you who may be able to support your work.

Local libraries and archives

Local libraries and archives often offer activities and resources. These may take place in community settings, but they may also include resources and activities you could engage with in your own setting.

Local councils

Local councils can be a great starting point to access cultural opportunities or to build links to partners that may be able to support creative work. The council arts development, heritage or culture teams can be a great place to start. Equally, it can be good to connect with any Age Friendly programme that the council is running as culture is frequently an integral part of this kind of programme.

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Schools, colleges and universities

Reaching out to local schools and colleges can be a lovely way to develop creative projects and also to build intergenerational links. Many schools have a key contact who works to build links with the local community. For colleges and universities, it can be useful to think about what you are interested in and then connect with the department that best reflects your interest – for example, drama, music and art departments can all be great places to start.

Local arts groups

If there is a local art group, brass band or amateur dramatics group, it is worth contacting them to see if they could support you in any way. Many may have exhibitions or performances that you could attend, but may also have specific projects that you could get involved in too.

Online

There are now numerous online resources available to support this type of work, a number of which are referenced in the Resources section of this Treasury. Another good idea is to find Arts for Health groups and sign up for their newsletters as they can be packed full of ideas, resources and projects that can be both useful and inspiring.

The background features a repeating pattern of autumn-themed icons in a light red color. The icons include individual leaves, pairs of leaves, and acorns, arranged in a grid-like fashion. The word "Autumn" is centered in the middle of the page in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

Autumn

Autumn

With the colours of the natural world starting to change, the weather starting to cool and the days getting shorter, Autumn is a beautiful time of year. It is the perfect season to explore activities which draw you inside and which gather people together to enjoy and create. It is also a lovely time to slow down and take inspiration from the distinctive colours and textures of the season.

Events

September	Heritage Open Days (generally first weekend)
September	Autumn Equinox (Around 22nd)
October	Black History Month
October	National Poetry Day
31 October	Halloween
11 November	Armistice Day
Oct or Nov	Diwali

Possible themes

Autumn festivals
Harvest
Baking
Bonfire Night
Autumn garden

Inspiration

Look

Indian Rangoli Art
Woldgate Woods,
David Hockney

Listen

Autumn in New York, Ella
Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong
Khukhune ho hole. Mokhopo:
'Pumpkin Song' or 'Autumn
Harvest Song', Kevin Volans
South African Music Collection,
British Library (available from
the British Library website)

Read

*Sonnet 73: That time of year
thou mayst in me behold*,
William Shakespeare
Plums, Gillian Clarke

Making a fabric basket

Art and crafts

60 minutes+

You will need:

Ironed felt, thick cotton, denim or calico. Two pieces of the same size (around 30cm x 20cm works well).

Yarn, such as embroidery silks, cotton, string

Ruler

Pencil

Paper clips/pins

Scissors

Large needle

A piece of A5 card, cut in half (portrait)

Optional:

A selection of buttons, sequins and ribbons

One-to-one



Fun
Challenging
Focused

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Credit:

The Whitworth Age Friendly Programme.

An activity best done one-to-one or in small groups. It requires clear and concise step-by-step instructions to get it right, but it is very achievable. The finished basket is an attractive object to be proud of!

To begin:

Create your cardboard template (see photo). Next place your two pieces of fabric on top of the other and pin together. Then use your template to cut triangles into your fabric (see photo). Make sure that your triangles are the mirror image of each other.

Next:

Construct the basket by folding up the long sides first and then bringing the short sides round in front of them. Use paper clips or pins to hold the fabric in place (see photo below).

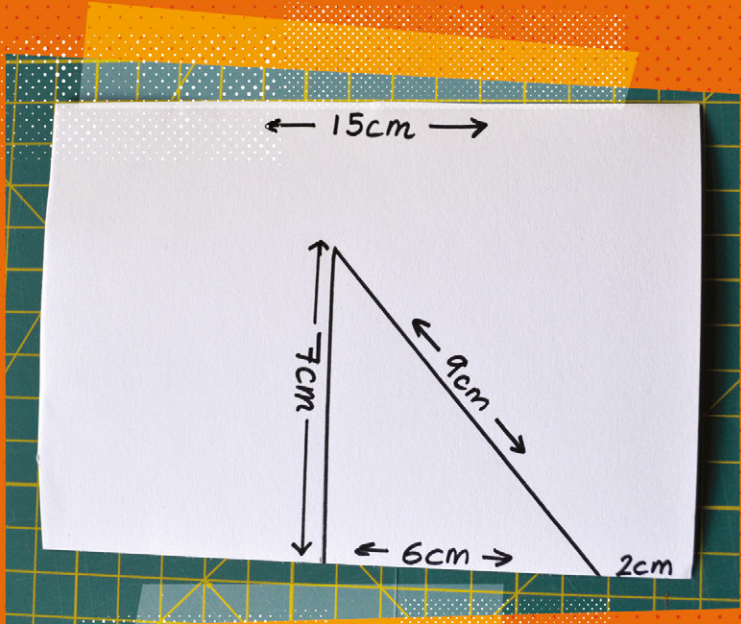
To finish:

Stitch together the fabric layers at the midpoint on the long sides. Then stitch the corners. A couple of bold stitches should be sufficient for each. Your basket is now finished, so all you have to do is decide how to use it! It can be a lovely way to store craft materials like threads, or to fill with nice toiletries as a gift.

You could also:

Use brightly coloured thread, ribbons, buttons and sequins to decorate your basket.





Your story, your way

Stories and poetry

30–60 minutes

(depending on the access needs, wellbeing, and interest of each participant)

You will need:

A tablet or laptop, with Zoom app downloaded

Wi-Fi connection

A pen and paper, or a flipchart or whiteboard

Images of seasons (laminated if possible)

A multi coloured heart made out of cardboard (laminated if possible)

A handout containing symbols representing a range of themes and topics such as food, music, travel (laminated if possible)

One-to-one Dementia-friendly



Engaging
Interactive
Celebratory

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Credit:

Nicola Abraham and Victoria Ruddock / Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.
Developed in partnership with Imperial College Healthcare Trust, Dementia Care Team.

In this one-to-one activity participants create a story or poem that they can keep and share with family and friends. It is designed to be relaxed, supportive and flexible to meet the needs and feelings of everybody who takes part.

To prepare:

This activity is designed to take place online but works equally well in a face-to-face setting – if you are working online you may want to provide your participant with physical materials before the activity. Equally you could share these online during the activity.

To begin:

Start by introducing yourself and explain that you are going to spend the next half an hour writing a story or poem together.

Then present a multi-coloured heart to the person that you are working with. This could be on a laminated card or something that you share on screen. *What colour do they feel best represents their day?* It will help if you get the ball rolling by sharing how you feel. For example, *'I feel yellow today because the sun is shining and that makes me feel happy and content'*. This will set a calm and focused tone for the task and help you to get a sense how the participant might be feeling and therefore how they may choose to participate in the activity.

Explain that throughout the activity you will write their thoughts and ideas down – try to record their words exactly rather than changing them as you note them down. You can do this on a piece of paper or on a whiteboard or flipchart so that the person you are working with can see it too.

Step one:

Take the colour that has been chosen and ask your participant if it reminds them of a season. It may help to provide a selection of colourful images of each season so that you can look at the images together and decide where the colour is best represented. *Is the season they have chosen their favourite?* This could serve as a gentle introduction for their own thoughts on their favourite season and any stories that they'd like to share.

Finally, invite them to choose their favourite picture of the season that they are thinking about. *What is it about that picture that drew them to it? What do they like about it?*





Step two:

Explain that you are going to look at the picture that they have chosen and think about it in more detail. *Can they think of activities and topics that are inspired by the image?*

It can help if you have a handout with a range of symbols representing different topics. These could be things like a knife and fork for food, a treble clef for music, a map for places, and a space for anything else that you come up with together.

Use these symbols to prompt sharing stories and ideas on different subjects. For example, *What kind of music does the picture make them think of? What kind of food? What place does it look like? What could you do in that place?* Another good way to explore the image is to use the senses as a starting point – *What could you hear, see, smell, feel, taste in that place?*

Once again, as stories and ideas are shared, jot them down on a piece of paper, or a whiteboard or flipchart.

To finish:

Read back the notes you have made to capture the stories and conversations during the session. If you have written these as they were said, the list that you have created should feel like a spoken word poem or story. Ask the person you have worked with what they like about the poem. *What surprises them? Which is their favourite part? Can you create a name for it together?*

You could also:

After the session why not type up the writing that you have created alongside the images that you used to inspire it. You can then print this out and provide a copy for the participant.

It can also be nice to record somebody reading their piece and make a mini film that includes the images that you looked at as inspiration.



What fills your cup with joy?



Teacup collage

Art and crafts

30 minutes

You will need:

A4 cardstock (white or ivory)

Scissors

Glue sticks

Selection of images, such as magazine clippings, clipart, old greeting cards

Variety of mark-making tools, such as felt-tip pens, crayons, colored pencils, oil pastels

Optional: Glitter glue, stickers, feathers

One-to-one
Dementia-friendly



Gentle
Engaging
Calming

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Credit:

Sue Holmes,
Independent Activity Coordinator.

This is a fun, dementia-friendly exercise which can help you get to know a person's interests and passions. It can also work well as an intergenerational activity.

To prepare:

Draw or print the outline of a teacup at the bottom of each piece of card. At the top of the same piece of card, write or print: *'What fills your cup with joy?'*. Repeat this process so you have at least one card for each participant – it is a good idea to make a few extra just in case.

Lay out materials needed including the prepared cards, mark-making tools, glue sticks, scissors and a selection of images.

To begin:

Explain the activity you are going to do, starting with the following prompt: *'What fills you (and your cup) with joy?'*

Invite your participants to choose materials they like to add to their teacup, for example, pictures of things they like, their favourite colours, words that reflect their personality, etc. They can also choose any mark-making tools they would like to use to add further decoration. It can help to show an example of a finished teacup for reference at this point so that people know what they are working towards.

Next:

Give your group as much time as they need to complete their teacups. Generally around 30 minutes is sufficient but you may find that you need more or less time depending on your group's needs.

You might like to play some calming background music as people make their collages, and to move around and provide support to people if they need it. You can even chat to people to ask what they are choosing or to help them choose things to add to their collage.

To finish:

When all participants have finished, set aside time to look at all the different teacups that have been created and to discuss and praise each other's work.

You could lay out all of the finished cups and talk about which ones people like, unusual techniques that people have used, and the items that they have added.

You could also:

Use the activity as a starting point for the group to create and host their own tea party.

Dance well: take away

Dance and movement

30 minutes

(if all done together)

You will need:

Selected music,
such as *Air* by Midival Punditz,
Kesariya Baalam by Midival
Punditz, *Alap* by Four Tet

An audio device

Optional:

A selection of props,
such as light scarves
and feathers

Large groups



Fun
Energising
Physical

These simple dance activities work well together but are equally effective if they are tried on their own. They are a great way to get a group stretching and moving and a lovely way to support a group to have some fun together. They work well seated, but some groups may like to try some of them standing up.

To begin – Namaskar:

This traditional Indian greeting is done at the beginning and end of every dance. It is the dancer's way of showing gratitude to the stage, their teachers and to dance. To begin, your group will need to let their hands drop down by their sides with the palms facing away from the body. From this position they should slowly move their hands upwards with their palms facing the ceiling, then bring the hands over so that the palms can come together in the middle of the breastbone. Keeping your palms together and your lower arms parallel to the ground, pause like this for a moment before moving on to the next activity.

One – time to introduce yourself:

Explain that you are going to write your names in the air using your hand. *Air* by Midival Punditz works well as backing music.

As a group try writing your names at your own pace. When you have tried this a couple of times, invite your participants to try writing it again but as small as you can, then get bigger and bigger with each repetition until you are writing it the biggest that you can. *Can you also try repeating this sequence but with the other hand? Or writing your names backwards?* You could also try the sequence holding things like feathers or light silky scarves.

Two – reach and repeat:

The next movement works well accompanied by more upbeat music: *Kesariya Baalam* by Midival Punditz works well here.

To begin, invite your group to put their feet flat on the floor about shoulder width apart. Then as a group march your feet on the spot in time to the music to get into a bit of rhythm. Next, stretch your arms out in front of you and clasp your hands together. Twist from the waist, moving your arms from side to side looking in the direction of your hands as you move them.

Swap sides eight times, trying to follow the rhythm of the music, and then bring your hands back to a comfortable resting position, keeping them clasped. Now reach your clasped hands up to the ceiling, and back to your lap – repeat this eight times in time to the music.

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Credit:

Akademi.





Finally, bring your hands to your chest and unclasp them. Extend one hand forward, then bring it back to your chest and swap hands. Repeat eight times.

If you want you could get your legs involved too by tapping each foot forward at the same time as the arm. Once you have tried the whole sequence, you could repeat it if you feel that your group are able to.

Three – seated stretch:

This final movement is really lovely with a gentle, relaxing musical accompaniment: *Alap* by Four Tet is a good piece to use.

To begin, invite your group to take three deep breaths in through their noses and out through their mouths. Then take three more but adding movements to the breath – first they should stretch their arms as far to the ceiling as they can with each breath in, then bring them back to their knees with each breath out, doing this for three breaths in and three breaths out. Next, lift the hands up on the in breath and bring down so they stretch out to the side on the out breath – hold in this position for two more breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth, wiggling their fingers as they stretch their arms.

To finish the sequence, the group should bring their arms around themselves and give themselves a hug, which is held for three further breaths. This will give a nice stretch across the top of the back. Do it again but switching the arm that goes on top.

Repeat three times.

To finish:

To end your movements, invite your group to repeat their Namaskar greeting one final time.



A rhyme in time

Stories and poetry

30 minutes

You will need:

Colourful marker pens

Large paper, such as a flipchart or lining paper

Optional:

An audio device

A selection of poetry, nursery rhymes, and limericks

One-to-one



Nostalgic
Stimulating
Expressive

This activity uses familiar rhymes and rhyming patterns such as well-loved nursery rhymes and limericks as a starting point to create your own. It is good fun and works well in community spaces like libraries, care home lounges and day centres.

To prepare:

The activity works best in a circle or around a table so everyone can easily see and hear each other.

Start the activity in an open and approachable way – a good way to do this can be to get out the tea and biscuits, and wear a smile!

To begin:

Set the scene by reciting, or playing through an audio device, a few well-known nursery or traditional rhymes. Once you have done a couple, open the floor and invite other people in the group to share rhymes that they know. This is contagious and people will automatically join in without much encouragement!

Once you have shared a couple of rhymes as a group, you could try a simple game where you leave out the last word of each sentence in a rhyme and the participants have to fill in the gaps.

Next:

Once everyone has loosened up, begin to alter the words of well-known rhymes to suit your own themes. You could start doing this by changing a single word or whole sentences, working in a way that suits your group.

For example, 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' could become 'Twinkle, twinkle little car'. And 'How I wonder what you are' could become 'I wonder if I can drive far'. There are no hard or fast rules. Be as flexible and creative as possible.

Can you pick a couple of rhymes to re-write? Or could you create a limerick together?

As people speak you can write down any lines, verses, sayings, little 'gems' of words that the participants contribute. You can also write down the poems / limericks on a flipchart or large sheet of paper.

To finish:

Finish the activity by reading back the poems that have been created – you could read or members of the group may want to. Can you pick which you like best? And give names to your creations?

You could also:

Work on rhymes individually to share at the end of the activity.

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Credit:

Writing East Midlands /
Michelle 'Mother' Hubbard.
Developed in partnership
Gregory House at Grantham –
Orders of St John Care Trust.

Colour and mood

Sensory

30-60 minutes

You will need:

Swatches of paper or fabric, in a range of colours

Optional:

A large sheet of paper or flipchart

One-to-one

Dementia-friendly



Fun
Sensory
Mindful

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Credit:

Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums. Developed in partnership with Age UK North Tyneside – Time Travellers Dementia Group.

A sensory activity exploring colour and emotion. It is dementia friendly and can help support speech and communication. It can create a space to discuss feelings and emotions, and to stimulate mindfulness.

To begin:

Lay out a range of swatches of paper and/or fabric in a wide range of colours. Invite the people that you are working with to have a good look at the different swatches. *Can they choose their favourite colour?* When each person has chosen a colour, take turns to share what you have chosen and why you have chosen it. There is no rush – leave space for thinking and make sure that everybody who wants to has a chance to share their thoughts.

You might like to make notes of your discussion in a place that everybody can see such as on a flipchart or large sheet of paper.

Next:

Talk about what the colours might represent culturally. For example red for love or danger, purple for royalty, green for health or nature. *What do the different colours represent to the group?*

This often leads to a conversation about how the different colours make them feel. *Do any colours have a particular association for them?*

To finish:

Ask the participants which colour represents how they are feeling today and why.

This is a great way to talk about mood and mental health while using creative and socially and culturally recognisable language as a stimulus.

You could also:

Talk about the way colour can be used as a code for non-verbal communication, and how different colours carry different meanings and associations which can vary across different cultures.

What words would you associate with each colour?

Red: Love, Passion, Danger, Fire, Confidence, Strength, Power

Orange: Activity, Energy, Health, Fun, Creativity, Youthfulness

Yellow: Sunshine, Cheerfulness, Joy, Intellect, Caution, Hazard

Green: Nature, Environment, Wealth, Growth, Vitality, Stability, Prestige

Blue: Trust, Communication, Health, Sadness, Depression, Calm, Harmony

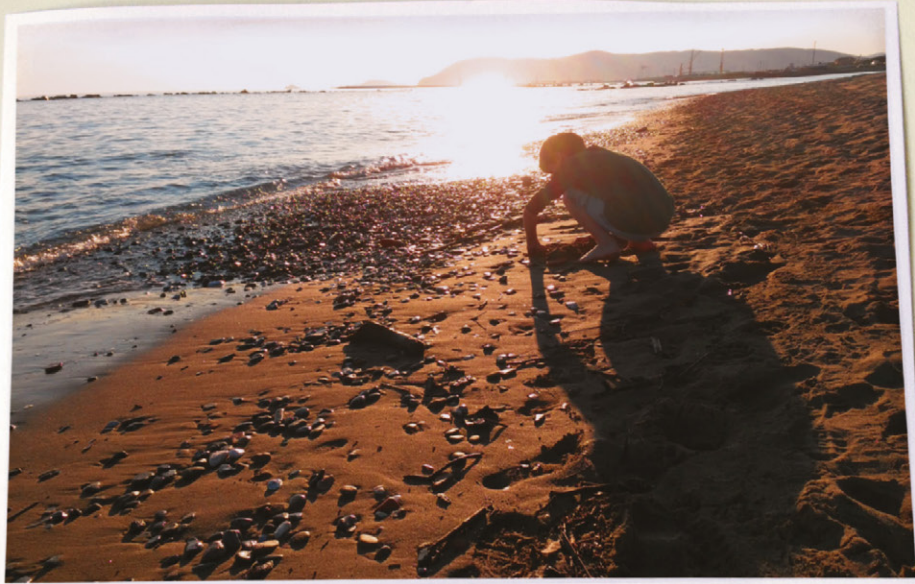
Purple: Royal, Noble, Luxury, Sentimental, Nostalgic, Spiritual

Brown: Nature, Strong, Simple, Wholesome, Honest, Dirty, Dull

Pink: Feminine, Romantic, Sentimental, Fun

Black: Sad, Sophisticated, Power, Death, Cool

White: Pure, Innocent, Clean, Sterile, Clinical



rock pools

low tide

breeze

waves

wet

sandals

you

see

jellyfish

touch

salty

shells

How to make a photo poem

Stories and poetry

30 minutes

You will need:

A photograph

Print-outs of sample words and phrases that relate to the photo

Optional:

Pen and paper, scissors, newspapers, glue

One-to-one

Dementia-friendly



Calming
Conversational
Absorbing

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Credit:

Independent Arts. Developed in partnership with Hazel Lodge, Northbrooke House Care Home.

Photo poems were first devised by poet Paul Eluard and photographer Man Ray. The technique is a simple blending of poetic words or phrases with an arresting, evocative photograph to create an entirely new work of art: a photo poem.

To prepare:

Before the session you will need to build activity packs, choosing the image and creating the words that will go along with it. For example, for a beach scene, you might print out words like: 'waves', 'seaside', 'seaweed', 'children playing', 'paddling', 'deckchairs', 'sunhat', 'sand', 'ice cream', 'holiday', etc.

It can be helpful for the image and the words to be laminated for extra strength and cleanliness.

To begin:

Share the picture that you will be using with your participants – it is good to have a copy for each participant so that they can have a good look at it. Once everyone has had a chance to look, begin talking about the picture.

Can the group describe what they see: *do they recognise the scene? What is happening in the picture? Does it remind them of somewhere or of someone?* Take time to talk so that everybody has the chance to share their own feelings and responses.

Next:

Lay out the words that you have provided and have a look at them. Talk about the words and choose the ones that stand out and make a connection.

Then work together as a group to create a poem – move the words around to find the way that the group feels they fit together best. When the poem is finished, you can read it to the group or invite a member of the group to read it.

After you have worked together, you may also want to work individually or in small groups to create your own poems. If you do this, you could spend time creating before sharing with each other.

You could also:

Some people may prefer to choose their own words to create their poem – you will need to provide a pen and paper if they want to do this. Or you could provide old papers and magazines for participants to cut out their own words.

Your final poems could be made into a really striking wall display for a communal space or in somebody's room or home.

Dance on: *Feeling Good*

Dance and movement

20 minutes

You will need:

Music: *Feeling Good*
by Michael Bublé

An audio device

Chairs, for seated participants (harder chairs like dining chairs are best)

Lyrics of the song, for the facilitator

Large groups
Dementia-friendly



Gentle
Energising
Uplifting

This gentle dance offers simple movements set to lyrics to wake up the body, mobilise the joints and stimulate the senses. It is a wonderful way to lift mood through movement.

To prepare:

If you are using chairs, set them out in a circle or in lines depending upon what works best for your space and group.

To begin:

Invite your participants to decide if they would like to sit or stand to take part in the activity. For participants who are seated, invite them to shuffle forwards on the seat, lengthening up through the spine by imagining the head as a helium balloon, floating towards the sky. For participants who are standing, invite them to put their feet together and stand tall with a straight spine. This should help everyone feel long and strong and ready to go!

Next:

Explain to the group that you are going to listen to a piece of music together and then create your own sequence of movements to go with it. First, listen to the music and then ask if anybody knows it already. *Where have they heard it? Do they know this version or another? Is it a piece of music they like?*

Once you have listened to the music, explain that you are now going to come up with your own movement for each line of the song. As a group, go through the song line by line and come up with a movement idea for each.

It is a good idea to spend some time practising each movement together. As you do this, it is important to encourage the participants to find what feels good for them. If a movement does not feel right in their body, they can make it smaller, adapt it to suit them or move more slowly.

We have shared some ideas for movements but these are just suggestions. Feel free to come up with something totally different yourself! Don't worry if you don't manage to come up with movements for the whole song – start with one verse and a chorus and then add more if your group is having fun!

To finish:

Put the music on and enjoy trying all of your movements together!

You could also:

If you enjoyed this activity, why not try and add movements to other songs that you like?

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Credit:

Yorkshire Dance / Rachel Clarke & Izzy Brittain. Developed in partnership with OPAL, Welcome In Community Centre, Leeds.







Feeling Good movement suggestions

Verse one

'Birds flying high': lift one arm up and down slowly to the side like a bird.

'Sun in the sky': lift the other arm up and down slowly to the side like a bird.

'Breeze drifting on by': lift both arms up and down slowly to the sides like a bird.

Chorus

'It's a new dawn': push one hand out to the side until the arm is extended and hold the position with flexed hand.

'A new day': push the other hand out to the side until the arm is extended and hold the position with a flexed hand.

'A new life for me': lift both arms up and down to the side like a bird.

'And I'm feeling good': jazz hands on both sides bent at the elbow; twinkle the fingers and then shimmy-shake the shoulders.

Instrumental

Step to the side with one foot and tap the other foot next to it; alternate sides and swing arms from side to side. You can include clicks.

Verse two

'Fish in the sea': arms out to one side making sea/wave-like gestures.

'River running free': arms out to the other side making sea/wave-like gestures.

'Blossoms on the tree': both arms reach up the body to the ceiling; both arms sway/wave from side to side as they come back down again.

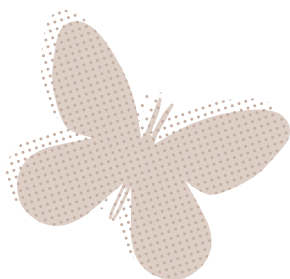
Verse three

'Dragonfly out in the sun': taking your time, both arms come up to the sides in a strong line making a T-shape with the body ... both arms reach forward until palms touch ... both arms go backwards to the T-shape ... and then both arms come back down to your side.

'Butterflies all having fun and sleep in peace when day is done': repeat as above.

'Sleep in peace when day is done': repeat as above.

'And this old world is a new world': both arms reach up the body to the ceiling ... both arms sway/wave from side to side as they come back down again.



Hat snap

Performance

From 5 minutes

(could be much longer as improvisations develop)

You will need:

2 suitcases
(one per team)

5-10 hats per case
(the hats in each should be of a similar type, such as one flat cap per case, one trilby per case, etc)

2 tables
(one per team, for the suitcases to go on)

A table for computers / tablets, if you are playing online

Dementia-friendly



Funny
Stimulating
Imaginative

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Credit:

Dr Richard Talbot and Dr Clare Dormann / University of Salford. Developed in partnership with Aspire Adult Social Care and Humphrey Booth Resource Centre/Poppy Day Care Centre, Swinton.

This is a simple game which works best with small groups. It's best to have one or two people on each team and a further person to act as adjudicator!

To prepare:

The atmosphere should be fun, silly and relaxed for this game. Using the hats will help you to clown around and it can help set the tone if the adjudicator wears something funny as well like big funny glasses or a coloured wig. Set up the tables and the suitcases of hats.

To begin:

As the adjudicator, explain that you are going to play a game of snap using hats – the teams are going to pull out hats and put them on – if the hats are the same, the winner is the team that shouts 'snap' first.

Decide who is going to be the picker in each team and who is going to be the guesser. The adjudicator counts down 3-2-1 and says 'go'. When the teams hear 'go', the picker picks a hat out of a suitcase, and puts it on the head of their partner – it's important that the wearer doesn't see their hat so it may be good for them to close their eyes whilst this is happening. The person wearing the hat must then look at the other team and decide if they are wearing the same headwear by feeling the hat that they have got on their head!

The winner of each point is the first team to shout 'snap'. As the adjudicator, ask why they have decided it is a snap. This could be anything. For example, "it is the same shape", "it feels like the same material" ... as long as they have a reason, they are right!

When you have played a couple of rounds, you could swap over. When both people have been picker and guesser, take time to talk about it. *What makes you call out 'snap'? Do you enjoy feeling the shape and texture of your hat?* Digressions should be encouraged. If you play this game to the full, you will find yourself playing with the sound of words, of names for hats, and with the 'characters' that hats make you think of. Anything goes!

Next:

Give categories to the hat that you are looking for as a snap. For example, a captain's hat, a hat that you would wear to a party, a hat to shade you from the sun. You could also give different words to say instead of 'snap' when there is a match. For example 'lah dee dah' for a party hat, or 'aye aye captain' for a captain's hat. You could choose the category of hat or you could let your teams do it.

You could also:

Take time to talk about the 'characters' that appear wearing different hats. Can you come up with a phrase that the characters say and then have a go mimicking how each one speaks? Or can your characters come up with movements that can be copied? Have fun doing this and remember that there is no right or wrong answer.



Tissue paper pictures

Art and crafts

30 minutes

You will need:

Tissue paper,
in a range of colours

Scissors

PVA glue,
with pots and spreaders

Sheets of white or
light-coloured tissue paper
(to use as the background sheet)

Pen or marker pen,
to draw the outline

One-to-one Dementia-friendly



Fun
Creative
Calm

Ideas for shapes

- Pumpkin for Halloween
- Christmas tree for Christmas
- Daffodil for St David's Day
- National flags for St George's Day, St Patrick's Day or other national celebration days
- Football or a football strip for the FA Cup
- Menorah for Hanukkah
- South American inspired 'Semana Santa' Flowers for Easter
- Landmarks for cities or places, such as a pyramid for Egypt, a red bus for London.

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Credit:

West Eaton Nursing Home /
Clare Lockley.

This is a creative crafts activity that produces a great effect when displayed on a window. The result may look messy close up but once displayed on the window it looks fantastic.

To prepare:

Put pieces of different coloured tissue paper in separate boxes; you can either rip the paper into small pieces or cut into squares. This is something that you could do on your own or with members of the group that you are working with.

To begin:

Give each participant some white or light-coloured tissue paper for their background sheet. Ask them to draw the shape they are going to fill onto the white sheet using a marker or felt-tip pen which will allow them to see the shape they are filling more easily. Some suggested shapes are listed below, or some groups may like to create their own shape on the paper.

Then:

Participants can then apply PVA glue with a paintbrush to their shape, and start sticking on their chosen tissue papers. It is a good idea to do small areas at a time, alternating between gluing and sticking. It does not matter if people decide to use the same colour or many different colours – it's their choice how they construct their design.

If members of your group can't do the sticking, or don't want to, they can either sort the tissue paper into colours or rip the tissue paper up into the shapes to use.

To finish:

When participants have filled their shapes, leave them to dry and then display by sticking onto a window so the light shines through.

Look at the pictures together. Which ones do the group like the best? What techniques have people used to create their design? Which techniques are most effective? What effect does the light have when the pictures are up on the window?



Community inspired acrostic

Stories and poetry

20 minutes

You will need:

A large sheet of paper

A marker pen

Optional:

Examples of acrostics,
A4 paper, pens or pencils

One-to-one



Gentle
Reflective
Personal

Acrostics are a simple form of poem where the first letter of each word spells out a word or phrase related to the poem. Here the word is COMMUNITY, but once you are familiar with the technique it is a great foundation for writing poems on any theme.

To begin:

Explain to your group that you are going to write an acrostic together and then ask if anybody knows what an acrostic is. If nobody knows the answer, tell the group that it is a poem that uses the letters of a word or phrase to make up the first letter of the lines of a poem.

At this point it may be good to share some examples of acrostics for your group to have a look at – there are lots available online. If you do this, you can read through them together and talk about what you like about them and what you aren't so keen on.

Then:

Explain that you are going to have a go at writing your own acrostic inspired by the word COMMUNITY. Write the word down the left hand side of a large sheet of paper in big letters so that everybody can read it. Then go through letter by letter coming up with ideas for what to write for each line. You could do this together, or go around the group each taking a turn.

To finish:

Read back the poem that you have created together. Take time to make edits if you want to – changing sentences and phrases until you all agree that it is just right. When it is finished, read it back one more time.

You could also:

Have a go at writing more acrostic poems if the group enjoyed it. Some groups may enjoy taking time to write poems on their own or in pairs that they can then share together as a group.

Try using different stimuli to create more poems. For example, you could write one about home, one about family, one about holidays, etc.

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Credit:

Small Things Creative Projects.
Developed in partnership with
The Jinnah Centre as part of
Bury Culture Champions.



Sound stories

Performance

30–60 minutes

You will need:

An extract from a story, play, or poem (this should be descriptive and contain actions to stimulate sound effects)

A range of common household objects to make sound effects, such as mug and spoon, crinkly paper, beans in a jar, beads, bell

Optional:

A flipchart (or large sheet of paper) and pen

One-to-one



Fun
Uplifting
Engaging

The activity works well in person and also with small groups of around four people online. It brings the stories to life and is a stimulating, creative activity.

To begin:

Welcome the group and explain that you are going to create a performance piece that brings a text/story to life by using objects to make sound effects. You may want to talk about films, television or plays where sound effects made a big impact. For example, the dramatic music in *Jaws* when the shark appears.

Next have a look at the different 'instruments' you have. Have a think about the range of sounds they could be used to create. Take some time to explore them, experimenting with the sounds that can be produced separately or with several objects together.

Next:

Read the text together. You may do this, or members of the group may want to have a go. Invite participants to share their first reactions to the text. *What do they like about it? Is it a text that they recognise?* Then discuss/demonstrate examples of sounds that stand out in the text. For example: the doorbell rings = strike a mug with a spoon; heavy raindrops against a window = beans rattled in a jar; footsteps = stamp your feet.

Explain that you are going to work to create a sound performance using your instruments and your text. Go through the text line by line and create a list of moments when you think a sound is needed. Then create a sound for each of them.

You might like to write down your sounds on a flipchart or large sheet of paper as you go and create an informal score for your performance. It can also be a good idea to note who will do what.

Spend time rehearsing, discussing and modifying your scene.

To finish:

Perform the piece you have created. Do this first with the text in the background and then try it just with the sounds. *What atmosphere is created when the words are removed?*

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Credit:

Royal Exchange Theatre Elders Company / Catherine and Gill.



Visuals and music

Stories and poetry

30 minutes

You will need:

A small selection of printed images linked to films, theatre or television, such as a picture from *Singing in the Rain*

A piece of music to match each of your pictures. For example a track from *Singing in the Rain* to support the image from the film

An audio device

One-to-one



Fun
Relaxing
Casual

This activity has been successfully used at the Royal Exchange Theatre's Elders Coffee Mornings on Zoom. It is a fun and engaging way to start conversations and get people involved.

To begin:

Lay out a selection of images so that people can have a look at them. If you are working in person, it is a good idea to have several copies of each image.

Ask the group if they recognise any of the images and then talk about them together. *Which do they recognise? Have they seen the film, play or programme that the picture is from? What is happening in the picture?*

For the pictures they don't recognise, *which ones look interesting? What is happening in the pictures?*

If they had to pick your favourite, *which one would they pick and why?* You could invite each person to pick their favourite and then share what they have chosen with the group.

Next:

Play each song or piece of music and then decide which piece of music is linked to which picture. *What kind of mood does the music create? What does it add to the picture in terms of mood and atmosphere? Which piece of music do they like best and why?*

You could also:

Instead of playing the music and seeing which image it is connected to, you could turn it around and ask the group if they can think of a piece of music that is connected to each of the images.

Choose images that are linked to a theme and use this activity as a starting point to begin exploring that theme.



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Credit:

Royal Exchange Theatre Elders Company / Graham and Tony.

The background features a repeating pattern of light blue snowflakes and textured spheres on a dark blue background. The snowflakes are arranged in a grid-like pattern, while the spheres are interspersed between them. The spheres have a grid-like texture. The word "Winter" is centered in the middle of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

Winter

Winter

With its long dark evenings and cold weather, winter is a time of year when most of us want to keep warm and cosy indoors so many of the activities in this section reflect that desire. There are also games to keep bodies and minds active, and to get groups moving and having fun together.

Events

11 December	International Mountain Day
Late Nov / early Dec	Hanukkah
21 or 22 December	Winter Solstice
Early February	Lunar New Year
14 February	Valentine's Day
Late February	FESTIMA Mask Festival

Possible themes

Snow and ice
Winter celebrations
New Year's Eve
Scotland (for Burns Night)
Winter foods

Inspiration

Look

Beautifully decorated Chinese
Lions and Dragons

Glacier Crystal, Grindelwald,
Wilhelmina Barns-Graham

Wintergreens, Frank Bowling

Listen

The Snow is Dancing,
Claude Debussy

Traditional music from the Pongal
Festival, the Hindu harvest
festival of South India which
typically takes place in January

Read

Chanukah Dreams,
Judith Ish-Kishor

*Poem 311: It sifts from Leaden
Sieves,* Emily Dickinson

Sashiko stitching

Art and crafts

30 minutes

(but can take less time or be extended)

You will need:

2 pieces of fabric, 20cm x 20cm per person (old shirts work well)

A selection of Sashiko patterns, printed out (available online)

Long darners (one each)

Cotton perlé thread

Scissors

Pattern

Frixion pen

Large groups



Focused
Engaging
Relaxing

Sashiko is a mindful and peaceful activity that enables participants to stitch, share and chat. This 500-year-old technique from Japan can create both simple and more complex designs depending on the participants' knowledge of stitching.

To begin:

Place the fabric on top of the pattern, and then hold them up at a window so that you can see to trace the pattern onto the right side of one of the pieces of fabric. You can do this using the Frixion pen.

Next:

Put the second piece of fabric under the fabric you have just drawn on and line up the edges. Cut a piece of thread that is no longer than the length of your arm. Thread the needle. Put a knot in the end of the thread and secure the knot between the layers. Start to stitch the design using running stitches. You can also use the pattern provided to see which way to stitch. Where the curves intersect, the stitches should not overlap or cross.

As you all stitch together it can be a lovely time to talk.

You might like to ask:

When did your group learn to sew?

What have you made?

What is your favourite stitch?

When you are stitching what do you think about?

Any other questions that your group comes up with...

Don't worry if you don't finish your embroidery in a single session. This is something that your group could keep coming back to and developing if they enjoy it, or something that they could take away to finish in their own time.

The Sashiko embroideries you create are a memory of a moment which you can keep adding to e.g. by creating larger pieces like samplers. The pieces can also be joined together to make a fabric book/journal.

You could also:

While there are pre-printed Sashiko panels available to purchase online, you can also encourage participants to create their own designs. If you want to try this, you can do it on 5mm graph paper!

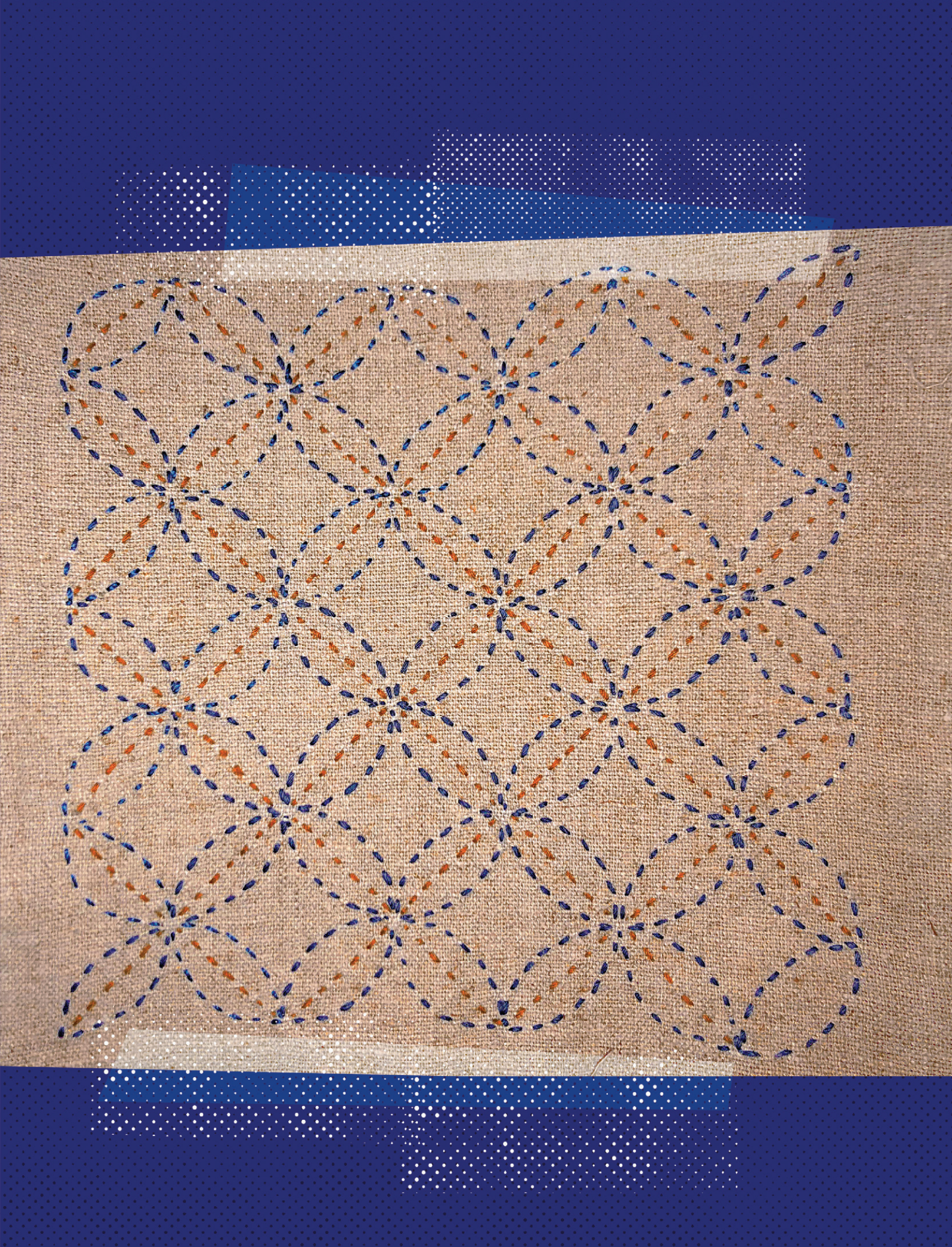
Try other Sashiko patterns and use them to make greetings cards, patchworks and scarves. You could also explore other Japanese textile techniques such as Boro and Kogin.

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Credit:

Derby Quad,
GoldsQUAD / Phillipa Larkin.



Chocolate tasting

Sensory

30-45 minutes

You will need:

A couple of different types of nice chocolate (1-2 squares of each per participant)

Plates

Hand wipes or cloths

Cups of water (1 for each participant)

Optional:

A map of the world, pen and paper, white napkins

Dementia-friendly



Fun
Informative
Explorative

This informative, sensory activity gives participants space to chat and to share their reactions and experiences whilst tasting chocolate. It is also a fun way to learn more about the history of chocolate.

To begin:

Share some facts with the group about chocolate. You can find a selection at the end of this activity.

Then:

Explain that you are going to sample a range of different chocolates and decide which ones you like. If you are sampling several different chocolates, it is a good idea to make a note of your reactions to each one so that it is easier to compare.

Look at your first chocolate. Think about the colour, the thickness, the texture. *Is it shiny?* You could use a white napkin or paper under the chocolate in order to inspect it more clearly.

Next, touch and hold the chocolate in your hand – some people may like to close their eyes in order to focus on the sensation. *If you rub the chocolate with your fingers is it smooth? How easily does it start to melt? Does it feel like it will snap easily?*

Listen to the chocolate by snapping it in two. *What sort of sound does it make?*

Smell the chocolate. *Does the snapped chocolate smell stronger? What sort of aromas can you smell? What words would you use? Earthy, fruity, nutty?*

Finally, taste the chocolate. Some people may like to close their eyes and focus on the taste. It can be a good idea to let the chocolate rest on your tongue for a few seconds and melt slightly before you chew. You can also move the chocolate around your mouth. *What sorts of flavours do you experience?*

If you have got a map, you can look at where the chocolate has come from together.

Next:

Repeat this process with your other samples of chocolate. You will need to drink water in between to neutralise the palate.

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Credit:

“Food in Georgian times”, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums. Developed in partnership with Age UK North Tyneside, ‘Time Travellers’ Dementia Group .





To finish:

Go back through the chocolates that you have sampled with the notes you have made. *Which one did you like the best? What did you like about it? Which one didn't you like? Why didn't you like it?*

Some chocolate facts:

Chocolate was first cultivated and consumed by the ancient Maya of Mesoamerica (South America). They used cacao beans to make a liquid drink. It came to Europe via the Spanish, who by the 16th century had colonised many areas of South America.

Enslaved people were often used in the production of chocolate.

Chocolate first became popular in England during the Georgian Period (1714-1837) which covered the reigns of monarchs George I, George II, George III, George IV and often William IV.

The Georgians drank their chocolate and it was a hugely popular drink for the upper and then middle classes. Most cities had Chocolate Houses where the upper classes could enjoy the beverage.

In 1759 the first commercial chocolate company was founded by Joseph Fry, a Quaker from Bristol. Fry's would go on to manufacture and sell the first solid chocolate bar but not until 1847, so the poor Georgians never got to know the wonder of eating a piece of chocolate!





Something to talk about

Stories and poetry

2 x 1-hour sessions

with a task for the participant to do in between

You will need:

Craft materials, such as undecorated containers, glue, scissors, paper, stickers

An example of a completed box

Images of other interesting boxes

A selection of boxes and containers, enough for all participants

A small selection of memorabilia and 'found' objects collected by participants

One-to-one



Sociable
Reflective
Sharing

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Credit:

Roger Hill / Bluecoat
Developed in partnership
with Belong.

A two-session activity that encourages participants to curate their own set of personal objects into something that offers the opportunity for reflective conversation.

To prepare:

In advance of the first session, make a small decorated box or jar filled with things that you like. These could be personal items or items that you have found outdoors. You can decorate the box in any way you like.

Session one:

Begin the first session by welcoming the group and asking people to introduce themselves if they don't know each other already.

You can now introduce two ideas: interesting objects and curated boxes. This is a good time to share the box that you have created as well as the pictures of interesting boxes. Use these as a starting point for conversation:

What do they like about the box?

How do they feel about the items in it?

Which item do they like best?

After this introduction, offer a selection of boxes and containers to participants to choose one to work with during the workshops.

Invite participants to decorate their boxes using a range of materials such as paint and stickers. Leave the containers to dry until the next session.

At the end of the session, ask participants to look around for objects they would like to put into their box and to bring them to the next session together. They can also think of other ideas they have for decorating or personalising their boxes.

Session two:

Recap the previous session with participants and then invite them to continue to add further embellishments to their container.

Once decoration is complete, participants can curate their objects in their boxes.

With approximately 30 minutes left of the session, ask the group to stop working on their boxes. Then invite each person in turn to show their creation to the rest of the group and to explain their design and the things they have included in their box.

Participants are then able to take their curated boxes home.

Pass the ball

Dance and movement

10 minutes

You will need:

A **soft ball**, or something similar you can throw around (a balloon works well, or a slightly deflated plastic football)

Dementia-friendly



Fun
Stimulating
Physical

A fun, dementia-friendly activity that is good fun to play in small groups. It is a lovely way to get people warmed up and can be a good icebreaker to start a longer activity or workshop.

To begin:

To play *Pass the ball* all you need is a ball and a theme. It is recommended that participants are in a circle.

The first thing that you need to do is decide a theme for your game. It is a good idea for the facilitator to choose the first theme, and then you can invite the group to choose themes for subsequent games.

Next:

Explain that you are going to pass around your ball and that each time somebody catches it they need to call out a word that they associate with the theme. For example, if the theme is 'countries', the first player could shout out "Italy!". Once a word has been called out, the ball is then passed on to somebody else.

Each player has 15 seconds to answer and cannot repeat previous answers! When you run out of words for a theme, move on to a new one.

You could also:

Make the activity slightly more difficult and choose the letter for the theme. For example, you could only say countries starting with the letter 'P'.



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Credit:

CASPAE / Ana Campos and Joana Nunes.

Let's do, yes let's

Performance

10-15 minutes

You will need:

Chairs, if your group prefers to sit

Large groups



Fun
Imaginative
Friendly

This activity is a fun icebreaker or warm-up exercise. The activity should be energetic, even if your group is seated, and there should be a sense of fun, enjoyment and exploration with plenty of laughter.

To prepare:

Set out the chairs in pairs around the space you are working in if your participants prefer to be seated.

To begin:

Invite your group to move around the space and find a partner. Encourage them to choose somebody they don't know so well or they haven't worked with before. If there is an odd number, the facilitator will need to join in to create the final pair.

Then:

One person in each pair suggests an activity by saying **"Let's..."** and then adding an action to finish the phrase. This could be anything: "look out of the window", "pretend we are swimming", "sing a song", "jump up and down", etc. Their partner then responds, **"Yes, let's!"** and they do the action together. The important thing is that there is no right or wrong answer or way of doing the action.

The partners swap roles and the activity continues with pairs changing the action frequently. This continues until a natural end arrives or the facilitator stops the activity and asks the group to change partners. When the group has warmed up with a couple of different partners, they can move on to the next stage of the activity.

Next:

Repeat the activity but for each round choose a task for the group which is modified and developed by the participants. You could decide on the task or invite participants to suggest them. For example, if the task is "Let's create a rhythm...", the pairs then work together to do this in as many different ways as they can. This might be on the table, on a chair, with their hands, on the floor with their feet, using a pencil on a cup, etc. Other ideas for tasks could be: "Let's... make funny noises ...walk in different ways... move at different speeds."

The pairs could experiment with not saying what they are going to do but just doing it, with their partner then joining in and copying.

You can carry out as many practical or imaginative activities as you like.

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Credit:

Royal Exchange Theatre Elders
Company / Bill and Estelle.

Creating abstract cards

Art and crafts

20-30 minutes

You will need:

Postcard-sized cards
or A6 folded blank cards

Coloured pencils or felt-tip pens

A collection of small 'bits
and bobs' that can be placed
on the cards, such as small
stones, shells, leaves, lollipop
sticks or twigs

Scissors

Pencils

One-to-one
Dementia-friendly



Tactile
Imaginative
Relaxing

This creative pattern-making activity is a tactile way of making unique cards to share with all. It is a relaxing activity, almost doodling, either for a group supporting each other or to do one-to-one.

To prepare:

Set out the resources on the table, and a card for each participant. You may also want to make your own card in advance so that the people you are working with can see what they are working towards.

To begin:

Invite your group to explore the materials and choose three or four items that they like and think complement each other. Participants then place the chosen items on the postcard and draw around them loosely in pencil making an outline. They could also choose just one item and repeat the shape across the card.

They could also work in pairs supporting each other by holding the pieces so everyone can be involved.

Then:

Decorate the outlined shapes with felt-tip pens or pencils, using coloured lines to connect the shapes in different directions. Participants can use as many colours as they wish to make unique patterns.

Explore ways to make new patterns. *Why not try drawing small circles, dots, squares, squiggles or doodles and see where the lines and marks take you?*

To finish:

When all of your cards are finished, you could lay them out to look at the different designs you have created. *How have different people created their cards? Which techniques do the group like? What moods are captured in the different cards?*

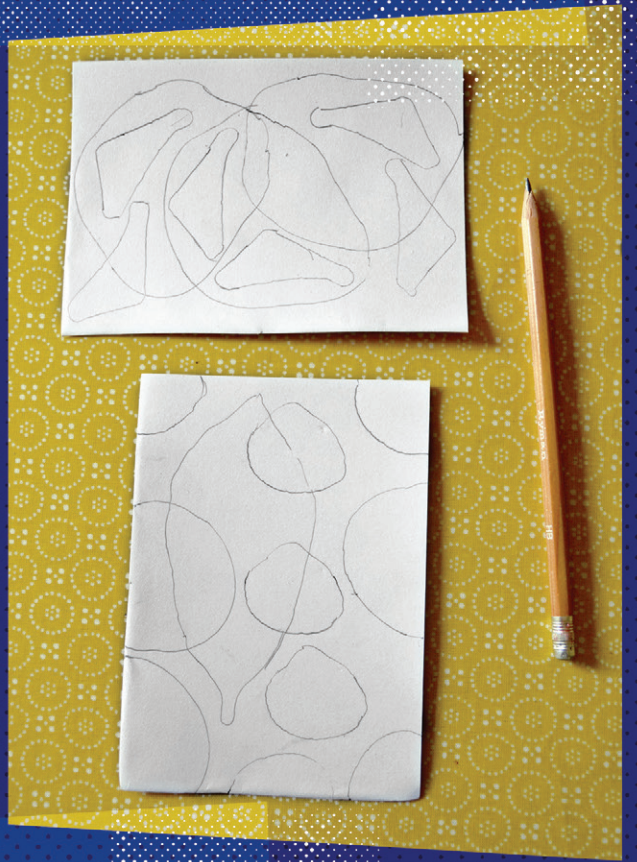
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Credit:

Tara Dean / cARTrefu
Age Cymru.





Namaste seated movement

Dance and movement

15 minutes

You will need:

An audio device

Gentle background music, such as *Hope* by The Sinis Spirit, *Nectar Drop* by DJ Drez or *Meeting of Two Oceans* by Chinmaya Dunster.

Dementia-friendly



Gentle
Relaxing
Focused

These simple seated stretches take inspiration from Indian dance. They are a gentle way for people to stretch their bodies and a lovely activity to do together in a group.

To prepare:

It is nice to accompany the movements with some gentle background music. The suggested pieces (left) all work really well.

To begin:

Invite your group to sit comfortably in their seats with their feet flat on the floor. Spend a moment to focus on breathing deeply. Then show them how to bring the palms of their hands together in front of their breastbone, with their arms parallel to the floor. As a group, they hold this position for four deep breaths, before bowing their heads in respect as they say “Namaste”.

Next ask the group to keep their hands in front of them and join their fingertips together before opening them out to stretch their hands. Do this for four breaths stretching their fingers each time they breath out, and bringing them back together flat when they breath in.

Demonstrate how to stretch your arms out to the side with your palms facing upwards, hold for four breaths, and then bring your hands back in front of your breastbone and clasp them together.

To finish this first part of the sequence your group should hold their hands forwards from the breastbone in a cupped position as though they are catching water, hold for three breaths, and then bring their cupped hands up to their face for the final three breaths.

Next:

Explain to the group that you are going to now stretch your feet and legs. They should sit comfortably in their seat with both feet flat on the floor.

To begin the sequence, invite them to stretch their arms out in front of them with palms facing upwards. When their arms are fully extended, they should turn their hands at the wrist to face downwards. Then they should point their right foot forward with the toe touching the floor. This foot should then be lifted to stretch parallel from the knee with the toes facing the roof and, at the same time, your group should hold their fingers as though holding a string that is lifting their foot.

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Credit:

Bisakha Sarker MBE, developed in partnership with Knowsley Borough Council.





Finally, they should stretch the foot forward again, but this time with the heel touching the floor and their toes pointing upwards. As they do this, show them how they can move their hands so it looks like they are moving their foot with a piece of string. Invite your group to come back to resting in their seats before repeating on the left side.

To finish:

Invite your group to bring their hands palm to palm one final time in front of their breastbone and focus upon breathing deeply for four breaths. They should then bow their head in respect and say “Namaste”. Finally, they should lift their head back to a comfortable position and bring their hands back to their lap.





Glitter glue art

Art and crafts

30-45 minutes

You will need:

Black paper (any size)

Biodegradable glitter
(a variety of colours)

Clear glue (the type you can
hold and squeeze)

An example of a finished glitter
glue art

Newspaper or a tablecloth,
to protect your surface

Large groups



Fun
Mesmerising
Magical

Glitter glue art is a fun activity to do with bigger groups. It is easy but produces very pleasing results and can be meditative once people get into it.

To prepare:

Cover the surface you will be working on with a tablecloth or newspaper. Lay your materials out so that they are ready for your participants when they arrive. Make sure that your example piece of glitter glue art is visible so that people know what they are working towards.

To begin:

When you do this activity, you may want to start by giving a demonstration of how to make glitter glue art – some groups find this useful but others may prefer to dive in and give it a go themselves!

Invite each person to take a piece of black paper and place it in front of them. They can then squeeze glue all over the paper in different directions and patterns.

Now the participants can select the glitter they'd like to use. They could try a single colour or several different ones. Next, they scatter or pour the glitter they have chosen over the entire pattern they created with the glue.

Finally, participants pick up their piece of paper and tap it on the table. The glitter will stick to the glue and reveal a mesmerising masterpiece. If some areas are missing glitter, they may want to go back and add more.

Next:

Your group might just want to make one piece of glitter glue art or they might want to experiment using different techniques and combinations of colours to make multiple pieces.

Once the works are completed, lay them out so the group can see them all. *Which pieces stand out? Which techniques have been used to create the different effects? Which combinations of colours do they like?*

You could also:

Create glitter glue art to celebrate Bonfire Night by creating firework patterns on the paper.

You might like to ask:

What are the names of the fireworks that you have created?

What would they be like when they exploded?

What noise would they make?

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Credit:

Falkland Grange Care Home,
Porthaven Care Homes.



Two small dances

Dance and movement

5-15 minutes per dance

You will need:

Chairs, laid out in a circle (not too soft; a dining chair is good)

A quiet space to work in where you won't be disturbed

Optional:

An audio device and an ambient, low-volume soundtrack

One-to-one



Inspiring
Energising
Reflective

These dances offer a way to listen and observe sensations and small movements within the body. For both dances it is helpful if the facilitator does them at the same time as the group to serve as a demonstration.

Dance one: Breathing dance

Invite your group to sit comfortably, and then to notice where their hands are resting. *Can they feel the warmth their hands bring to that place and the warmth that comes back to the hands from that spot on their body?* Then invite the group to slightly lift their hands and then drop them into their lap. *Can they notice the weight of their arms and hands as they fall into your lap? And how their hands feel as they move and settle?*

As your group moves, don't rush! Allow participants to focus upon the sequence of small changes and shifts that occur around their bodies.

Next, ask them to sense and feel the movements, big and small, that their breathing creates throughout their body. *Can they feel a sense of rising and falling? And a sense of expanding and contracting?* Then ask them to imagine and sense the touch of clothes against the surfaces of their skin sliding downward as they let the breath out.

As the group breathe in and out, invite them to let their bodies shift and move to ease any tension they might be experiencing.

At this point you may choose to end the activity, or you may move onto the second dance.

Dance two: 'Let your eyes follow your hands...'

Invite your group to look at their hands and enjoy the ripples and lines creating patterns and landscapes on their palms. Then ask them to lightly brush their hands across each other and feel the softness and textures of the skin.

As they get used to observing the brushing movement in a focused way, they can begin to allow their hands and arms to move, following them, keeping their eyes on their hands.

Suggest that they stretch their fingers away and follow the line of their arms to look beyond their fingers as far as they can see. Then trace patterns through the air with their hands and arms. Experiment with having their hands up close to their face and sometimes further away, or with using one arm at a time, and then both together.

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Credit:

Mary Prestidge / Bluecoat
Developed in partnership
with Belong.





From time to time, invite the group to hold still and observe how they are. *What is their position and how do they feel in that moment? Where are they in relation to other people and objects in the room?*

If you work gently and slowly, the quality of looking and seeing will change. Your engagement with looking will start to become an activity in itself to be explored and enjoyed.

To finish:

Invite your group to move their focus from inward to outward, and to take a couple of deep breaths with long inhales and exhales. Then gently move their upper body together – shoulders, arms, head, neck, and do a seated twist of some kind. Next, move their lower body together – legs, ankles, feet, toes. Finally they can rub their hands together to create a tingling sensation and finish with a big stretch.



Winter landscapes

Art and crafts

40-60 minutes

You will need:

Dark or black paper

Paintbrushes

Acrylic paints (light colours)

Sponges

Felt-tip pens

Pencils

Images of snowy winter scenes
(from a book or the Internet)

One-to-one



Calming
Peaceful
Focused

This painting activity explores the beauty and colours in snowy, wintry landscapes, focusing on the shades in the sky and the shapes of the leafless trees. It is a lovely activity to do in a group or in a pair.

To begin:

Explain that you are going to paint snowy scenes on some black or dark paper.

Start by making sketches of the scenes that you would like to create using a pencil. There doesn't need to be a lot of detail – you don't need to include much more than the shape of the landscape or large features such as trees. Participants could take inspiration from a picture of a snowy scene, or if it is a snowy day you could look out of the window.

Next:

Encourage participants to use a sponge to dab light coloured acrylic paint onto their scene. Press harder for areas where they would like a greater coverage, such as the land, and do lighter dabs for areas such as the sky or clouds.

Still using a sponge, participants can use darker colour paints and grey tones to add shadows and texture. They can also add more texture by using the side of their brush in a dabbing motion.

Allow the paint to dry and then add finer details using a paintbrush or felt-tip pens. This would be a good time to add in animals or birds, or the shapes of the branches on a tree.

You could also:

Start with something more abstract and look for pictures within your design.

To do this, participants start with a dark sheet of paper and then use white acrylic paint to cover the page using long, sweeping movements of the paintbrush. They could also use their sponge to add texture.

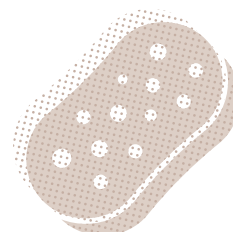
Once dry, look at the abstract paintings. *Can they see any shapes in the pictures that could be developed into something else? Are there long tree trunks or the edges of snowy buildings?* If they spot interesting features, they can draw out the details using a black pen or paint with a fine brush.

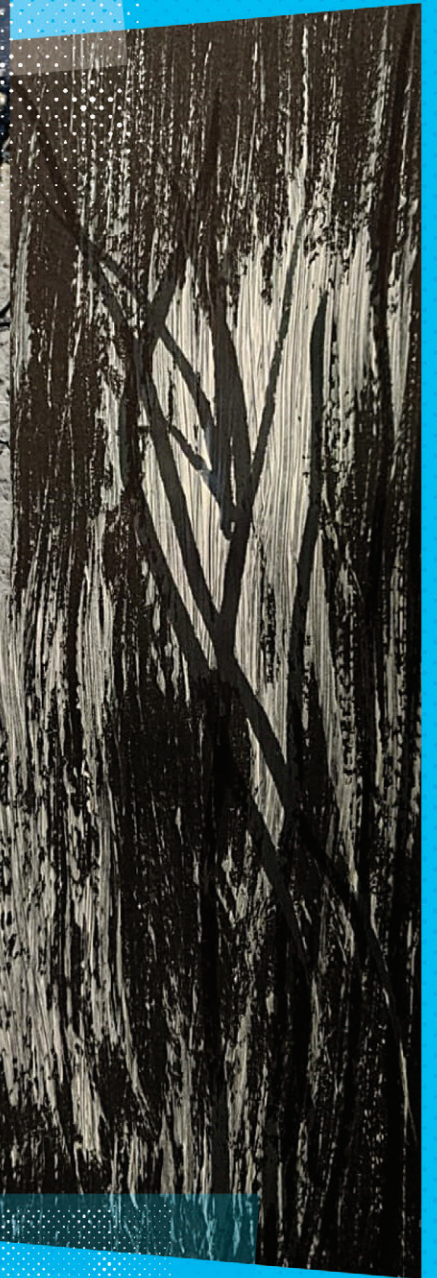
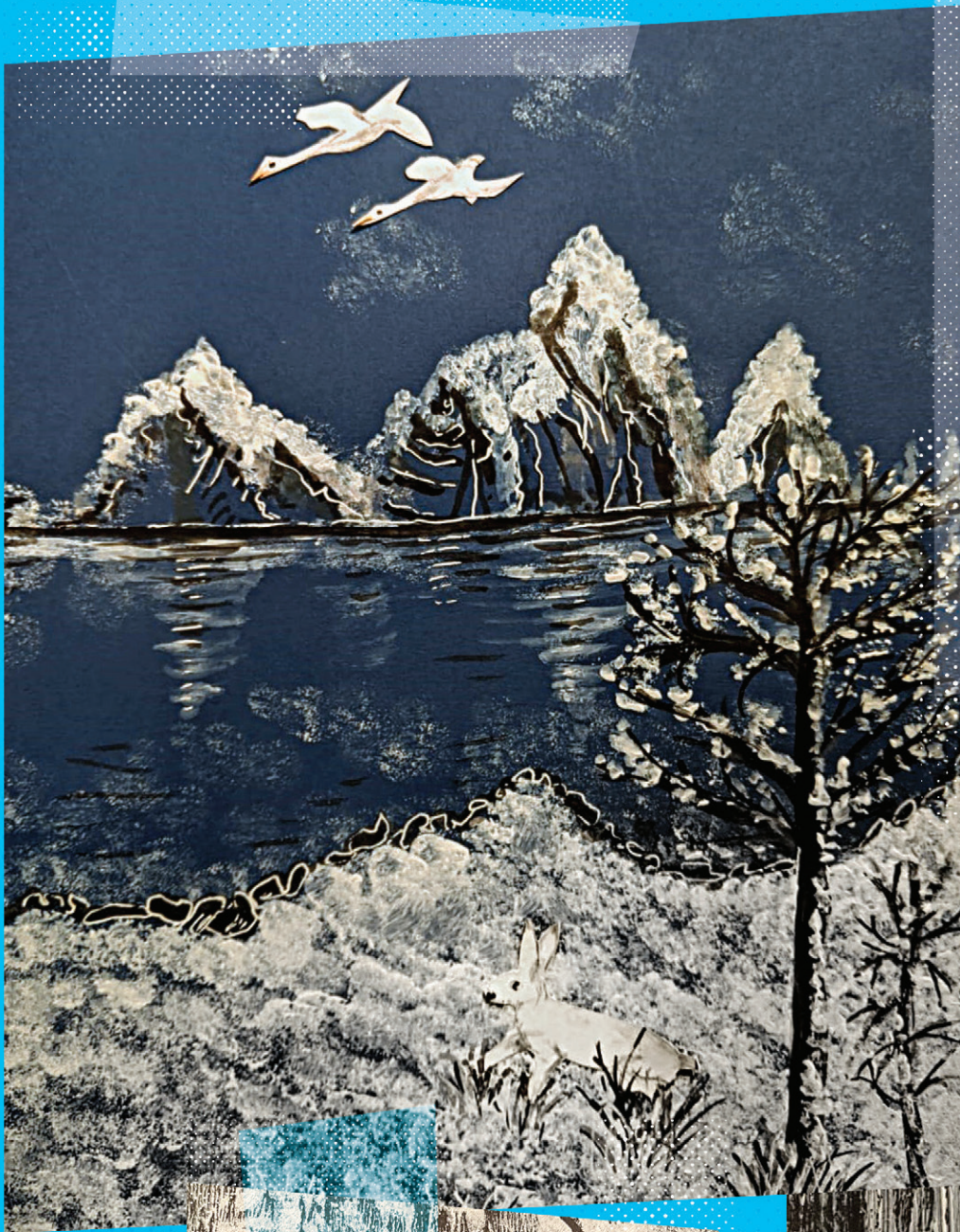
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Credit:

Macclesfield Museums /
Julie Longbottom. Developed
in partnership with East
Cheshire Housing Consortium.





Musical identities

Music

20-30 minutes

(minimum, but can be extended)

You will need:

Postcard-sized cards or A6 folded blank cards

Good Wi-Fi/internet connection

Device to connect online, such as tablet, Smart TV, Smartphone, laptop, Alexa

Notepad and pen

Selected music

Optional:

Cables to connect a tablet to a TV

One-to-one
Dementia-friendly



Relaxing
Collaborative
Interactive

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Credit:

The Orders of St John Care Trust, Monkscroft Care Centre: Sarah Davis and Beata McLean. Developed in partnership with Live Music Now: Douglas Noble and Julia Turner.

This activity is an ideal way for facilitators and participants to find out about each other, sharing their identities and stories through music as well as being introduced to, and discovering new music.

To prepare:

Put some seats in a circle in a space where you will not be disturbed.

Set up your equipment and have a couple of pieces of music lined up that you think your group will like. You can find music on, for example: YouTube, LMNOnline, Music for Dementia Radio, Roxi Music System, Spotify or BBC Music Memories.

You could choose a theme as a starting point – for example, a couple of pieces of winter-themed music.

To begin:

Introduce the theme and then ask the group if they can think of any pieces of music with that theme. Write a list of the songs that are suggested – if none are suggested you could share the songs that you have found as a starting point. Then choose one of the songs together and play it.

As people listen to the song, watch how they react and take their lead.

Based on the reactions to the song, you could:

- Sing along to it together
- Add movements
- Hum along to the song
- Tap your feet and clap your hands
- Talk about how the music makes them feel or what they know about it.

Next:

When you have finished listening to a piece of music, you could move onto another one on your list. Or you could introduce something new that you think they may be interested in.

Continue repeating this process until the group has listened to all the songs they would like to, or until your activity feels like it has reached a natural conclusion.

You could also:

Create music lists for each person that you work with as you get to know them so that you have something to refer to if you try the activity again. Also create a music list for your group so that you can remember songs you like singing together or those that you like adding movements to.

Making stories together

Stories and poetry

30 minutes

You will need:

Comfortable chairs in a circle
(not too soft; a dining chair is good)

A 'starting point' picture
(multiple copies if needed)

A pen and paper

Two facilitators, one to lead
and one to write

One-to-one
Dementia-friendly



Tactile
Imaginative
Relaxing

This relaxed activity supports a group to create a piece of creative writing. It is a great way to bring people together and the end product brings a sense of achievement.

To begin:

Explain that you are going to use a picture as inspiration to create a piece of writing together.

Hand out copies of the 'starting point' picture so everyone can see it. It needs to be a picture that has two or more people in it and something happening. You could use anything but stills from films and television programmes work really well.

Give the participants time to really look at the picture, and then start talking about it together. *What can they see in the picture? What details stand out?* As people talk about the picture, your scribe should record what is being said as this will become your story. Make sure that you record exactly what is said – try not to edit anything!

Next:

Look at the picture in more detail and try to scrutinise it as much as you can to construct the story that it depicts.

You might like to ask:

Who are the people?

How do they know each other?

What do they do for a living?

How are they feeling at the moment the picture was captured?

What happened just before the picture was taken? And what happened just after?

Any other questions that help you create your story...

To finish:

Read back the story that the group has created together. Can you come up with a name for it?

You could also:

Type up a copy of the story and print off a copy for each member of the group, along with a copy of the picture.

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Credit:

Belong Crewe / Natalie Ravenscroft. Developed in partnership with the Bluecoat, inspired by an original activity by Roger Hill.





Pom-pom warm-up

Dance and movement

10 minutes

You will need:

Pom-poms with handles,
2 per person

Selected music

An audio device

Large groups

Dementia-friendly



Fun
Stimulating
Joyful

This activity can be a warm-up as part of a wider session or used on its own. It uses props to stimulate and enhance physical movement and sensorial feedback, develop reflexes, and bring in enjoyment and fun.

To prepare:

Set out a circle of chairs for your group. A hard-back dining chair with no arms is preferable, but the activity is also possible in an upright armchair.

Choose music to accompany your activity. This is crucial to tailor the intensity of the movement and make the activity relatable to the participants: it can be of any style, tradition or era but should be more upbeat for the active elements, and more serene as you finish off.

To begin:

Use the pom-poms to warm up the body, dancing and moving to the rhythm of the music. Awaken the different parts of the body by touching and brushing them with the pom-pom. Long strides are better, for example: you could brush your shoulders, your feet, your head, etc. You could also brush the space around you – up in the air or to the side – to add more stretches. Try to make sure that all parts of the body are included and that you alternate between small actions and larger actions, taking advantage of the extra length that the pom-poms provide.

Can they think of any movements that they would like to add to warm up the body?

Next:

Use the music to add some moves that take advantage of the swishing sound of the pom-poms. *Can you swish them high in the air? Low to the ground? In a circle one way, and then the other? How else can you move the pom-poms?* You could also gently throw the pom-poms in the air and catch them. You could try this as individuals, and then pass the pom-poms across or around the circle.

To finish:

Cool down with some gentle swaying, covering the area around the body which can be reached by easily extended limbs. Use appropriate breathing, slowing it down and making it deeper to reach a point when the activity can be stopped.

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Credit:

Dr Rosaria Gracia
Developed in partnership
with Know Dementia.

The image features a repeating pattern of stylized floral motifs in a light teal color against a dark teal background. The motifs include three-lobed leaves and five-petaled flowers with central details. The word "Spring" is centered in a white, sans-serif font.

Spring

Spring

As the weather begins to warm up and the days get longer, many people begin to feel drawn outdoors. With the natural world and gardens starting to spring to life, some of us also feel like making a fresh start or trying new things. For this season we have chosen a selection of activities that invite participants to try new techniques and create things like prints and pictures, but also poems, dances and stories.

Events

Mid / late February	The Carnival of Brazil
8 March	International Women's Day
21 March	World Poetry Day
22 April	Earth Day
Late March / early May	Hanami Cherry Blossom Festival

Possible themes

Easter
Spring Garden
Ireland (St Patrick's Day)
or Wales (St David's Day)
Shakespeare (his birthday
was 23 April)
Books (for World Book Day,
also 23 April)

Inspiration

Look
Take inspiration from the
Gathering of Nations, which takes
place on the fourth weekend
in April, and explore Native
American Art
Spring Flowers in Washington DC,
Alma Thomas

Listen
Raga Kafi, Lakshmi Shankar,
Hori folk music traditionally sung
at Holi

*Violin Sonatas Numbers
4 & 5: 'Spring'*, Beethoven

Read
A Cold Spring, Elizabeth Bishop
Today, Billy Collins

Mardi Gras masks

Art and crafts

45 minutes

You will need:

Cardboard

PVA glue and spreaders

Scissors

Ribbons

Feathers

Felt pens

Paints, brushes and pots

Pencils

Stickers, sequins and other decorations

Rice, lentils or beads

Craft knife

Optional:

Old magazines,

free Mardi Gras mask template

One-to-one



Tactile
Creative
Relaxing

This simple craft activity invites participants to create their own Mardi Gras mask. It is accessible and tactile and allows participants to develop their own creative ideas within the context of a gentle art activity.

To prepare:

You will need a piece of card per participant. This could be craft card or recycled material such as a cereal box or a paper plate. The masks can be any shape you like and can be drawn freehand or using a Mardi Gras mask template which can easily be found online. The masks will need to be cut out using scissors, and the eye holes removed with a craft knife. You may want to prepare your masks in advance, or this might be something that your group will enjoy doing.

You will also need to collect all kinds of arts and craft materials that you can decorate your masks safely with. This could be paints, ribbons, feathers, stickers, buttons, sequins, sweet wrappers and anything else that inspires you! You may also have magazines that you can cut up or old celebration cards.

To begin:

Give each member of the group a mask template or let them make their own. Invite the group to paint the base of their mask in a colour of their choosing, and then allow this to dry. Next, they can use a glue stick or PVA glue to stick on ribbons and sequins. It can also be nice to add some peel-off stickers, and 3D embellishment such as lentils and sequins for texture and sparkle. You could even stick feathers on the back of the mask with masking tape and use silver and gold pens for more detail. Encourage your group to go freestyle and have fun!

To finish:

Invite your group to attach ribbon to the sides of their mask using tape to stick it on to the back. You could also use a stapler if you want to attach it more securely (or make holes on each side of the mask and then tie ribbon on that way). Another option is to tape a pencil or lollipop stick to the side of the masks if your group would prefer to hold their finished mask up to their faces rather than tying it on.

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Credit:

Artcore.



Spring cleaning

Performance

30 minutes

You will need:

A pile of freshly laundered sheets

A large laundry basket

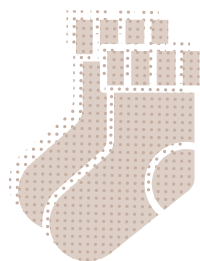
A couple of inflated balloons

Pairs of chunky socks, rolled into balls (1 pair per person)

Dementia-friendly



Fun
Uplifting
Active



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Credit:

Jen Harris / Small Things Creative Projects. Developed in partnership with The Fed.

This activity was originally developed as part of a series of sessions exploring our homes and community. It is especially engaging for people with dementia who may respond well to more sensory elements.

To begin:

Explain to the group that you are going to try some spring-cleaning inspired activities. Then reveal the laundry basket filled with the clean sheets.

Start by smelling fresh sheets and use this as a springboard to ask questions and start conversations.

You could ask:

What do the sheets smell of?

Do you like the smell?

What does it make you think of?

Where do you think the sheets were dried?

Where does it take you to when you smell this smell?

Who does the washing at your house?

You could also try folding some sheets together if this is something that your group is mobile enough to do.

Next:

Take a large sheet or a couple of sheets and stretch them out so that they are held tightly by the group. Then, drop a balloon on top and see if you can move it around as a group by bouncing the sheet! When you have tried to move the balloon around generally, try setting different tasks for the group. Can you get the balloon to go to a named person? Make sure it goes to everyone in the group! Can you get the balloon to go high? Or low? What about making it bounce up and down on the sheet? Or adding more than one balloon? Can the group come up with their own ideas about how the balloon could be moved around?

To finish:

Give everyone a pair of (chunky) rolled up socks.

Can they throw them up in the air and catch them? Perhaps you could throw them to the participants and they can throw them back to you? You could do this to music if you wanted to add energy.

Then, introduce a laundry basket and give everyone the chance to throw their socks into it. Try with the basket in the middle of the group and then add different 'rules' to make it trickier. You could move the basket up high or further away if your group is very good at the activity.

Or you could add baskets of different sizes and allocate different points for a successful throw into each one.

Tambourine round

Music

30 minutes

You will need:

One big, good-quality tambourine, with a drum skin and jingles

Large groups



Physical
Interactive
Inclusive



There is nothing like a tambourine round to focus a group of people and bring their attention into the here and now. It is suitable for everyone and can be repeated and practised for as long as the participants are enjoying it.

To prepare:

Set out the space where you will be doing your activity so that everybody can sit in a circle. The activity could be a warm-up for something bigger but works well on its own too.

As the leader of this activity, you will need to choose a widely known song to use, e.g. *She'll be coming round the mountain*, *Michael, row your boat ashore*, *Bring me sunshine* or another song that you think your group will know and enjoy. It can help to choose your song before your group arrives.

To begin:

Once everybody is comfortably seated, move to the middle of the circle where you can stand or crouch down. Sing the tune of the song without the words, just using 'la-la' or 'da-da'.

Emphasise your singing with single, slow beats on the tambourine at regular, prominent places in the song, e.g. the first beat in every bar. A big playing gesture helps to give a visual cue.

Then:

Once the tune is established and in people's heads (some participants might join in with the singing), go up to each person in the circle and hold out the tambourine for them to beat one beat in the string of beats. You can play every other beat yourself; this will guarantee the momentum/pulse.

Offer the tambourine to the people in the circle in order or randomly across the circle, 'surprising' someone who doesn't expect their turn!

Depending on the group, members may like to take a turn in the centre being the leader. You could also invite the group to choose another song to use and create a round.

Remember:

The fun of this activity is to keep the regular pulse of the music going as a group, using a familiar tune as a guide. This doesn't mean that the music and singing can't also 'wait' for someone's beat, should they take a bit longer; be patient and give people space to take their turn.

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Credit:

Manchester Camerata:
Music in Mind.

Abstract art collage

Art and crafts

Up to 60 minutes

You will need:

Paper in a range of colours

Paint (acrylic is ideal in two or three different colours)

Glue

Scissors

Brushes

A selection of tools, such as pieces of cardboard, cork stoppers, used gift cards, sponges, brushes, tubes; anything that creates texture

A plate or palette for paints

Fun
Focused
Creative

This is a great activity for participants who don't feel confident with art activities. The three main stages – paint, scissors and glue – could be made into separate activities for different capacity levels if preferred.

To begin:

Share the selection of tools with your group. Demonstrate with one or two of them to show how they can be used to create different patterns and textures on the paper. Then give each participant a piece of paper and invite them to explore how they can use the different tools.

Things to try:

- Dragging a used plastic gift card through the paint to find interesting effects.
- Pressing a sponge into the paint to create texture.
- Using a cork to make circular patterns.

Allow the group time to experiment and see what they can create! When the paper is covered in paint and people are happy with the results, leave it to dry completely. Everybody needs at least one piece of painted paper but could do more if they are enjoying the process.

Next:

When the paint is dry, invite your group to carefully cut their painting up into triangles of various sizes. Some people may need assistance to do this, but others will be happy to do it on their own.

To finish:

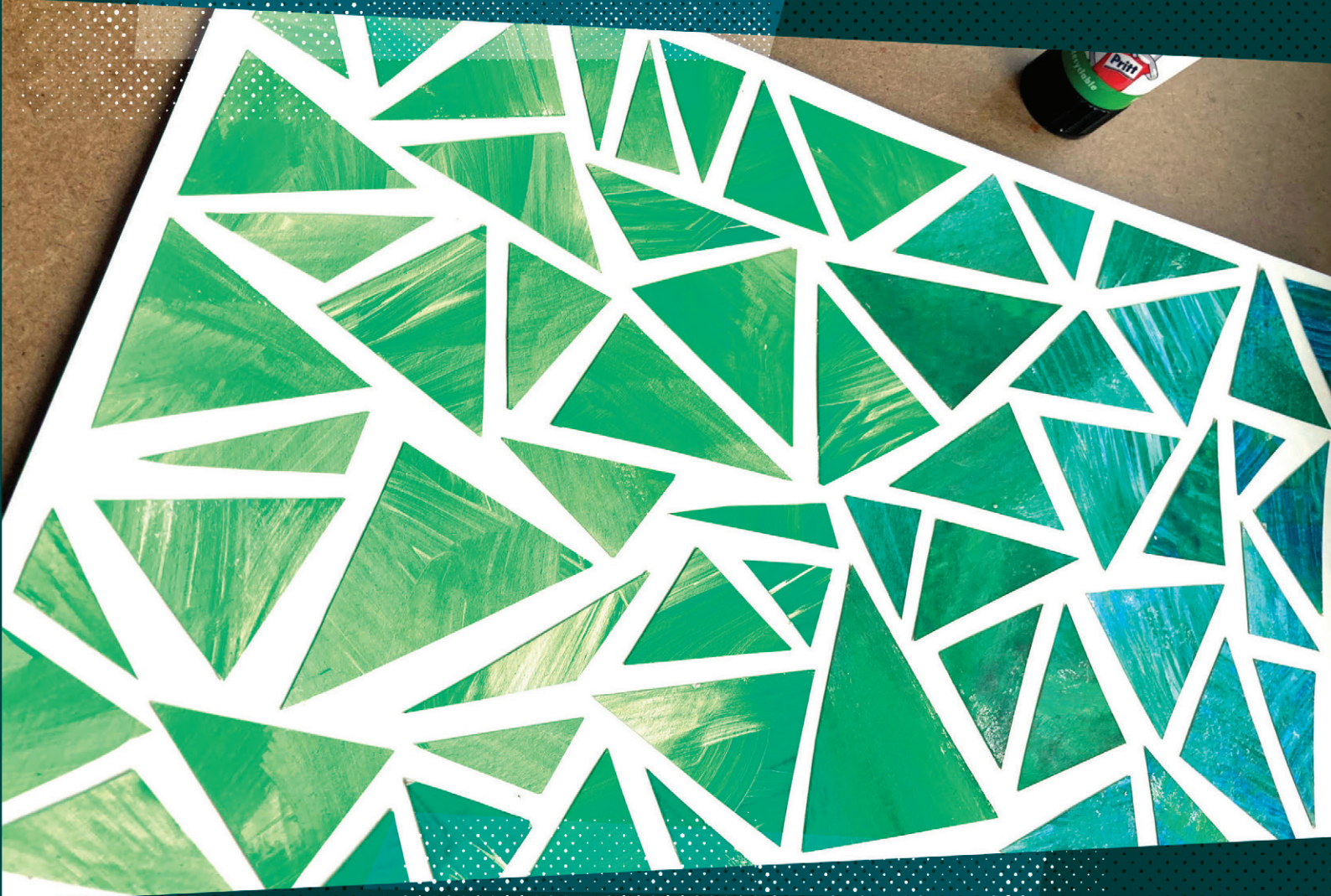
Give each member of the group a blank piece of A4 paper and show them how they can begin to arrange their painted triangular pieces to fill the area. It can help if you demonstrate this and show them how nice it can look if you leave a small space between each piece – like creating your own jigsaw puzzle. Some people may want to create a gradient by going from one colour to another or it could be completely random – support your group to work how they feel comfortable. However they decide to lay their pieces out, they will have an eye-catching piece of art. When satisfied with the arrangement, glue the pieces into place – their work is now finished!

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Credit:

Creative Minds / Tracey Knight.
Developed in partnership with
Lister House Nursing Home.



The magic basket

Sensory

Up to 20 minutes

You will need:

A wicker shopping basket, attractive, medium-sized

Essential oil of lavender (this is the only oil that is safe to use on the skin)

Bunch of lavender and/or lemon verbena (fresh if possible)

Fresh herbs from the garden, such as mint or chives

A couple of small organza bags, in different colours

Kitchen roll or small pieces of fabric

One-to-one
Dementia-friendly



Sensory
Stimulating
Nurturing

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Credit:

Maria Harvey-Lavin /
Roaming Aroma. Developed
in partnership with C&C
Care Homes.

A basket of sensory items can easily become an instant way of connecting with the people. People are naturally curious about what's in the basket and it can become a source of curiosity opening up delight, memory and stories.

To prepare:

Gather a selection of sensory items in your basket to use. Here we are using Spring themed items, but the basket could easily be changed to suit other seasons or seasonal events. The Magic Basket can be used in a number of different ways one-to-one and can also be explored with a small group.

To begin:

Reveal the basket to the person or small group that you are working with. Invite the participants to have a look in the basket with you. *What can they see in there? Is there anything that catches their eye or sparks their interest?*

Get out the bottle of lavender oil and hold it to your nose and express how you feel about the smell. Offer your participants a smell – the easiest way to do this is to give each person a pad of fabric or kitchen roll with a drop of oil on. *Does anybody recognise the smell? Does it come from any of the plants in the basket? How does the smell make them feel? Do they like the smell? What do they like about it?*

Then invite the group to take items out of the basket and explore them in a similar way. *Which do they like? Which do they recognise? Which are not familiar?* If there is a particular item that people like, you could put a small amount of it in an organza bag for them to keep after the activity, such as a couple of mint leaves.

Next:

Explain that you are going to take some time to pamper yourselves. Put a drop of lavender oil on the palm of your hand then rub your hands together. Next, inhale, cupping your hands over your nose. Ask if anybody in the group would like to give this a go. Focus upon rubbing the oil in slowly and really enjoying the sensation.

Then give yourselves a loving hug by wrapping your arms around your body and giving yourselves a squeeze. It will help if you do this first, then invite your group to copy you. Take time to notice how nice it feels.





Move back to your hands and give them a quick sniff, and then rub them together as if applying a scented hand cream. Next, place one hand over the other and glide upwards around the elbow and up and around the shoulder and back down to hand three times slowly and rhythmically. On the fourth time, glide up round the shoulder into the nape of your neck and give yourself a gentle hug. Again, it helps if you demonstrate the movements and then encourage people to give it a go.

Repeat on the other arm and enjoy together.

You could also try rolling your fingers over the top of your head, gently and rhythmically, from the middle of your forehead to the back of your neck. Follow this with a gentle squeeze to the neck.

To finish:

Cup your hands under your chin and enjoy the feeling – some people may like to shut their eyes whilst they are doing this. Then let the magic moments happen and dream on.

Things to consider:

The only oil that can be used directly on the skin safely is lavender. When not in use, the oil should be kept in a safe and secure place. Any irritation through contact with the oil can be eased by applying cold water.



Materials for other seasons:

Summer

Lavender oil, summer flowers, summer herbs like basil and oregano, sun cream, summer fruit like strawberries.

Autumn

Cinnamon sticks, pine cones, crispy apples, dry autumn leaves, seasonal candle, e.g. pumpkin spice, vanilla oil.

Winter

Christmas tree branch, gingerbread, cloves, oranges, dried fruit, bergamot, mulled wine.



Superhero sounds

Music

30 minutes

You will need:

Flipchart/whiteboard and pen to make notes, or a large sheet of paper that everybody can see

Selection of percussion instruments (this could be things you have bought but homemade instruments can work equally well)

Large groups



Fun Uplifting Creative

Ideas for homemade instruments

- A plastic bottle full of rice
- Pans and wooden spoons
- Metal spoons
- Coconut shells
- Plastic bottle lids on string
- Dried peas sealed inside a cardboard tube
- Dried peas or beans on a metal tray
- Tin can drums: stretch a balloon over an empty tin and fix in place with an elastic band.

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Credit:

Andrea Vogler. Developed in partnership with Made by Mortals, who are part funded by Action Together, in partnership with Hearts and Minds Theatre Company.

This activity invites participants to design their own superhero characters, then create a percussive sound effect or rhythm to go with their superpower. The sounds can then be added to a live narrative or individually recorded and added to a podcast, for example.

To begin:

Start your activity with a general discussion about superheroes; remember not all heroes wear capes! *What qualities do you think a superhero has? For example: determined, strong, patient? And if that quality was a sound, how would you describe it? For example: soft, bright, gentle, sparkly?*

As your group comes up with ideas, write them down so that everybody can see them. Try to continue until everybody has come up with at least one quality and one sound.

Next:

Think about creating rhythms to match some of the words in your sound list. You can try them on their own or in different combinations. For example:

“soft, gen-tle”

“soft, spar-kly”

“bright, soft, gen-tle”

Now think about the quality of the sounds and which of your percussion instruments would fit each one best. When everybody has created a word rhythm and chosen an instrument, you can have a go at playing them. *Do people like their sound or do they want to change it?*

To finish:

Once everybody is happy with their superhero sounds, you can start to experiment with them. *Are there some that sound good joined together or played at the same time?*

As a group, can you develop your own mini superhero story and play the sounds to accompany it? Or could you record them for future use?

You could also:

Percussion lends itself well to this activity because everyone can join in and create sounds. But if you have someone in your group who plays a different instrument, you could easily include them too and create a whole new sound world.



New stories

Stories and poetry

**3 x sessions
of 60 minutes each**

You will need:

A selection of childhood books and illustrations

Notepad, pens and paper or post-it notes

Cut out paper dolls, a row for each participant (or paper and scissors to make them)

A small box for each participant

A range of nice envelopes and tissue paper

Creative
Reflective
Personal

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Credit:

Dr Alison Waller with Gemma Seltzer and Wallis Eates. Developed in partnership with Holybourne Care Home in Roehampton.

Using remembered childhood books and illustrations as a stimulus, participants explore significant moments from their own life stories through a series of linked activities.

To prepare:

Ideally this activity requires two facilitators and takes place over three sessions. For all sessions, find a quiet space to gather together with chairs arranged in a circle.

Before the sessions, you will need to gather a selection of books and illustrations. These will ideally be items that participants might recognise or ones that will stimulate memories. They can be bought cheaply from charity shops or be donations/loans from families and carers. They can also be stories and images that have been found online and printed out.

Session one:

To begin, use gentle prompts to inspire general memories of childhood reading.

Questions you might ask:

What kind of reader were you as a child?

Do you remember any of the books you read?

Did you read at school?

Did anyone read to you or tell you stories?

This may lead to further general conversations about childhood, or about looking after children. Throughout, try to encourage further talk by asking questions and by inviting participants to elaborate on things that they share.

Throughout the activity the facilitator who isn't asking questions should keep notes of participants' responses. They can do this by writing down things people say and by noting some key phrases. If they are comfortable with drawing, they can also sketch some of the details of the discussion. For example, a picture of a toy that somebody mentions, or a building that is described.

Next, show the group a range of children's books and illustrations and encourage the participants to touch and look at them. Invite each participant to select the one that most appeals to them, and then as a group share the things that have been chosen. Leave plenty of space so that everybody can offer thoughts and reflections as you look through the items. If comfortable, the participants can read extracts from the books, or you could read extracts for them.





To finish the session, you could summarise particular themes that have come out as you have talked, e.g. the people everybody had read with, types of books people were particularly interested in, etc.

Session two:

Share the same books and illustrations from Session one. It can be nice to start the session by reading full or new extracts to deepen or extend the experience and conversation. Your participants may also like to share favourite bits from the books and pictures.

As you read and talk, the facilitator who is taking notes can sketch the scene of reading and listening if confident, or jot down simple doodles from the stories (e.g. a cat, a blue hat), things that people say they like, or words that stand out.

Next, present the small boxes to the participants and tell them they will be filled with pieces of art and writing that represent the stories they have shared, and the conversations that have been had. Share the idea that you're "making something out of nothing".

Share the notes and drawings from the first session and look at them as a group. When people have had a good look, ask if they would like to add any of the items to their boxes. This process of sharing and reflecting can be a lovely thing to do together, so don't rush it.

After you have finished looking at the material from the last session, give each participant a set of cut-out paper-chain dolls. Talk about ways that the dolls could be connected to the conversations that you have had.

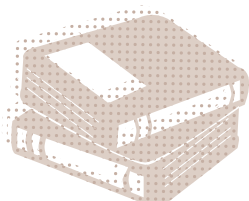
Perhaps they are dolls inspired by friends and families that people have enjoyed reading with? Or maybe some are characters from the books?

Invite the group to decorate their dolls by adding drawings or notes. Finally, invite the group to add the dolls that they have created to their book boxes.

After Session two, gather together all the papers, doodles, story fragments, crafted objects, poetic words and any other relevant items that reflect the sessions. Some of these can be slotted into nice envelopes and placed in the book box, while others can be placed in the box freely, padded with tissue paper. The contents represent imaginative 'pages' from the participants' lives and tell their stories in a non-linear and creative way.

Session three:

In Session three, participants are presented with their final book box. Facilitators can open the box and show each participant the contents, which is likely to prompt more discussion and reflection together.



Painting from your window

Art and crafts

Up to 60 minutes

You will need:

A selection of inspirational pictures by David Hockney (*The Arrival of Spring in Woldgate* is a great one to look at)

Acrylic paint, around six colours works well

2 paint brushes per person, a larger one and a smaller one

1 thick sheet of card per person, or a canvas

A jar of clean water, to wash brushes

A piece of cardboard or old plate, to mix paints on (like an artist's paint palette)

One-to-one



Calming
Meditative
Focusing

Inspired by artist David Hockney's bright colours, this activity will encourage you to think differently about the way you use colour to capture the view through your window.

To prepare:

This activity works best if you find a comfortable place where you can sit and look out of a window and have a table for the materials you will need.

To begin:

Look at the David Hockney pictures that you have got for inspiration. Think about the way that he uses colour to construct his image, and how he uses different brush strokes.

Then:

Spend a couple of minutes together looking out of the window and thinking about what draws your attention in the scene that you can see.

Select the colours of paint you want to work with and using the larger brush put them on the palette. You might need to mix some paints up. David Hockney uses colour experimentally, so have a go at experimenting with different colours.

Consider how you can use colour and brush work. Look, for example, at the way David Hockney creates trees in contrasting colour, with a simple downward brushstroke, and uses a simple pale line to depict the horizon or a path. *Can you try using these kinds of strokes of colour or simple shapes to represent what you see from the window?*

Next:

Once you have got the main colours onto the canvas, you can then use a smaller paintbrush to add more detail, such as clouds, leaves and birds – whatever the finer details you can see from your window are. When the painting is dry, write the date on the back and sign it!

You could also:

If you are working in a group, look at all of the pictures you have created and compare the different techniques and colours that have been used to depict the same view.

Revisit the same view at different times of year and create new pictures to record the way the landscape changes.

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Credit:

Sensory Trust. Developed in partnership with Creative Spaces Activity Groups and Carers Programme.



Slow walking

Performance

10 minutes

You will need:

A chair for each person

A gentle piece of music
(*Ashun Daje Mori* by Ljiljana
Buttler works well)

An audio device

A big open space to work in

Large groups



Calming
Meditative
Focusing

This activity is a sequence of breathing, walking, thinking and being, culminating in a final statement of assertion. You can do it daily, creating a regular time when participants can clear their heads and find focus.

To prepare:

In the space where you are working you will need to arrange a line of chairs across the back of one wall and clear all bags, coats and extraneous items away.

To begin:

Invite the participants to take their seats, feet placed parallel firmly on the floor, palms on their laps and sitting up straight with their eyes closed. As they close their eyes, you can begin playing the music quietly in the background.

Invite the group to become aware of their breathing – to feel it go in and out and to be aware of that and nothing else. Invite them to remember that they are sitting on a chair, that their feet on the floor are parallel and they are breathing in and out. *Nothing else, nothing more.*

Then:

Ask the group to imagine there are two lines traveling from their toes to their heels. As they think of these lines, tell them to let all the thoughts disappear from their heads, let any tension disappear from their body and just to concentrate on the lines travelling from their toes to their heels, their heels to their knees, their knees to their hips and then meeting at their coccyx. *Breathe.*

Let the group sit for a while aware of their breathing, letting go of any tension in their body and any thoughts in their head. Explain that in a moment you want them to open their eyes.

When they open their eyes, they should imagine their eyes are windows and that they are looking out of them from the place behind the eyes, which is connected to a line running through their body from the coccyx to the top of the head. Just look across the room to the opposite wall. *Don't stare, just look, looking from that place behind your eyes.*

Next:

Invite the group to slowly stand up and take a single step away from the chair. *Just stand.* Their feet parallel, the imaginary line still travelling from toe to heel, heel to knee, knee to hips, hips to coccyx and then up through the belly, the solar plexus, the heart, the throat, behind the eyes and to the top of the head.

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Credit:

The Performance Ensemble.
Developed in partnership with
Leeds Older People's Forum.





Now the group can very slowly start walking forward, staying aware of their breathing. Once everyone is walking, ask them to stop and remember the seat where they were sitting. They should imagine they are back sitting on their chair – just standing still and imagining the chair behind them.

Very slowly invite them to turn around and face the chair. *Do it with sincerity, don't embellish.* They move their eyes first, then the head and then the rest of your body. They move their feet round to face the chair as they turn. They look at the chair and think – 'Yes. I want to return to my chair'. Slowly they walk back to their chair. But ... at the last minute, they stop. They've changed their mind and decided they don't want to sit there anymore; they want to walk toward the opposite wall again.

Next:

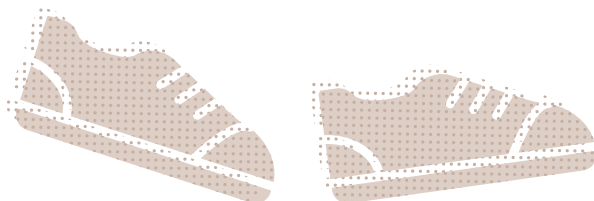
Again, invite the group to turn slowly and start moving forward again. Step by step. Every step is important. Encourage them not to embellish or interpret what they are doing; just to walk slowly toward the other wall. As they reach a place close to the wall, a place where they believe they have walked far enough, they stop. Their feet are parallel, bottom tucked under, shoulders down and chest open.

Remind the group about the line running through their body while they are looking at the wall in front of them. Tell them not to stare, just to look. Then, as if by a miracle, their right hand starts to move, by itself, slowly traveling upwards. They watch it moving, amazed by its movement. It continues to rise past their chest, past their shoulder towards the ceiling. They look away from it and it descends again to their side. Encourage them not to perform this or interpret what is happening – it is just happening by itself. They look towards the wall. They say the words 'I wish' or 'I remember' out loud and then they continue that thought in their own head.

What they wish for or what they remember is private to them. Nobody else will hear it.

To finish:

Allow the group a moment to think about what they have wished for or remembered. Then invite them to stretch and move on to the next activity if you are doing this as part of a workshop, or thank them for taking part if you are doing the activity on its own.



Collagraph printing

Art and crafts

Up to 60 minutes

(but can be longer or shorter depending on group needs)

You will need:

Card

Laminated sheets

Newspaper

Block printing ink

Rollers

Scissors

Glue, such as PVA

Pencils

A4 coloured paper

A variety of textured papers and materials, such as wallpaper samples, string, bubble wrap

One-to-one Dementia-friendly



Calming
Surprising
Physical

Collagraph prints are a creative and experimental form of printmaking, with printing plates made from many different materials, including cardboard, yarn, fabric, leaves, or masking tape. The activity is a great way to use up scraps and encourages the use of recycled materials.

To begin:

Trim down the card so it fits within the sheet of A4 paper. It doesn't have to be a rectangle; you can experiment and play with different shapes.

Then:

Take your textured papers and materials and start cutting them into shapes to form either an abstract or pictorial image, as if you were creating a collage. For pictorial images, you can take inspiration from magazines or postcards or set up a few objects. For those less confident with their dexterity, prepare some pre-made shapes of different textures and gather sensory objects like feathers, wool or sequins. These can be used to explore patterns and abstract forms.

Once you have your image or shapes, stick them down onto the card using plenty of glue. If you're using PVA glue, then allow for drying time – this could be a nice opportunity to have a break from the activity.

Next:

Squeeze out a small amount of printing ink onto the laminated sheet and rollout until tacky and matt in texture.

Place the cardboard onto a piece of newspaper and roll the ink over the image. To top the ink up on the roller, simply roll it over the laminated sheet again. Repeat until all the textured surfaces are covered in printing ink.

Place the coloured paper over the top of the card and press down firmly with your hands. This secures the paper to the surface of the card. Apply additional pressure with a clean roller.

Peel the paper away from the card and admire your print.

To finish:

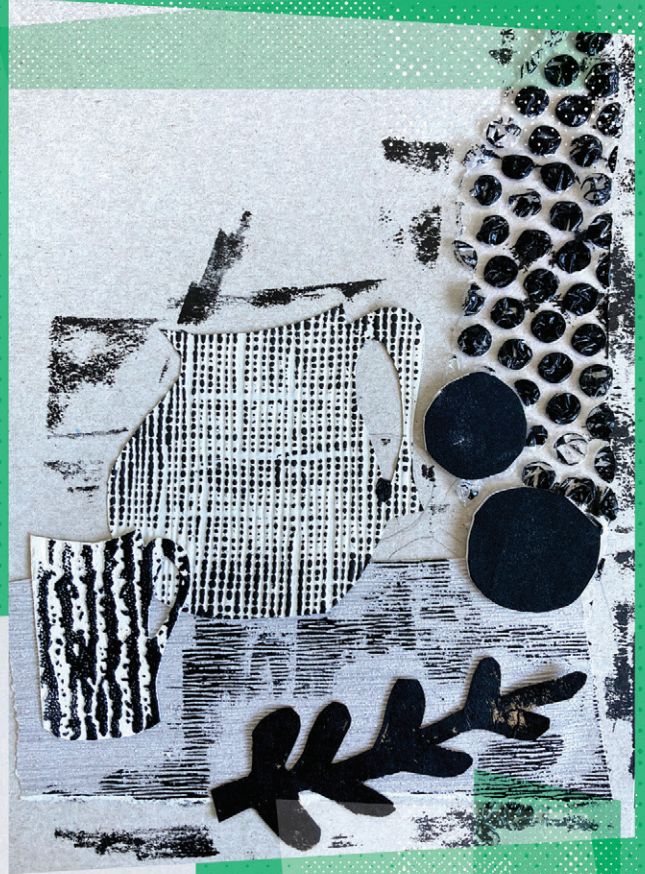
Look at the different images you have created together. *How have different people constructed their image? Which results are surprising? Which textures create a nice effect? Are there any that don't work so well; if so, why may that be?*

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Credit:

Charlotte Cranidge.
Developed in partnership
with C&C.



Colour as writing inspiration

Stories and poetry

Up to 45 minutes

(but can be longer or shorter depending on group needs)

You will need:

Paint charts

(free from DIY stores)

Access to a garden space

(this could be your own garden or a park!)

A pen and paper

One-to-one Dementia-friendly



Fun Creative Colourful

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Credit:

Creative Writes / Nichola Charalambou. Developed in partnership with NAPA - Arts in Care Homes, Greensleeves Care & Sunrise Senior Living,

Use a range of resources and ideas to tap into colour as poetry and creative writing inspiration. Focus on a specific colour that you see lots of or particularly like, and let your mind take you wherever it wants to!

To begin:

Get comfortable in the space that you are working. It helps if you have a sturdy bench or garden chairs with a garden table.

Start by asking the group to observe the colours they can spot in the garden around them. You may want to walk around to do this or sit in the seats and observe the garden from one position.

Next:

When you have had a general look around, choose a single colour to focus upon. *How many shades of that colour can you spot in the garden? Then look at the colour on your colour charts – are any of the shades on the chart also in the garden? How would you describe the different shades and what moods do they evoke? What do you associate that colour with? What does it make you think of?*

Have fun looking, daydreaming, imagining and coming up with ideas springing from your chosen colour. Be playful – there is no right or wrong answer. Let your colour guide your thoughts and images.

Then:

Draw out more associations by emphasising the senses to create a sensory colour poem related to the colour that you have chosen. Do this by describing your colour through the five senses.

For example:

*Purple **looks** like Julie's veins on her legs, a fancy wrapped birthday gift, a vibrant butterfly*

*Purple **feels** like Frayed Velvet, the patent shoes that I wore to Kate's wedding, something luxurious*

*Purple **sounds** like the orchestra warming up, pompous and posh, deep and rich*

*Purple **tastes** like strong Swiss cheese fondue, a plum, something thick that sticks to your teeth*

*Purple **smells** like a rich juicy grape, deep thick wine, plum pudding*

As people come up with ideas, write them down to create a simple poem – it's fine if you come up with multiple ideas for each sense.





As you write together remember that poetry doesn't have to rhyme; anything goes! Try to write exactly what people say in response – don't try to edit or change people's words.

Another good starting point is to use the phrase "Makes me think of..."

So:

Purple makes me think of...

Wrapping paper

Irises in my garden

The wallpaper in my old office

Grapes on a summer day

To finish:

Read the piece aloud that you have created. You could do this or one of your group may want to. The important thing is to read slowly and let the words and images sink in.

Then have fun chatting about it together – *what do the group like about it? What is interesting? What is surprising? Can they come up with a name for it together?*

Finally, read the poem one last time.

You could also:

Try several sessions working on different colours and combine individual colour poems and group pieces.

Combine writing with a 'Read-Aloud' activity sharing some colour-related poems or pieces written by other people. *Colour* by Christina Rossetti is a lovely poem to read if you want to do this, as is *The Blue Garden* by Helen Dunmore.



This hand held

Dance and movement

About 30 minutes

(but can be longer or shorter depending on group needs)

You will need:

A4 Paper

Pens or pencils

Clipboards or hard surface to rest the paper on

Large groups



Fun
Relaxed
Physical

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Credit:

Moving Memory Dance.
Developed in partnership with House Residential Home Canterbury, Medway Age UK, Thanet Age UK, and Community friends of local primary schools.

A storytelling activity that brings people together to share experiences of relationships, friendship, care and love. It can develop into a joyful, gestural choreography, adaptable to a variety of different needs.

To begin:

In pairs, invite your participants to take it in turns to draw round each other's hands. Then ask participants individually to think about special people who have held their hand. Invite them to jot down the names of those people along the fingers of their drawing.

Next, ask people to choose one of the people that they have written down to concentrate on with their partner. Ask the pairs to tell each other about their chosen person – what they like doing, what they're like as the person, how they make them feel, things they've done together and why they are special.

Then:

In the palm of their drawing, ask participants to write some keywords that relate to their chosen person. They then choose three of those words and find a gesture for each. They then decide an order for these three movements and share them with their partner.

To finish:

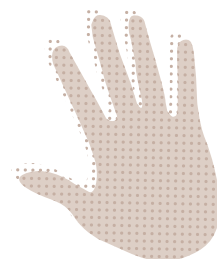
The pairs teach each other their sequences and put them together to make a longer sequence. Once they have done this, you could allow time for each pair to share their sequence with the rest of the group.

You could also:

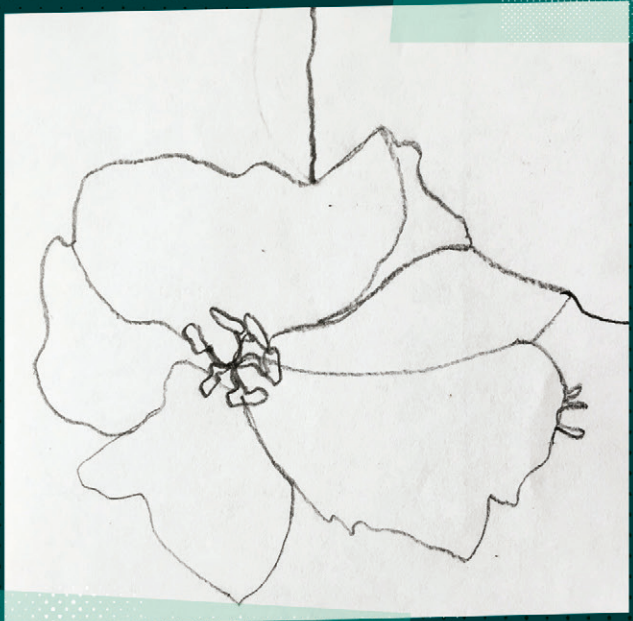
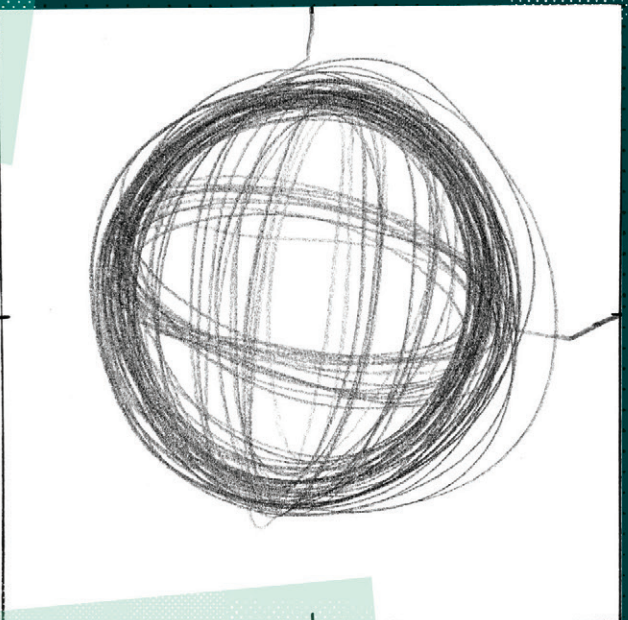
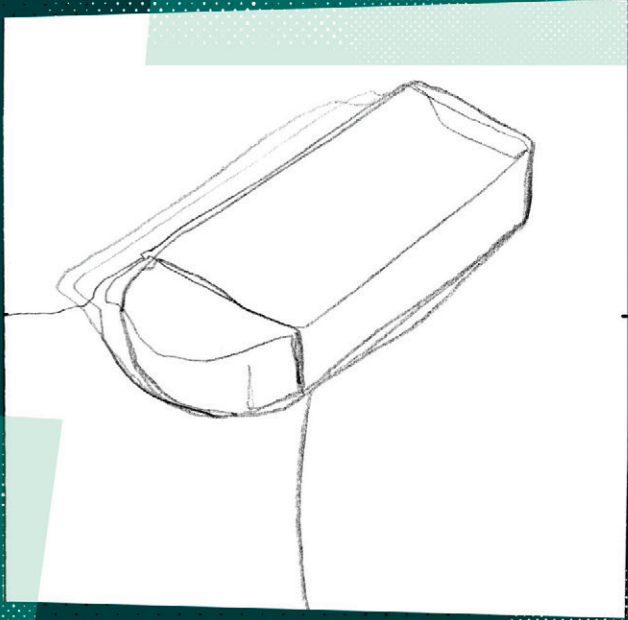
Bring two pairs together and ask them to teach and join their sequences together, and then perform to the group.

As you are making your sequences, remind everyone that there is no right or wrong. They should just play and have fun. In order to create a relaxed yet creative atmosphere, it can be a nice idea to play some relaxed background music.

This activity is a lovely one to explore with intergenerational groups. It would work really well if children are visiting a setting, or it's a lovely thing for a grandparent to do together with a grandchild.







Line one

Art and crafts

Up to an hour

You will need:

White paper,
cut into squares

Pens

Pencils

Large groups

Dementia-friendly



Calm
Collaborative
Fun

A simple drawing activity for a group where participants initially create small artworks on their own and then bring their separate drawings together to make a collaborative artwork.

To prepare:

Cut your white paper into equally sized squares – 15cm x 15cm works well. These should be prepared beforehand with a small mark at the halfway point on each side.

To begin:

Each participant is given a square piece of paper and pen/pencil. They are then invited to start on one of the halfway marks and take their line for a walk across the paper, anywhere they like, for as long as they like, without lifting their pen/pencil from the paper. Their line should leave the page at another one of the halfway marks.

It may help some groups if you give a demonstration of this before they get started.

Participants could produce a representational artwork of a person, object or landscape; a detailed abstract piece; or a simple squiggly line. They can create as many squares as they like.

Next:

The group now get together and create a single, composite artwork by arranging the separate pieces of paper together however they like. The key is that the lines must meet: a line on one piece must align with a line on another piece.

The group can turn the individual drawings and rearrange them so that there is a single line throughout the emerging, larger artwork. The only rule is that the final artwork will be linked by a single, continuous line: joining everyone's drawings together.

You could also:

Invite the group to experiment with mark-making by varying the pressure and speed of their lines. They could also try different mark-making materials such as charcoal or paint.

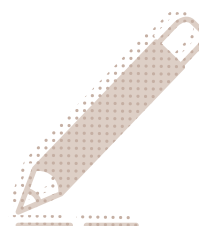
Once you have finished your first artwork as a group, participants may want to make further drawings to add to it.

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Credit:

Creative Lives/Linda Evans.



The background features a repeating pattern of sunflowers and strawberries in a light purple color against a dark purple background. The sunflowers are arranged in a grid, while the strawberries are interspersed between them. The word "Summer" is centered in the middle of the image in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

Summer

Summer

During long summer days there is nothing better than heading outside, so many activities in this section are gentle projects that work brilliantly in outdoor spaces. There are also upbeat dances inspired by the seaside and by world travel, and creative writing taking inspiration from picnic foods.

Events

5 June	World Environment Day
June or July	Pride
Late July	British Festival of Archaeology
August	Edinburgh Festival Fringe
Late August	Notting Hill Carnival

Possible themes

Summer fêtes
Sports Day
Seaside
USA: Independence Day (4 July)
Heatwaves

Inspiration

Look

A Sunday on La Grande Jatte,
Georges Pierre Seurat

Sweet Summertime,
Antoinette Kelly

Explore Indigenous
Australian art inspired
by the Barunga Festival

Listen

Summertime, George Gershwin

Cinderella, Summer Fairy,
Sergei Prokofiev

In The Heart of The Moon,
Ali Farka Touré and
Tounami Diabaté

Read

When We Got To The Beach,
Hollie McNish

Midsummer, Tobago,
Derek Walcott

Seaside collage postcards

Art and crafts

45 minutes

You will need:

Firm card, blank postcards or cereal packets to cut to size

Glue sticks

Scissors

Pens and pencils

Paint sticks

Examples of seaside postcards

Seaside music, shanties, seagull, foghorns and wave soundtracks

An audio device

Assorted coloured papers, such as wrapping paper, tissue papers, envelopes

Old magazines, such as holiday and gardening brochures, National Geographic

A couple of examples of completed postcards

Optional:

Ice cream and/or ice lollies for a refreshment break

Dementia-friendly



Gentle
Absorbing
Calming

An absorbing and gentle visual arts session using collage techniques to capture people's experiences and thoughts of holidays. It provides an opportunity for people to be creative, explore their imaginations, and create a postcard to share.

To prepare:

Set up the activity area with your materials and seaside-themed items. Have your soundtrack playing in the background.

To begin:

Introduce the activity to the group. Look at the seaside postcards together and then talk about trips to the beach, fish and chips, holidays at the coast and postcards that you have sent home. *What could they write on a seaside postcard?*

Next:

Make sure everyone has a blank postcard, collage materials, scissors and glue stick. Explain that you are going to begin by creating your cards – it helps if you have a couple of examples to show people.

Start using your materials to create your cards. They work best if you keep the overall design large and simple. For example, a bucket and spade work well, or a lighthouse or an ice lolly. Don't try to do too much on each card. Choose your designs, then cut out simple shapes from magazines using coloured areas on the pages to create them, and then glue these to the postcard. Finally, add details to the basic shapes, e.g. stripes and a door on beach huts or windows for the lighthouse.

Don't worry if you don't get everything finished in one session. You could always add details as a follow-on activity at another time, depending upon the energy level of your group.

You could also:

Is the postcard going to be sent to anyone – perhaps to grandchildren or family members? Think about adding a message to your postcards and provide stamps and a post basket.

If your group enjoyed this activity, why not adapt it to a different theme?

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Credit:

Equal Arts / Rosi Thornton.
Developed in partnership with
Ambleside Residential Home.



Hand and foot bathing

Sensory

15–30 minutes

You will need:

One washing basin per participant (rectangular is preferable)

One towel per participant

A stable chair

A table (if doing the hand bathing)

Warm water

Optional:

Radox, epsom salts, essential oils or fresh herbs such as rosemary and lavender

One-to-one
Dementia-friendly



Sensory
Relaxing
Calming

An easy experience to set up that can be enjoyed by anyone. It can be done in a group whilst chatting or framed as a relaxation activity to be done with one person.

To prepare:

Set up your equipment on the floor for foot baths or on a table for a hand bath. If you are using things like oils and salts, you must check that nobody has got any allergies to the things that you have chosen to use. Make sure that you set up well away from any electrical items or plugs.

Please be mindful if the participant has low blood pressure or is prone to dizziness. If this is the case, ensure the water temperature is lower and the length of time of 'the soak' could be reduced.

To begin:

Invite the person that you are working with to get comfortable in their seat. Whilst they are doing this fill the bowl you will be using with 5-7cm of water. The temperature should be warm, not boiling and pleasant to the touch. Add any essential oils or herbs to the water as appropriate – you could invite your participant to choose what they would like to add.

Next:

Invite the participant to place their hands or feet in the bowl. For the hands, ensure the bowl is at a height that doesn't cause stress on the shoulders or back; it should be easy to reach. You could do one hand or foot at a time or both together.

Allow the participant to 'soak' for approximately 10 minutes or until they indicate they would like to stop. Then remove the hands or feet and gently dry with a towel. You could invite the participant to swap, i.e. do the feet if they have just done the hands or vice versa.

You could also:

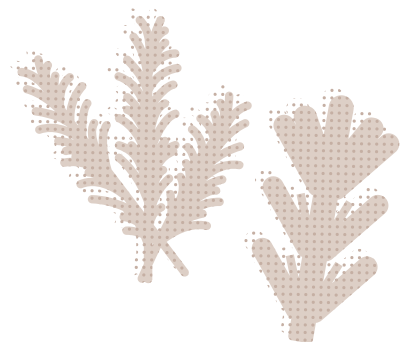
Where appropriate, you may like to encourage conversation around how it feels. Hand and foot baths can stimulate sensations and feelings which the participant may enjoy sharing. It can also be nice to play some gentle music in the background to relax the participant even more! Again, this could be a lovely starting point to talk about.

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Credit:

Spin Turn Creative Movement.



Song-makers

Music

10 minutes

You will need:

Recognisable tunes
your group will know

**One-to-one
Dementia-friendly**



**Creative
Spontaneous
Functional**

Familiar, well-known tunes can be used to facilitate singing together, even when you don't know all the words. By changing or completely removing the 'original' words to the song, you can make it fit any circumstance!

To begin:

From your knowledge of the group or individual you are with, choose a recognisable tune that you think they will know. The simplest tunes work the best, but there are no limits!

Begin by humming the tune or 'la-la-la-ing' along. You can lead and then invite the group to sing back each line of the song.

Next::

You have two options now: you can reword the tune yourself and present it to the group or individual, inviting them to sing it with you as you repeat it many times, or you can hand responsibility over to the group or individual to choose the words themselves.

Choose a topic to focus your new lyrics on. For example, you could say that the new lyrics will be inspired by actions that the group are doing, or by clothes that people are wearing. Feel the rhythm of each line of the song, and, thinking about the desired topic, see whether a word, a name, an expression or a whole line comes into your mind to replace the original lyrics.

For example, if you choose the tune of *She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain*, you might as a group decide to change the words to 'Sally taps her toes in time to the song... David claps his hands in time to the song'.

Or, if you're working with an individual, it could be 'Norman's wearing a red jumper today.'

You could also:

Use this activity as part of a sociable activity or as an accompaniment to a specific part of a daily routine.

If you manage to come up with new words for a whole song or a section of a song, you could also think about adding actions.

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Credit:

Manchester Camerata /
Music in Mind.

The Berkshire model village

Art and crafts

Flexible duration

(For a full village: a series of 45-minute sessions)

You will need:

Paper, in a range of colours, A4 or A5 sized works well

Scissors

Glue

Coloured pencils

Paintbrushes

Paints, in a range of colours

Paint pots or palettes

Coloured pens and pencils

Instructions for a range of origami houses and buildings

(there are plenty available online)

Some completed buildings and elements for the group to look at

Printed pictures of doors, windows, etc

A baseboard for your final village

Large groups



Calming
Collaborative
Reflective

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Credit:

The Berkshire Nursing and Care Home, Four Seasons Health Care Group.

This simple activity is a great way to connect people and bring back memories. It works well taking place around a big table in a communal space, but equally people could make elements in their own space to be added to the finished artwork. For example, in a bedroom in a care home.

To prepare:

Lay out the materials and origami instructions so that the participants can see them and pick them up if they would like to look at them.

To begin:

Start by explaining that you are going to create a model village over a number of sessions. Then ask what they would like to include in their very own model village and create a list of ideas for content. This in itself can bring back some great memories of items, buildings or objects that they have or had in their local village/town/area, so don't rush this stage. Allow time for people to talk and share memories and stories.

It can help to show examples of finished buildings and objects and pictures of possible designs or instructions. This will encourage conversation and help people come up with a plan together.

Next:

When the list is ready, you can start using the paper as you would with origami to make simple houses and buildings – you can use the instructions that you have printed off to help with this.

Let the participants choose their building design and the colours they would like for their particular model home.

To add a bit of personality to the homes and buildings, encourage them to customise windows and doors. You could draw windows and doors on or print some from the internet and use the glue to stick them on. It is fun to make each house as different as possible. You could encourage participants to put a number on the door or to give their building a name.

Finally:

After you have some buildings ready, you can start to build the village on a baseboard. Work with the participants to plan where to put each little house, tree, building etc. Working together to move objects around and choose the best place for them is a lovely, fun activity in itself. Then, you can get started naming the streets and the village itself!





A full village can take several sessions to create – there's no rush though! So enjoy the conversation and stories that are generated as a result of the process.

You could also:

Add as many features as the group come up with: what about a hairdressing salon, a bakery, a butcher, a river, trees, a church, a school, a bowls club, a community hall, or a pub? The possibilities are endless! As you make the village, remember that there is no right or wrong way of doing it.

When you have completed your village, you can use it as inspiration to talk about the people who might live there, or the events that might happen there. It can also be a lovely thing to display that becomes a talking point for people to explore together.





Painting with sticks and music

Sensory

45 minutes

(plus set-up time of about 30 minutes)

You will need:

Materials to draw with, such as paint brushes, felt-tips

Materials to make unusual marks, such as bits of sponge or herbs tied in a bow to make a rough brush

Water-based, non-toxic paints in a range of colours

Sticks, such as bamboo sticks (available from garden centres or hardware shops)

Masking tape and gaffer tape

Paint pots or bowls

Drawing surfaces, such as large roll of newsprint paper or lining paper

Live or recorded music

An audio device

Large groups



Gentle
Explorative
Tactile

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Credit:

Entelechy Arts / Florence Peake, Shane Waltener, Sarah Jarman, Malcolm Buchanan-Dick, Rainer Knupp, Cai Tomos. Developed in partnership with Tower Bridge Care Home, and as part of Lewisham Creative Ageing Festival.

This versatile communal activity combines visual art with movement, through live or recorded music. You can adapt this activity in different ways depending on your context and resources.

To prepare:

Clear the space that you will be working in. A sense of space is important for this activity. Simply clearing enough uncluttered space in a dining or communal room can work well, or you could work in an outdoor space like a garden. Try to choose a space with as much natural light as possible.

Next, prepare the area that people are going to paint on. You should do this by spreading out your paper on the ground, or on a wall. Attach paintbrushes or felt-tips to your bamboo sticks using masking tape. The sticks allow for extended reach or if you want to paint big with less inhibition.

At this point, set up your live or recorded music so that it is playing as people come into the space. Music can influence how you draw and move your paintbrush. It can also create a relaxed space for those who prefer to watch or set the tone for people who want to paint. A live musician can improvise to the actions people make in their drawing. However, recorded music will work fine. Choose music to suggest the atmosphere and mood that you want to create.

To begin:

As people come into the space, explain that it is a free space where they can paint or make marks on the paper however they would like to. Some people may get stuck in straight away but others may need more support. You can ask questions to get people started:

What is the mood of the music and how could that be reflected on the paper?

Can you create shapes and colours that complement the space or that contradict the space?

Can you add to things that other people have drawn already? Or that people are drawing?

Can you draw something as big as possible? Or make tiny marks?

How would you like to make a mark?

Next:

The work can develop further from the drawing stage into a movement piece where drawings can be hung or worn – if you want to do this, newsprint works best as it is a much lighter paper. How can you paint if paper is wrapped around a person or object? What does the image then look like when it is removed from that project?





You can also experiment with moving around in different ways to make different marks – for example how does it affect your marks if you move faster? Or slower? And what impact does it have if you add words or sentences inspired by the movements that you are making?

As drawings are finished, they can be immediately hung up in the space on washing lines or on walls to “take over” your environment, a bit like a spontaneous rough and ready stage design. And as one piece of paper is removed, another can be added for as long as the group wants to continue creating.

To finish:

Encourage participants to step back and appreciate the space they have created together. Talk about what you like in the space, what you enjoyed creating, what you would do differently next time...

You could also:

Develop the work further to create painted paper costumes.

Attach different materials to your bamboo sticks and see how that changes the effect, such as herbs, twigs and leaves can encourage a wilder nature-informed mark making. What else could you use? And what music could you try to encourage different qualities for the marks that are made?

Record, document and celebrate your work. You may not be able to keep it all, but it is nice to take photos of selected parts to share with others. Could you make postcards of some of the abstract marks, drawings and painted sentences to celebrate and share what you have created?

This activity works well with families – children seem to take to it naturally – so it’s a very easy way into intergenerational work.



Objects with meaning

Stories and poetry

20 minutes

(but can be adapted to be longer or shorter)

You will need:

A selection of objects (either personal items that people bring along, or objects chosen by the facilitator)

A tray to place the items on

Optional:

A pen and paper

One-to-one



Fun
Collaborative
Reminiscent

This activity takes a simple concept to create an accessible activity that can be set up in any environment and which everybody can take part in. It works well as a warm-up or as a starting point for something bigger.

To prepare:

Either ask participants to bring objects to the session or bring some yourself. These could be unusual things, or things that remind them of an earlier time. For example, you could ask everybody to bring along something that reminds them of a holiday, or something that they received as a present. Or, as facilitator, you could gather a selection of items that are all related to different places.

To begin:

Lay out the objects so that everybody can see them and invite your group to have a good look at them. Encourage people to pick up the items to look at them more closely and to get a sense of what they feel like.

What is their favourite object? Which one stands out for them and why? If the group brought along the objects, they should not choose their own item. Go around the group and ask each person to share their favourite object and explain why they have chosen it. What do they like about it? What made it stand out for them?

Next:

As a group, choose one object that you would like to think about. Can you work together to create a story around that item? *Who might it have belonged to? Where might it have come from? How might it have been used?* As you are talking, you might want to jot down the story that is being created.

Then ask the group if that object is linked to any of the other items that you have got. *How are they connected? Are they linked to the same person or different people?*

To finish:

When you have exhausted stories and ideas around one object or chain of objects, you could read back the story that you have created.

You could also:

If the group has brought in the objects, people could tell their personal story of their item. How is it similar or different to the story that the group created inspired by that object?

This activity can be a great way to start generating ideas and stories to create scenes for performance. If you are doing this, you could choose a selection of items linked by a theme that you want to explore.

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Credit:

Royal Exchange Theatre Elders Company / Gordon and Jackie.

Flower pressed prints

Art and crafts

Two x 1-hour sessions

(with a break of 2-4 weeks whilst flowers are pressed)

You will need:

Fresh dry flowers from the garden or old bouquets

Heavy books or flower presser

Scissors

Parchment paper, or newspaper or blotting paper

PVA glue and glue spreader

Plain white card/paper (A3 or A4 is ideal)

Tissue paper squares

Drawing pens and pencils

Optional:

Tweezer, self-adhesive film

One-to-one



Fun
Relaxing
Colourful

Pressed flowers preserve a moment in time and can be used to create a piece of art using flowers from your garden or an old bouquet. The activity can be used to create prints or cards for loved ones.

Session one:

Collect the flowers you would like to press – this can be a lovely activity in itself if you do it in the garden, or if you buy some flowers for people to choose from.

Put the flowers you have chosen flat on the newspaper, top with another piece of newspaper and place in the book/flower presser. Ensure that the books with the flowers in them are weighted down with heavy objects. Leave them to dry out/press for two to four weeks before you check on them.

Session two:

When it is time to assemble the print, get your card/paper, PVA glue, spreader, scissors and the tissue paper together. Cut the tissue paper into small squares using the scissors – you may want to do this in advance, or it may be something that your group enjoys doing. The squares work well if they are about 2cm x 2cm.

Invite participants to draw an outline of a vase at the bottom of the paper and fill the vase with the tissue paper pieces, using the glue to stick them down. Get out your pressed flowers and assemble them on the paper to look like a bouquet of flowers in a vase. If they are delicate, use the tweezers. Once you are happy with the positioning, use the glue to gently stick them down.

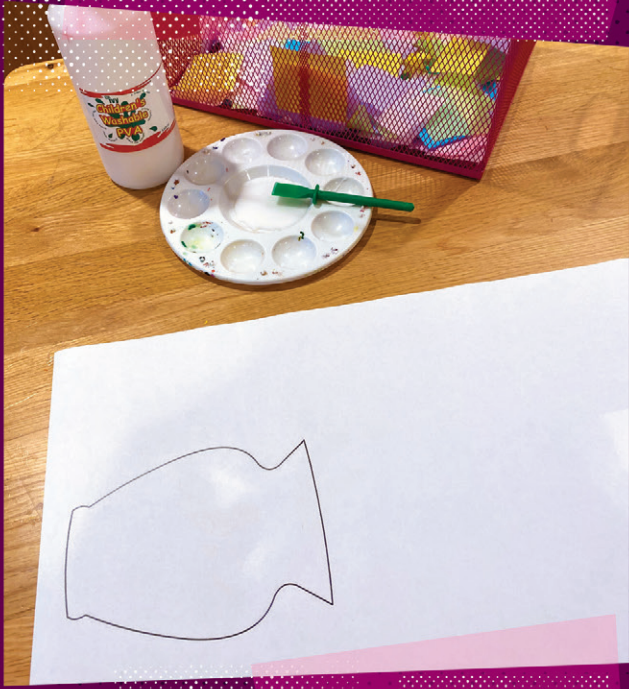
If you want, you can seal the design using self-adhesive film to cover the entire paper.

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Credit:

Woodland Manor Care Home.



Seaside shenanigans

Dance and movement

20 minutes

You will need:

Selected music

The following work well:

Don't Worry Be Happy
by Bobby McFerrin

Everybody Loves The Sunshine
by Roy Ayers

Beyond The Sea
by Bobby Darin

An audio device

Large groups



Fun
Energetic
Upbeat

A fun and lively dance activity encouraging movement, dancing and physical exercise. There is no wrong or right way to participate – just move to the music, feel energised and remember the sights and sounds of the seaside.

To prepare:

Set out a circle of chairs for your group. A hard back dining chair with no arms is preferable, but the activity is also possible in an upright armchair.

To begin:

When your group is comfortable in their seats, put on your music – *Don't Worry Be Happy* by Bobby McFerrin works well here. Explain to your group that you are going to try a range of movements inspired by the seaside starting with the sand on the beach.

Ask your group to imagine that they are handling sand on the beach. Start at the hands and do fine finger work by touching the thumb from one finger to another on the same hand, and then repeat with the other hand. Next twinkle the fingers in the space in front and then move your twinkling fingers over your hands and up the arms.

Use the same twinkling fingers to encourage participants to give themselves a body massage. Start at the top of the body, 'pattering' the fingers on the head and face, then making way down the body – behind the neck, chest, along the arms, to the hands, then to the stomach, finishing down the front and backs of the legs.

Repeat this pattern but change the quality: you could try a stroking action with fingers, or squeezing and moulding the body like sand, for example.

Then ask participants to imagine the chair is made of sand and to make an imprint in the chair by wiggling and pushing the body into different areas. Encourage them to try pushing different areas of the back, arms, legs or to make 'sand angels.'

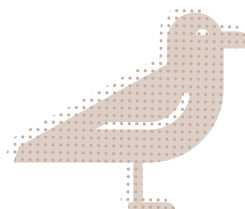
Invite participants to 'wiggle toes' in the sand – if wearing shoes, they can wiggle their toes inside the shoe. Develop this movement to wiggle each foot, moving one foot at a time. People can lift one leg up at a time and wiggle and shake the leg. This action can be made easier by using their hands and arms to lift and support each leg.

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Credit:

Yorkshire Dance / Ellen Turner, Rachel Clarke & Musician, Will Fletcher. Developed in partnership with The Grove and Red Court Care Home.



**Next:**

Next you are going to think about the sunshine – *Everybody Loves The Sunshine* by Roy Ayers works well as music to use here.

Start by closing and opening the hands and then grow the movement into the arms. Pull your hands as close as you can into your body as you can then stretch them out towards the floor, and then pull them back in again. Repeat this closing and stretching action to the sides, to the ceiling and finally to the centre of the room. This can develop into closing and stretching in any direction, reaching the arms in opposite directions and it can finally progress on to reaching towards different people in the room.

You could also call out a participant's name and then everyone can individually reach out to that person.

Now, invite participants to imagine that the sun is filling the room and they are sunbathing. Present different body parts to the 'sun' – this could be their face, arms, legs, or feet. Remember you can also sun different areas of each body part, for example the inside and then the outside of the arms.

Introduce breathing in through the nose and out through the mouth. Start small and then get bigger, taking the breath into the shoulders by raising them up to the ears and then releasing again. You can use verbal imagery of waves or use wave sound effects to help the group with the breathing. This breathing can go into the arms, opening the arms out wide and reaching upwards on the in-breath and then relaxing everything down on the out-breath.

Then:

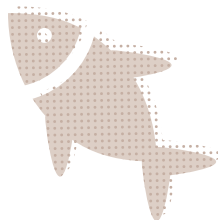
Move on to think about the sea. *Beyond The Sea* by Bobby Darin is a good choice to play here.

Invite participants to start by letting the 'waves' wash over their legs. Use the palms of the hand to push over the thighs towards the knees and release forward, and then reverse the action pulling the hands back over the legs and towards the body. These waves can start small, and then as the seas get 'stormy', the actions can get bigger and quicker. With the bigger 'waves', legs can be released off the floor. Let the waves become smaller again, so it becomes more gentle and easier to move on to the next action.

Then pass a wave around. This can be done like a traditional Mexican wave: releasing two arms up to the ceiling and releasing them down one participant at a time.

To finish:

To end the activity, you can repeat the breathing section from the 'sun' section to help bring heart rate down and everyone to relax.





Balancing objects

Performance

20 minutes

You will need:

An item for each participant to balance: a peacock feather is ideal but a wooden spoon, a cardboard tube or bamboo garden cane work too

One-to-one
Dementia-friendly



Fun
Physical
Engaging

Object balancing helps build hand-eye coordination, balance, body and spatial awareness as it requires you to coordinate your movements to keep the object upright.

To begin:

Explain to your group that you are going to try and balance an object on your hand. Hand out the items that you will be using. Invite the group to place the object on their outstretched hand with their palm facing upwards. The object should be pointing upwards as vertically as possible. They will need to steady the item with their other hand.

Next:

Show how you can gently let go with your other hand so the object is standing upright – explain that if it tips to the left then people should move their hand to the left to counterbalance it. You might want to demonstrate the movement before inviting your group to give it a go.

Demonstrate how you can gently move your hand to counter whichever direction the object is falling in, trying to move smoothly and not jerk the object. Explain that the secret to balancing objects is to watch the top of the object – this gives more visual clues about the direction it will fall to help the brain coordinate your hand to keep the object upright.

Then:

As a group, try different points of balance on your bodies – the back of each hand, on one fingertip, an elbow, a foot! You could also try to pass the object from one hand to the other hand. Show the group how to do this – you will need to give the object a little pop to help it jump across, and remember to keep your fingers closed tight against each other and the hand open. If your group get good at this, they can try making it jump from hand to foot.

You could also:

Have a go at standing with the feather balanced on the hand if participants are stable enough on their feet.

Anyone who wants to could also try to take a little walk with their balanced item. If you are going to try this, you will need to make sure that the space you are in is nice and clear as people's focus will be more on the object than their environment.

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Credit:

Upswing. Developed in partnership with Silk Court Residential Home, Anchor Care Homes.

Create a flower meadow

Art and crafts

A series of 1-hour sessions

You will need:

Pre-made framework
(canvas, card or wallpaper),
large enough to accommodate
everybody's work

A range of tactile materials,
in different patterns, textures
and colours

Scissors

PVA and fabric glue

Coloured paper,
cut into 15cm x 15cm squares

**Coloured tissue paper
and pipe cleaners,**
in baskets of the same
colour if possible

**Coloured images of flower
meadows and butterflies**

**Origami diagrams with
instructions: easy tulip, tulip
stem and easy bird** (available
free online, printable)

Simple templates of butterflies
(available free online, printable)

Optional:

Pre-cut leaf and flower shapes
in paper or felt

Dementia-friendly



Tactile
Creative
Hands-on

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Credit:

Lincroft Meadow Care Home.

This activity is a social occasion and an opportunity for people to develop and tap into their creative skills.

Session one:

Lay out the materials you have collected on the table so that they are easy to see and reach – putting the materials in colour co-ordinated baskets will help make them more accessible and dementia friendly. Give each participant a picture of a flower meadow and ask them to look closely at the flowers. Talk about the flowers asking open-ended questions about them, discussing the details such as leaves, petals, shape and colour.

Explain to the participants that together they are going to create their own interpretation of a flower meadow. They will begin that process by using the materials on the table to create their own flower.

Make an example flower with the whole group so that they understand how the activity works, and to start getting participants warmed up creatively.

Invite participants to pick the items they would like to use to create their flower. Allow plenty of time for them to make their choices and change their minds.

Depending on the group's abilities, you may want participants to cut out and design their own shapes, or it may be more appropriate for you to cut them out in advance. If you are making them in advance, you will need to prepare enough flowers for each person in the room.

Once all the shapes are cut out, ask participants to arrange them on your canvas until they are pleased with how it looks, and then glue the shapes down. As a group, you can then glue all of the flowers that have been created onto your canvas.

Share and celebrate the work that has been created and thank the participants for their contributions. Talk about the different ways that people have used the resources. *Which elements of the flower meadow do they particularly like?*

Session two:

Print and hand out enough copies of the origami tulip flower diagram and step-by-step instructions. Spend time demonstrating step-by-step how to fold the paper correctly to make a tulip flower.

Invite each participant to choose a piece of coloured paper. Repeat the same tutorial step by step, allowing time for each participant to reach the same stage before continuing. Once each participant is at the same stage, continue with the next fold until the flower is complete.

Repeat for both the origami tulip stem and bird.





Once all the tulip flowers, stems and birds are made, invite each participant to arrange them on the canvas until they are pleased with how it looks and then to glue the tulips and birds down.

Session three:

In advance, put pictures of butterflies around the space so that the group can see them. Cut up your coloured tissue paper into pieces and put them into your matching coloured baskets. Lay out an assortment of butterfly templates.

Start by saying to everyone that they are going to make their own butterfly.

Complete an example butterfly with the whole group so they understand how the activity works. Demonstrate different ways to use the tissue paper, such as scrunching up the paper into a ball.

Each participant decides which butterfly template that they would like to use. Then invite the participants to choose the tissue paper. Offer a choice of colour, but don't over complicate things if it will cause confusion.

Using glue and tissue paper each participant creates their butterfly in their own way. Encourage participants to work freely and support their composition.

When everyone has finished making their butterfly, invite each participant to arrange theirs on the canvas with the flowers and birds from the previous sessions until they are pleased with how it looks, and then to glue it down.

Round off this activity by sharing the work that has been created; *what section of the artwork did they enjoy most?*

To finish:

Display the artwork in your setting for all to see.



God's eyes

Art and crafts

45 minutes

You will need:

2-3 sticks per person, such as kebab skewers, craft sticks or even twigs from the garden

Yarn of various colours, textures and materials (scraps or leftovers, or bought specifically for the purpose)

Scissors

A tapestry or large-eyed needle to tuck ends away

One-to-one



Gentle
Creative
Cultural

Inspired by a traditional craft from South America, the process of making these woven 'God's eyes' ('Ojo de Dios' in Spanish) is very simple once the sticks are secure. They can also be joined together to create wall hangings.

To begin:

The first thing you will need to do is secure the sticks – this can be done in advance if you prefer.

Take two sticks, or three for more complexity, and lay them across each other to form a cross. Using a piece of yarn, tie a knot around the centre of two of the sticks. Then proceed to wrap yarn tightly around the first in one direction over the point where the sticks meet – between 5 and 10 wraps is usually enough – then wrap the yarn the same number of times in the other direction across the cross.

Tie the yarn securely. Then use a tapestry needle to hide the end in the wraps and snip any tail. Once this is done, the sticks should be fairly rigid depending on what type of stick is used. If this is too complex or time consuming, a glue gun could be used to secure the sticks together instead.

Next:

Invite people to choose a new piece of yarn to work with. Participants can choose any colours they like. The yarn will need to be secured to one of the sticks using a tight knot.

Move to the next stick and wrap the yarn around it. The yarn should be fairly tight between points and should be wrapped in the same direction at all times. It needs to be wrapped as close to the centre as possible to create a spiral. Keep wrapping around each stick in turn – when you return to the knot, you have completed a single round. Keep going to build up a nice wide stripe. A good number of rounds for a stripe is six, but this is up to the individual.

When the yarn is finished or the participant wants to change colours, tie a knot to one of the sticks and start a new colour in the same way that you started the first.

Tails of yarn can be hidden by using a tapestry needle and sewing through the wraps on the stick.

To finish:

To give a more finished look, wrap yarn around the individual sticks numerous times on the final trip around the Gods' Eye.

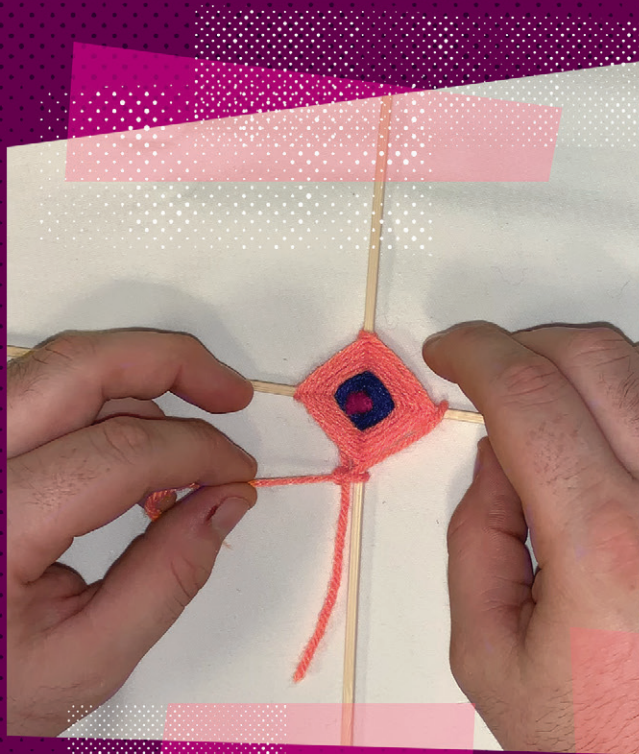
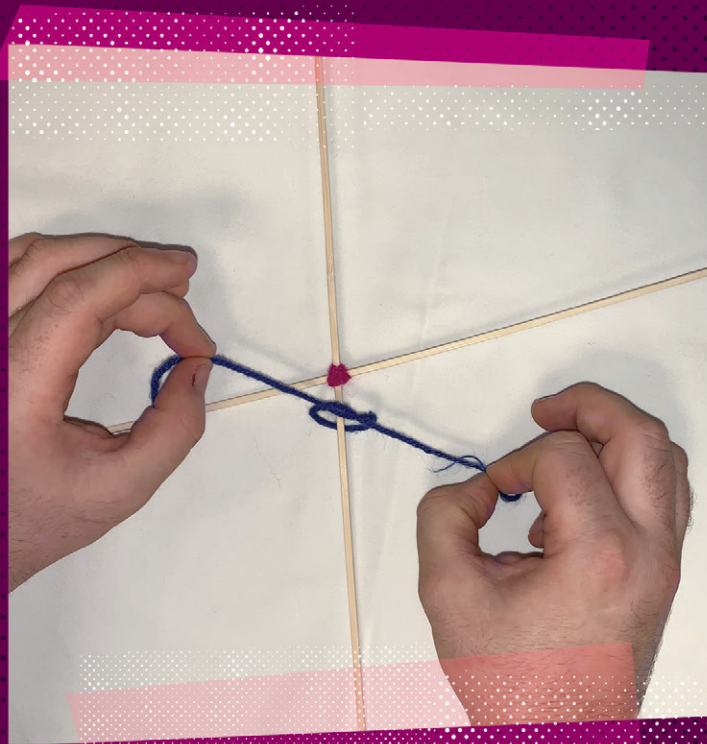
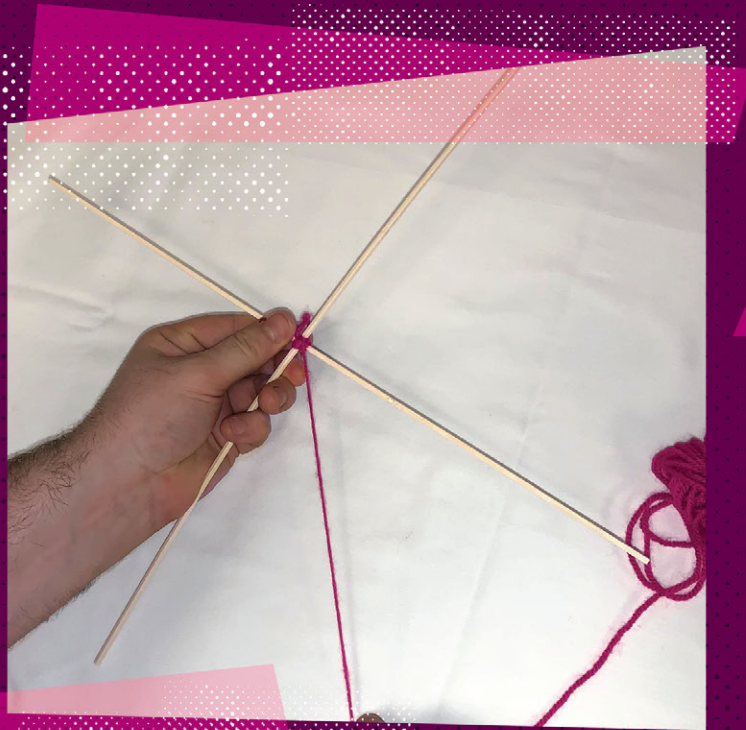
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Credit:

Avondale Care Home.







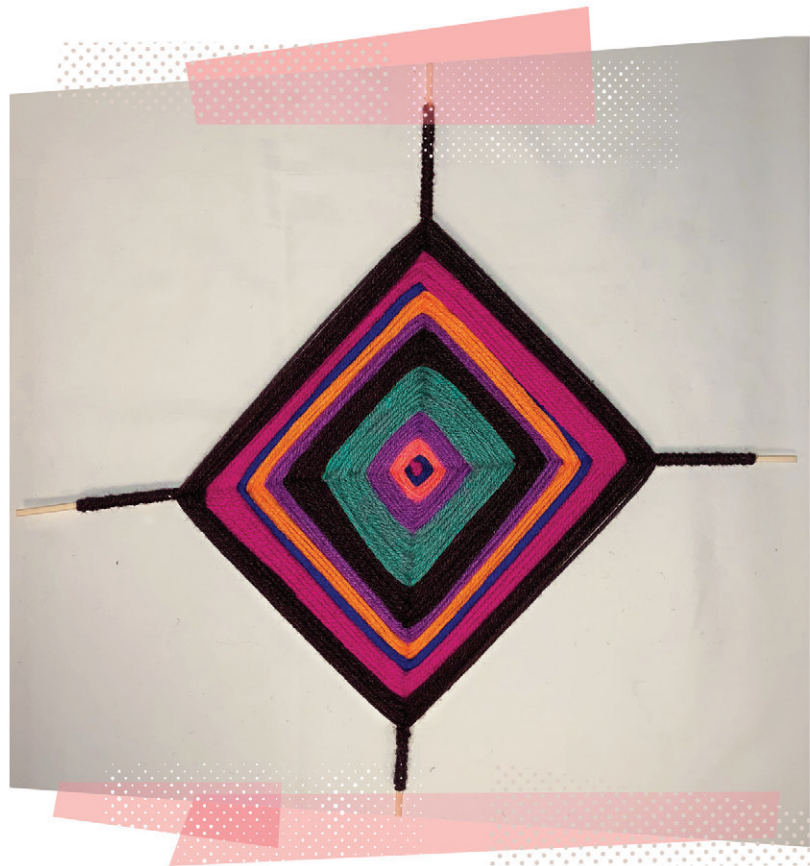
You could also:

The basic method outlined above will create a flat God's Eye. More texture can be added by changing the direction of wraps on different sticks. More sticks can be added to create more complexity. When using more sticks, you can skip sticks to create different patterns.

Pictures of elaborate God's Eyes can be found online, as well as more information about the history and uses of the activity. This could form part of an introduction or a separate activity in its own right.

If you need to purchase yarns for this project, reasonably priced colour packs are available in small balls, but there is a certain amount of fun to be had in collecting odd bits and bobs of yarn from family and friends and staff members.

If you need sticks, a walk around the garden or a local park to collect suitable twigs and sticks could also be incorporated into the activity or could be a separate activity altogether. Make sure the sticks are dry and free of moss and dirt and don't have too many off-shoots.



Sensory colours

Sensory

30 minutes

You will need:

Large sheet of paper,
such as lining paper

Poster paints,
in lots of different colours

Paint brushes

Water pots

Latex-free disposable gloves

Wipes

Optional:

Aprons (to protect people's
clothes), table and floor
covering

One-to-one



Gentle
Explorative
Tactile

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Credit:

Hoot Creative Arts /
Andrea Freeman.

Developed in partnership with
Age UK Calderdale & Kirklees
companionship groups.

A simple activity that works really well in pairs. Depending on the level of need and/or confidence, the activity could be undertaken by the participant and a family member or friend with minimal support.

To prepare:

Lay out the paper on the table and ensure all the required equipment will be within reach of the participants.

To begin:

Look at and talk about the various colours of paint – *which colours do the group like the best? How do they feel about the variety of colours that are available to them?*

Divide your group into pairs and then invite everybody to put on rubber gloves. Next, ask each person to choose a colour that they will paint onto the palm of the non-dominant hand of their partner. Each person then makes a print of their painted hand onto the paper.

Everybody then reapplies the paint and touches or holds the hands of their partner so that the paints mix on the gloves. They then each press their palms onto the paper again.

Next:

Take time to look at and open up discussion around the colours. *How have the colours changed when mixed? Which of the new colour combinations do they like best?*

Savour the time together and the shared experience. Allow the activity and conversation to flow and see what happens – there is no right or wrong response or approach!

Wipe the gloves and repeat with different colours – or the same colours – as many times as desired.

You could also:

Invite family members, friends and staff to take part in the activity over time so that a collage of intermingled palm prints and colours evolves. People could create their own individual collage or a group could work together to create a collaborative collage.

This can be a lovely intergenerational activity with older people and children creating handprints and collages together.

Dance around my world

Dance and movement

10 minutes

You will need:

Argentinian music,
in a 4-beat rhythm
(Santa Maria (del Buen Ayre)
by Gotan Project works well)

An audio device

Dementia-friendly



Fun
Inclusive
Upbeat

This fun movement activity takes inspiration from Argentinian tango to create a sequence of movements, which is inclusive and uplifting.

To prepare:

If your group will need to sit down, set out a circle of chairs. A hard back dining chair with no arms is preferable, but the activity is also possible in an upright armchair.

To begin:

Encourage everybody to sit tall in their chair, with shoulders relaxed, back straight and feet and knees hip width apart, toes and head pointing forwards. If standing, invite the group to stand tall with feet hip width apart, toes pointing forwards. Their knees should be soft and not locked.

Then:

Without music, first explore how your hand can brush up and down one arm (either left or right). Repeat on the other arm and then do the same on both arms with the opposite hand at the same time. You can explore this further by brushing your hands along the thighs and then extending them out in front of you. Once you have tried this as a group, you can add music and try it again.

You could also move the arms up and down crossing your hands back and forward in front of each other as they move – try this in time with the music and repeat.

Next:

Try adding some foot moves to your dance. It may be easier to start without music so you can learn the steps slowly.

For a tango:

Start with your right foot. On counts 1, 2, 3, 4, move your foot forward, back, forward, back. Repeat on the other side.

Then place one foot in front of the other and hold for 4 counts, 1-2-3-4, and repeat on the other side. This is great for balance.

Brush the floor with a foot and take it in front in a circle over 4 beats. If seated, you can also raise the foot (toes pointing up towards ceiling) and leg just below knee height, and hold for 3 counts and then lower again for one count. Repeat on the other side.

To finish:

Finish slowly by swaying the arms from side to side. If standing, you can also sway with the feet slightly turned out for more support. If seated, pedal the feet, pushing toe to heel, or try gentle walking.

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Credit:

EDNA | Energise Dance
Nourish Art / Luci Napleton.
Developed in partnership
with the Forget-Me-Not Café.



Selected resources

Age of Creativity

www.ageofcreativity.co.uk

A network of more than 1,000 professionals who all believe that creativity and culture supports older people to experience better health, wellbeing and quality of life.

Arts in Care Homes

www.artsincareshomes.org.uk

Arts in Care Homes runs the annual National Day of Arts in Care Homes (24 September) and its website has lots of activities and how-to guides. It also runs a pen pal project it started during the Covid-19 pandemic, setting up hundreds of connections between residents in care homes and people and children in the community.

Artspace Cinderford

www.artspacecinderford.org

This **free online resource** is a simple, easy-to-read series of landscape and nature activities for use by anyone, but especially designed for those who care for, manage or work with people living with dementia. It includes easy-to-follow practical activities as well as important considerations for you to plan, develop, implement or deliver a nature-based arts activity.

cARTrefu activity cards

www.cartrefu.org.uk/activity-cards

45 creative activity sessions from Age Cymru's well-known cARTrefu (artists in residence in care homes) programme, covering visual arts, performing arts, words and music, and sensory activities – all designed to be done without expert knowledge or specialist equipment.

Creativity in Care Activity Toolkits

city-arts.org.uk/creativity-in-care-activity-toolkits

A download including six activity sheets with practical advice and instructions for running creative activities with older people.

Luminate at home

www.luminatescotland.org/luminateathome

A collection of 31 short online films demonstrating creative activities developed by the creative ageing development agency for Scotland, Luminate, and Scottish Care, and shared throughout the Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020. The activities are presented by professional artists and feature different arts forms including crafts, poetry, music and dance.

Moving Memory Dance

movingmemorydance.com

An online learning resource from Moving Memory Dance Theatre with more than 50 films and over 20 worksheets to help facilitators plan participatory creative movement workshops primarily for older people.

Creative Care Homes

www.paintingsinhospitals.org.uk/creative-care-homes-introduction

Creative care homes – an A-Z of arts activities and inspirational ideas is a recent resource by Paintings in Hospitals with lots of ideas for visual arts activities (printmaking, quick drawing, repeat pattern, still life...) for care homes.

Arts in Care Homes, Social Care Institute for Excellence

www.scie.org.uk/person-centred-care/arts-in-care-homes

This resource bank from the Social Care Institute for Excellence is full of ideas and tips for care homes on doing creative activities with residents, covering everything from jewellery making to puppetry to drawing and painting. It also includes advice on how to do it without any external input or facilitation and lots of simple ideas.

The Storybox Project, Small Things

www.storyboxathome.smallthings.org.uk

A ground-breaking activity programme from Small Things Creative Projects which uses imagination and creativity to engage, enliven and empower people living with dementia, alongside the people that support them. The site contains hundreds of easy to try activities which are free and accessible to all.

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Akademi

www.akademi.co.uk

Akademi is a dynamic and future facing organisation, dedicated to redefining the parameters of south Asian dance as an art form. Its mission is to develop artists, inspire audiences and enhance lives by creating, commissioning and nurturing classical, contemporary, popular and participatory South Asian dance in the UK.

- See activity on page **24**.

Artcore

www.artcoreuk.com

Artcore is an international centre for contemporary art and creativity that is based in Derby, UK, and is home to a gallery, studios, workspaces, shop and café. A vibrant hub for commissioning, production, presentation and debate, it offers opportunities for diverse audiences to engage directly with creative practices through participation and discussion. It works with a diverse range of communities and the cultural, creative industries, community, education, health and regeneration sectors to deliver its programme.

- See activity on page **66**.

Avondale Care Home

www.porthaven.co.uk/avondale-aylesbury

Avondale Care Home is a place to live well, offering 24-hour residential, dementia, nursing and respite care. The expertly trained and professional team are dedicated to the care, comfort and dignity of all residents with a special emphasis given to promoting independence, privacy, respect and wellbeing. A diverse and inclusive activity programme caters for every need and interest whilst a bistro, private dining room and a gym ensure a feeling of community throughout the home.

- See activity on page **110**.

Belong

www.belong.org.uk

Belong is a dementia care specialist and not-for-profit organisation, operating vibrant community villages. These provide a range of care and housing options to support people as their needs change, including 24-hour care in family-sized households, independent living apartments and home care. Belong collaborated with Bluecoat, Liverpool's centre for contemporary arts, on the dementia research project, Where the Arts Belong.

- See activities on pages **47, 56, 61**.

The Berkshire

www.brighterkind.com/theberkshire

The Berkshire offers residential, nursing and palliative care. Set in prize-winning mature gardens with beautiful accommodation throughout, the home provides a welcoming place to stay, whether permanently or for a respite. Offering a very person-centred approach in every aspect: from quality care, premium food and dining to a vibrant activities programme called the Magic Moments Club. The happy, caring and passionate team are 'highly recommended' by residents and families.

- See activity on page **96**.

CASPÆ

caspae.pt/PT

The Centro de Apoio Social de Pais e Amigos da Escola nº10 - CASPAE 10 (Social Care Centre of Parents and Friends from School nº10) is a Private Organization of Social Solidarity, in Coimbra Portugal, with a social welfare non-profit statute. It has the mission to promote social welfare answers that help individuals to value themselves and their wellbeing, and facilitate their inclusion in society by supporting children, young people, families and older people.

- See activity on page **48**.

Nichola Charalambou

www.creativewrites.co.uk

Nichola founded Creative Writes in 2009 to provide space to write through supportive creative writing workshops. She has worked for several years in care settings and sheltered Housing, delivering Read Aloud poetry sessions and creative writing workshops, as well as staff training. Partnerships include Arts in Care Homes where she co-founded the Only Connect Pen Pals Project, which was launched at the first National Day of the Arts in Care Homes in 2019.

- See activity on page **84**.

Charlotte Cranidge

www.charlottecranidge.co.uk

Charlotte is an Artist and Creative Producer, delivering creative workshops with a number of organisations. Specialising in working with adults living with dementia, Charlotte focuses on delivering workshops that provide meaningful art engagement with a celebration of the creativity of individuals. She finds mindful approaches to engaging in creativity, and her workshops often offer a multi-sensory experience, which provides an opportunity to connect to the artwork through the individual's own senses and personal associations.

- See activity on page **82**.

Creative Lives

www.creative-lives.org

Creative Lives (formerly Voluntary Arts) is a registered charity that was established in 1991. It champions community and volunteer-led creative activity, and works to improve opportunities for everyone to be creative. In particular, it celebrates and promotes people expressing themselves creatively with others, recognising the benefits this can bring. It has teams based across the UK and Ireland.

- See activity on page **89**.

Creative Minds

www.creativeminds.art

Creative Minds is a social enterprise and arts organisation founded in November 2012 by James Cropper and is based in Guildford, Surrey. For over five years its art sessions have had a huge impact on the lives of older adults, people with learning disabilities, adults in the community and children, enabling people of all ages and abilities to explore their creativity.

- See activity on page **70**.

Tara Dean

www.taradean.co.uk

Working on community projects, Tara explores transforming marks into printmaking. Having worked as a Ceramic Artist, her projects experiment with pattern and texture. She has worked on Arts and Health workshops with Denbighshire Leisure Arts Service and as part of a team of artists on the cARTrefu project with Age Cymru. She is committed to sharing her practice and has a passion for creative engagement in all settings across Wales and beyond.

- See activity on page **50**.

Wallis Eates, Gemma Seltzer and Dr Alison Waller

Wallis, Gemma and Alison came together to develop work exploring how children's literature can be used to engage older people living in care settings. Wallis is a graphic narrative artist and facilitator whose interests include biography, autobiography and therapeutic drawing, and is part of LDC (Laydeez Do Comics). Gemma is a London-based writer who collaborates with dancers, photographers and older adults to create writing and storytelling projects. Alison is a Reader in Children's Literature, English and Creative Writing at the University of Roehampton.

- See activity on page **76**.

EDNA | Energise Dance Nourish Art

www.ednasjourney.co.uk

EDNA values and recognises the health and wellbeing benefits that accessible and inclusive dance, movement to music and art activities can bring to older people and families. Its work takes participants on a journey and along the way stories, skills and knowledge are shared.

- See activity on page **114**.

Entelechy Arts

www.entelechyarts.org

Entelechy Arts is a charity based in Lewisham, South East London. It produces projects, which powerfully test the boundaries between art, creativity, care, wellbeing and community. It believes that everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to the creative life of their local community, and that sharing the stories and experiences of those who can often feel underrepresented, encourages stronger communities, changes perceptions, and ultimately helps people live healthier, happier and more connected lives.

- See activity on page **99**.

Equal Arts

www.equalarts.org.uk

Equal Arts is a creative ageing charity working to reduce loneliness and improve wellbeing among older people and those living with dementia through creative opportunities. The organisation provides workshops and training led by artists, working in more than 50 care settings and in schools, community settings and cultural venues.

- See activity on page **92**.

Falkland Grange Care Home

www.porthaven.co.uk/falkland-grange-newbury

Falkland Grange Care Home is an exceptional place to live well, where person-centred, compassionate care comes as standard. Falkland Grange's dedicated team provide round-the-clock care and place an importance on promoting privacy, respect and independence at all times. The home boasts a variety of restaurants, a hair salon, cinema and a bistro whilst the landscaped gardens are the perfect setting for taking a slow summer stroll or sitting down to afternoon tea or an outdoor activity.

- See activity on page **55**.

Dr Rosaria Gracia

rosaria-gracia.com

Rosaria Gracia PhD is an international dancemaker, ethnochoreologist and researcher. Her dance specialism is in carnival and celebratory art forms, although she is interested in researching practices from around the world rooted in cultural narratives. Her current research interests are in cultural syncretism through dance and movement, and dance and health. She currently works with older adults both in the community and institutional settings, exploring movement and dance to support them in their health and wellbeing.

- See activity on page **63**.

Jen Harris

www.jennyharrisdrama.co.uk

Jen Harris is a drama practitioner delivering drama workshops and making theatre. She works with a variety of people of all ages and abilities using drama to promote confidence, wellbeing and communication. Her main areas of expertise are dementia work, SEN, primary schools and early years. She loves working on The Storybox Project – a project for people living with dementia and their carers/family. These sessions use a mixture of art forms and are always great fun.

- See activity on page **68**.

Maria Harvey-Lavin

www.roamingaromas.co.uk

Maria is a sensory clinical aromatherapist working in care settings and sheltered homes. She is presently working with C&C Housing, London. She trained in Clinical Aromatherapy with Tisserand Institute 1992. She also trained in Tai Chi, Qigong for health with Dr Paul Lam. She was lead therapist in C&C's pioneering project Health Alternatives for Older People 1995 and presented on aromatherapy and multisensory activities in care homes at The Royal Marsden in 2019.

- See activity on page **72**.

Roger Hill

www.thebluecoat.org.uk

Roger Hill is a director, performer, arts and education consultant, writer, lecturer and broadcaster. He has presented the nation's longest running alternative music programme on BBC Radio Merseyside for more than 35 years. Roger worked as an artist on Where the Arts Belong, a ground-breaking partnership between Bluecoat, Liverpool's centre for the contemporary arts, and innovative dementia care provider, Belong. The project was funded by Baring Foundation and Arts Council England through the Celebrating Age programme.

- See activities on pages **47, 61**.

Susan Holmes

www.susanholmesgallery.wixsite.com/website

Susan Holmes is a multimedia artist inspired by nature. Her background includes working as a recreation therapist at various nursing facilities. Presently, her work has been with a hospice as an expressive artist. While there she was the focus of a 2018 article in the Connecticut Freemasons magazine. Susan has been an educator and presenter at the 20th and 21st Alzheimer's Association conferences. Susan currently resides in South Eastern Connecticut, near the shoreline.

- See activity on page **23**.

Hoot Creative Arts

www.hootcreativearts.co.uk

Hoot Creative Arts is an arts and health charity based in West Yorkshire. For over 18 years it has been offering a range of creative activities to promote the health and wellbeing of adults aged 18+, including older people and people living with dementia and carers. It believes that being older or having dementia doesn't prevent people from enjoying new experiences and gaining new skills if given the right opportunities and approach.

- See activity on page **113**.

Independent Arts

www.independentarts.org.uk

Independent Arts is a small charity based on the Isle of Wight, which uses the arts and creativity as a tool to help improve health and wellbeing and reduce social isolation. Working with disadvantaged people from age of four to one hundred and four, Independent Arts aims to improve lives through art. It runs creative workshops in care homes and the community island wide.

- See activity on page **29**.

Lincroft Meadow Care Home

www.porthaven.co.uk/lincroft-meadow-kidlington

Lincroft Meadow Care Home is an exceptional place to live well where a compassionate, professional team delivers tailored care and support at all times. Every resident has a private bedroom whilst there is also a cinema, a bistro, communal lounges, a hair salon and a private dining room for special family occasions. Beautiful landscaped gardens are perfect for an afternoon stroll whilst an engaging and inclusive activity programme is on offer for every resident.

- See activity on page **108**.

Macclesfield Silk Museum

macclesfieldmuseums.co.uk/have-a-dabble

Macclesfield Museums are home to Europe's largest known collection of Jacquard Silk Handlooms, exhibits linked to the rise and fall of the silk industry, and Ancient Egyptian artefacts collected by Marianne Brocklehurst. The Silk Museum building originally housed the Macclesfield Art School attended by Charles Tunncliffe and there are a number of his pictures on display too. They continue to be a centre supporting creativity and art while providing access to local history.

- See activity on page 58.

Manchester Camerata

www.manchestercamerata.co.uk/community

Since 2012, Manchester Camerata has been delivering vital primary care for people living with dementia and their carers through its research-led, award-winning Music in Mind programme. Delivered by the orchestra's specialist team of musicians and resident music therapists, Music in Mind uses group-based musical improvisation to encourage and empower people living with dementia to express themselves and communicate with others through music, reducing loneliness and feelings of isolation.

- See activity on page 69.

Moving Memory Dance Theatre Company

www.movingmemordance.com

Moving Memory Dance Theatre makes visually striking, contemporary performances which have been surprising and entertaining family audiences in theatres, festivals, shopping centres, high streets and many other settings since 2010. The core performance ensemble, working with Creative Director, Sian Stevenson, use digital images, music and spoken word to co-produce performances and in participatory projects. The work, and the way it is produced, challenges ageist attitudes and promotes a positive, intergenerational approach to age and ageing.

- See activity on page 86.

The Orders of St John Care Trust, Monkscroft Care Centre, Cheltenham

www.osjct.co.uk/care-home/monkscroft-care-centre

Monkscroft Care Centre, part of The Orders of St John Care Trust (OSJCT), is in the heart of Cheltenham. It offers outstanding, person-centred and friendly dementia and nursing care for up to 80 residents in a charming and comfortable environment. The home is rated as Outstanding by the CQC and has a review score (April 2021) of 9.9 out of 10 on carehome.co.uk, a consumer website which features reviews from residents and their families.

- See activity on page 60.

The Performance Ensemble

www.theperformanceensemble.com

The Performance Ensemble is an ensemble theatre company of older performers, based in Leeds, making art with the experience of age. It works with people from many cultural backgrounds, in the space between professional and community arts practice to create contemporary theatre for audiences of all ages.

- See activity on page **80**.

Mary Prestidge

www.thebluecoat.org.uk

Mary Prestidge's dance career has spanned five decades. She continues to play a key role in the development of new and experimental dance both nationally and in Liverpool, where she is based. Mary worked as an artist on Where the Arts Belong, a ground-breaking partnership between Bluecoat, Liverpool's centre for the contemporary arts, and innovative dementia care provider, Belong. The project was funded by Baring Foundation and Arts Council England through the Celebrating Age programme.

- See activity on page **56**.

QUAD

www.derbyquad.co.uk

QUAD is a cinema, gallery, café bar, digital resource and workshop that anyone can use. We believe in making art, film and digital media accessible to all. We are a creative hub that connects people and businesses to art and film and creates opportunities for entertainment, education and participation. QUAD transforms lives through active participation in art and film.

- See activity on page **42**.

Royal Exchange Theatre

www.royalexchange.co.uk/the-elders

Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre (RET) is an award-winning producing theatre with a rich history of innovative community engagement including our Elders and Young Companies, and Local Exchange – a creative programme embedded in communities across Greater Manchester led by locally recruited Ambassadors. The Exchange's flagship Elders Company, established in 2014, is recognised nationally and internationally for its ability to challenge stereotypes around ageing, promote creativity into later life and reduce social isolation.

- See activities on pages **37, 39, 49, 101**.

Victoria Ruddock and Dr Nicola Abraham

@vic2ria2285 @DrNickyA

Victoria Ruddock, Dementia Specialist Healthcare Support Worker in the Dementia Care Team at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, is collaborating with Dr Nicola Abraham, Lecturer in Applied Theatre Practices from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama. This partnership is part of a broader Student Knowledge Exchange project bringing applied theatre into acute hospitals to offer creative projects to patients living with dementia. The project is co-funded by Research England and the Office for Students.

- See activity on page **20**.

Bisakha Sarker MBE

www.chezfred.org.uk/chat

Bisakha Sarker MBE is a dancer, choreographer, and facilitator. Trained in classical and creative Indian dance, she has performed and led countless workshops and conferences across the UK. She is the founder of the Chaturangan Dance Company and a Churchill Fellow.

- See activity on page **52**.

Sensory Trust

www.sensorytrust.org.uk

Sensory Trust is a national trust based in Cornwall. Its aim is to make the outdoors accessible to everyone, regardless of age, disability or social circumstance. Creative Spaces is its flagship dementia project, supporting people with dementia and their carers across Cornwall to access the outdoors and benefits from nature.

- See activity on page **78**.

Small Things Creative Projects

www.smallthings.org.uk

Small Things Creative Projects is an artist-led social enterprise that uses creativity and imagination to fuel learning, development and change. It does this by developing projects and interventions that create space for thinking and togetherness in a wide range of settings. Over recent years it has concentrated on developing creative work with people living with dementia through The Storybox Project – a collaborative storymaking project focused upon imagination and participation in the moment.

- See activities on pages **36, 68**.

Spin Turn Creative Movement

www.facebook.com/EKSpinTurn

Spin Turn Creative Movement provides creative movement sessions to the ageing population and those with dementia. It also makes short one-to-one films, 'moving portraits', with people living with dementia which explore movement memory, story and shared experience. Spin Turn is run by Elaine Kordys and based in Helensburgh, Scotland.

- See activity on page **94**.

Dr Richard Talbot and Dr Clare Dormann

www.rtalbot9.wixsite.com/ludicresearch

Dr Richard Talbot is an award-winning Performance Maker and Senior Lecturer in Performance at the University of Salford, where he leads a BA in Comedy Writing and Performance. He specialises in Physical Comedy and Digital Clowning creating participatory performances in partnership with universities, local authorities, and museums from Melbourne to Zagreb.

Dr Clare Dormann is Senior Research Fellow at the UCLIC Interaction Centre, University College London. Her research encompasses Humour Studies, Games Design and Gerontology.

- See activity on page **33**.

Tyne and Wear Museums

www.twmuseums.org.uk/adult-health-and-wellbeing

The Platinum Programme is Tyne and Wear Archives and Museum's culture and heritage programme of inspiring activities for people aged over 55. Its resources aim to support carers and health and social care professionals to use museums as part of their care practice. They have been developed with the help of Northumbria Universities' Faculty of Health and Life Sciences, along with a steering group of multi-disciplinary health and social care practitioners and academics.

- See activities on pages **27, 44**.

Upswing

www.upswing.org.uk

Upswing is an award-winning contemporary circus company. They use the human body as an expressive tool to entertain, inspire curiosity and build connection. It tells new stories in extraordinary ways – amplifying and celebrating the stories, skills and creative talents of diverse artists and communities. It is passionate about circus, not only as an art-form but as an adaptive set of practices that can help people imagine and shape the world they want to live in.

- See activity on page **107**.

Andrea Vogler

Andrea Vogler is a classically trained percussionist and freelance workshop facilitator. She teaches and lectures at the Royal Northern College of Music (RNCM). Her outreach work includes project design, staff training and mentoring for Live Music Now, Jessie's Fund, Made by Mortals and the RNCM; and she is proud to be part of Manchester Camerata's award winning Music in Mind team.

- See activity on page **74**.

West Eaton Nursing Home

www.heritagemanor.co.uk/locations/west-eaton

West Eaton is situated in a rural setting just outside Leominster in Hereford, but within walking distance of the town centre. The home provides accommodation for 33 residents in single and double rooms over two floors. It is a smaller, more personable home, which provides the highest quality of care 24 hours a day, in a happy and homely environment.

- See activity on page **35**.

The Whitworth

www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk/learn/adults/agefriendly

The Whitworth Age Friendly programme was developed in 2009 with the implementation of a City-wide Cultural Offer for older people across Manchester. The focus of the age friendly programme is on the visual arts with creative, artist facilitated workshops, talks, tours and research. The programme has included other art forms such as creative writing, performance, radio and festival workshops.

- See activity on page **18**.

Woodland Manor Care Home

www.porthaven.co.uk/woodland-manor-buckinghamshire

Woodland Manor Care Home provides exceptional person-centred residential, nursing, dementia and respite care tailored to an individual's needs on a short or long-term basis. All residents benefit from living in a caring environment where dignity, respect, independence and wellbeing are promoted. Every resident has a private bedroom with en-suite wet room whilst there is also a cinema, a café, communal lounges, a hair salon, a private dining room for special family occasions and beautiful surrounding gardens.

- See activity on page **102**.

Writing East Midlands

www.writingeastmidlands.co.uk

Writing East Midlands is the Literature Development Agency for the East Midlands. It believes in an open society, which for it means everyone should have equal access to the means of creativity and expression. These values inform the work it does, the areas it works in, the people it works with, and an ongoing dialogue with contemporary society through all its writing programmes and projects.

- See activity on page **26**.

Yorkshire Dance

www.yorkshiredance.com

Yorkshire Dance is a charity that champions the value of dance and its development in Yorkshire. It creates opportunities for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to see, make and take part in high quality dance. It fosters creativity and innovation, and challenges stereotypes about what dance looks like and who takes part. Yorkshire Dance's work with older adults has been recognised nationally by One Dance UK, winning its Dance Advocacy Award 2020.

- See activities on pages **30, 104**.

Other resources on creative ageing

All resources can be found on our website
www.baringfoundation.org.uk

Treasury of arts activities for older people, Volume 1
Liz Postlethwaite, 2019

Key workers: creative ageing in lockdown and after
David Cutler, 2020

On diversity and creative ageing
Baring Foundation, 2020

Older and wiser? Creative ageing in the UK 2010-19
Dr Rebecca Gordon-Nesbitt, King's College London, 2019

Around the world in 80 creative ageing projects
David Cutler, 2019

Art and dementia in the UK South Asian Diaspora
Elizabeth Lynch with Spare Tyre, 2019

Arts in care homes: a rapid mapping of training provision
Penny Allen, 2018

*Each breath is valuable: an evaluation of an arts
in care homes programme*
509 Arts, 2018

*Towards the end: The Baring Foundation's Arts
and Older People Programme 2010-2017*
David Cutler, 2017

Published by:

The Baring Foundation
8-10 Moorgate
London EC3R 6DA
www.baringfoundation.org.uk
Twitter: @Baring_Found
ISBN 978-1-906172-55-8

Compiled and written by: Liz Postlethwaite

Edited by: Harriet Lowe

Graphic design by: Alex Valy
www.alexvalydesign.co.uk

Acknowledgements and credits:

The Foundation is grateful to The Rayne Foundation for jointly funding this second edition of the Treasury.

We would also like to thank the many contributors of activities to this Treasury (see Biographies); its author Liz Postlethwaite who has nurtured both editions with skill, creativity and sensitivity; our partners on this publication, Alison Teader and Hilary Woodhead of the National Activity Providers' Association (NAPA) for their help and enthusiasm; Susan O'Sullivan of The Rayne Foundation for her support and suggestions; Arti Prashar and Virginia Tandy for their advice; Robin Phillips for excellent work in the craft studio; and Alex Valy for her creative design.

Photo credits:

The author and funders would like to thank the following for use of their photos:

Akademi (p25); Avondale Care Home (p111, 112); Charlotte Cranidge (p83); Creative Lives (p88); Derby Quad (p43); Entelechy / Tao Gadd (p98, top), Entelechy / Rebecca Swift (p98 bottom, p100); Equal Arts (p92); Falkland Grange Care Home (p54); Hoot Arts / Olivia Hemingway (p79, 85); Know Dementia (p62); Lincroft Meadow Care Home (p109); Macclesfield Silk Museum (p59); Made By Mortals (p75); Maria Harvey Lavin (p73); Robin Phillips (p86); Roshana Rubin-Mayhew (p57); Royal Exchange Elders Company / Joel C Fildes (p38); Small Things Creative Projects (p18, 19, 22, 28, 34, 51, 67, 97); Thomas Arran/Upswing (Cover); Tracey Knight / Creative Minds (p71); Upswing / Marcus Hassenburg (p106); Whitworth Art Gallery (p46); Woodlands Manor Care Home (p103); Yorkshire Dance (p13).
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If you are an activity coordinator in a care home, a dementia café volunteer, a domiciliary carer, or work in a day centre - or even a friend or family member, then this could well be the resource for you!

With 52 accessible, creative activities (one for each week of the year), this 2nd volume of the popular Treasury of Arts Activities is designed for everyone who would like to bring more art and creativity into the work they do with older people.

We hope it will provide ideas and inspiration that will enable you to develop your own creative practice and introduce new and exciting things to the older people that you support!