



EXPRESS YOURSELF

THE 10-WEEK CHALLENGE

Brought to you by Longsight, North City, and
Wythenshawe Forum Libraries as part of the
Creative Spaces programme.

#CreativeSpacesMcr
creativespacesmcr.com

Longsight, North City, and Wythenshawe Forum Libraries are Creative Spaces where you can experience amazing arts events and activities, have fun, and try new things. All for free, and right on your doorstep.

Meet some of Manchester Libraries' Creative Spaces team:



Paula



Fiona



Darren



Leigh



Sally



Alan



Alison



Max



Nicole



Elena



Nikcola



Beth
(Creative City)

Since we can't invite you into the library at the moment, we've asked some of our community of Manchester artists to put together these creative challenges for you to do at home.

Watch short videos of each challenge at creativespacesmcr.com

Stay connected and share your progress via social media [#CreativeSpacesMcr](#)



We'll be starting week one of this 10-week challenge on Mon 4 May, so you can start then too and share your journey with us online, or you can take it at your own pace.

Express Yourself

This 10-week challenge has been put together by: Yelena, Kofi, Anita, Beth, RP Roberts, Nasima, Jamie, Fran, Hanaa and Hafsa.

We've crafted a series of short weekly creative tasks just for you, responding to a weekly theme.

Our aim is to keep your creative juices flowing, to introduce you to a few new arts techniques, and to throw some positive thinking into the mix.

Here's our advice while taking on this challenge:

1. Stick with it, try every task
2. Make mistakes
3. Rough is good
4. Silly is good
5. Be messy - all the blank areas in this book are there for you to fill with creativity
6. Try not to overthink each challenge
7. Get lost in the moment
8. Be resourceful! Don't worry about what materials you don't have - its all about using what you do have.
9. You are not alone! Sending you good vibes the whole way.

Stay home, stay safe, stay creative, stay connected, and express yourself!

We'd love to see what you come up with for each challenge, so please share using [#CreativeSpacesMcr](#) so we can take a look.

Videos of our challenges will be released each week via creativespacesmcr.com

Strength

TRY THIS:

Get yourself in a good frame of mind to start this 10-week challenge. Write your name in the middle of the page. Now, set a timer for five minutes and illustrate the page around your name – taking inspiration from your strengths and positive characteristics, your favourite things, your interests and the people you love. Add colours if you can.

Use the blank areas in this booklet to complete the challenges.
There are more blank pages at the back.

TRY THIS:

What does strength mean to you? Jot down some words that come to mind. Go through those words and see if you can come up with rhymes for each them.

Pick your four favourite rhyming pairs (couplets). Try turning these into eight lines of poetry or lyrics. Short and simple is good for each line. End each line with the rhyming word. So the first two couplets are at the end of the two lines marked A, the second two couplets are at the end of the two lines marked B, and so on.

A.

A.

B.

B.

C.

C.

D.

D.

Google 'instrumental beat' to find a track to rap your words along to. Play around with where your words fall within the music. Alternatively, you could use a song you already have, or create your own beat by tapping out a rhythm yourself. You might want to edit your lines so they sound better with the beat. Don't worry about being perfect, just give it a go.



This challenge was set by Jamie.

Jamie Lynch is an emerging artist and facilitator. Jamie was one of the young producers behind Rhythmscape Festival earlier this year at Wythenshawe Forum Library, where he led a 'beats and rhymes' workshop series for young people.

Earth

TRY THIS:

For this challenge you will either need to be outside where you can listen to the sounds of the world, or near a window, or use the internet to play nature sounds like rainfall, forest sounds, or sounds of waves on the beach.

Have a blank page of paper and a pen ready.

Start by just listening quietly to those sounds for a couple of minutes with your eyes closed. Then put a timer on for 3 minutes. Now start to write and don't lift your pen off the page. Write freely with no expectations or worries about what you are writing. If you are struggling just write random words or whatever pops into your head until something starts to flow.



This challenge was set by Kofi.

Kofi Gyamfi is a poet, rapper, actor and workshop facilitator from Moss Side. He has had his work published in zines and anthologies, and has performed in festivals in Manchester and nationally. Kofi has been involved in setting up and running Creative Community events and activities at Longsight Library.

TRY THIS:

Create your own mini snowy mountain. You will need a sheet of paper and a pencil.

The steps you need to follow are:

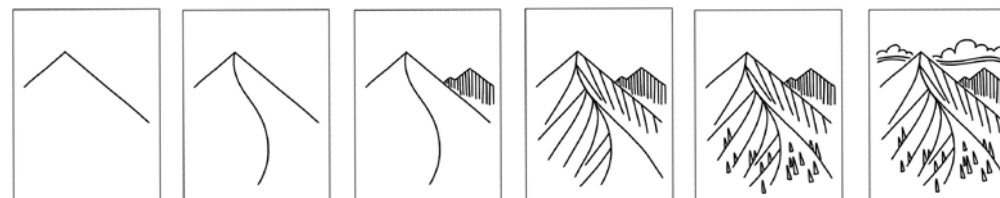
1. Leaving some space for the sky at the top of the page, draw an upside down 'V' going across the page.
2. From the point of the upside down 'V' go downwards and draw a long, stretched out letter 'S'.
3. To the side of the mountain you have created, so it looks like it's behind it, draw a zigzag line going across. This will be the mountains in the background.
4. Now draw some lines going away from the S of the mountain. These will look like other ridges going away from the middle of the mountain.
5. Draw some trees at the bottom, these can be simple triangles, or you can make them really realistic.
6. Work on the sky. The example below uses a simple long cloud. You could do a sun, some snow clouds, a sunset, totally up to you.

Once you've done all this in pencil, if you have colours you can now colour all this in.



This challenge was set by RP Roberts.

RP Roberts is a Manchester based artist who specializes in Alpine landscapes. He creates private commissions and commercially for various snowboard companies. He uses a variety of different creative media: from ink on paper, to large spraypaint murals.



Self



This challenge was set by Hanaa.

Hanaa Cara is a self-taught visual and performance artist based in Islington Mill, Salford. Within her art, she likes to focus on the themes of identity, dual-heritage and mental health, working with art forms like illustration, collage and painting.

TRY THIS:

This challenge is to make a surreal collage.

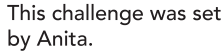
Materials you will need: scissors, glue, paper, magazines, junk mail, or any other materials. Make your collage on a new piece of paper or cardboard, or a page at the back of this booklet.

1. Build the background for the collage by ripping pieces of paper and arranging them in interesting ways to create a landscape.
2. Use different coloured card, paper or old packaging to create unusual shapes. Fold your material in half then cut out different sizes of those shapes. Use the spare cutouts from the shapes as archways within your collage. Cut out images and layer them behind the archways. You can also add different textures or patterns that you find interesting.
3. Now cut out shapes to create a figure that represents you. Layer different colour combinations, using your materials to create the outline of a figure. Your figure doesn't have to be person-shaped. For example, you could use the shape of a cloud for the body. Add different shapes for the arms and legs. Play around until you are happy with the collage.
4. Look through your materials and find words that describe your personality. Once you are happy with the layout of your collage, glue the pieces down. Save the pieces of material that you have left for another collage as these can be used to create a series of work.

TRY THIS:

Find a mirror and put pen to page. Use your non-dominant hand to draw (if you are normally right handed, use your left hand, or the other way around). Draw a self-portrait. It's a quick exercise so set a timer for three minutes maximum. Try to focus on what you see, make marks on the page and try not to look at what you are drawing until you feel you are finished.

Unlimited



TRY THIS:

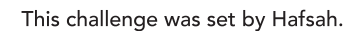
Use the first letter of your name. Draw that letter 10 different times in 10 different styles. Take inspiration from other words that start with that letter. For example, constructing a B out of Bricks or Bubbles, or an L out of Leaves or Ladybirds. This can really help you open up your mind and get creative.

What if we use our imagination to be UNLIMITED for a little while? Try to use all your five senses to create a short story using one of the following story prompts. Set a timer for five minutes and see where your story takes you.

What if you woke up one morning and all the doors and windows to your house had suddenly disappeared?

What if every time you opened a jar, or poured out some breakfast cereal or tried to drink something, you couldn't stop the flow?

What if the remote on your TV, or the light switches in your house suddenly gained unlimited powers to do whatever they wanted or better still, what you wanted?



Hafsah Aneela Bashir is a poet, playwright & performer who loves using imagination and experience to speak her truth. She is also passionate about amplifying voices of those who may not normally get involved in the arts. In 2019 Hafsah was writer in residence at Longsight Library where she worked with community members to create a new poem about the area.

WEEK 5

Energy

TRY THIS:

Either: head to creativespacesmcr.com and learn some new moves with Yelena's online dance challenge video.

Or: Write a list of 10 words that describe you, e.g. 'kind', 'musical', 'vivacious'. Now for each word think of a pose or movement that represents it.

For example, Yelena is 'strong' and her pose for 'strong' is →



Then put all of those movements together in time to one of your favourite songs. Move your whole body and try to capture the energy of the song with the speed and style of your movements.



This challenge was set by Yelena.

Yelena Lashimba is a Manchester creative. She's been involved in setting up and running Creative Community events and activities at Longsight Library. Yelena is trained in dance and drama and is currently studying Music Business and Creative Industries and is developing her music production skills.

TRY THIS:

First, flick through a book, newspaper, magazine or social media feed for a few seconds. Quickly pick any person, animal or animated object you see to be your central character - don't give yourself too many options to choose from.

Then, pick one of these action words: Leap, Dance, Throw, Rap, Drum.

Now write five lines of writing that make your chosen character do that action with a lot of energy, giving it some context and as much descriptive language as possible. Draw the scene too, if you like.



Empathy

Tues 9 June 2020 is #EmpathyDay! Empathy is all about imagining and sharing someone else's feelings.

TRY THIS:

Get a picture of someone who you have something in common with, for example a friend or celebrity. Maybe it's someone who shares your values or interests.

Set a timer to 1 minute and draw them without taking your pen off the paper! Then, on a different piece of paper or different area of the page, set a timer to one minute and draw them again but this time with your eyes closed. And finally, set a timer to 30 seconds and draw the person using only straight lines! Which one was your favourite and why?

TRY THIS:

Think up two characters who would make unlikely friends. You could pick characters from your life, politics, animals, fiction, games or comics - whatever you enjoy thinking about. Do a couple of very rough sketches of your pair on some scrap paper to get used to drawing them.

Your task is to create a comic strip that uses dialogue. This could be questions, a conversation, an offer, or a discussion. Your comic must depict these unlikely friends coming to understand each other better.

IDEA:

Do you have any chalk? If you do, maybe you could write an encouraging message on the pavement somewhere to brighten a the day of people who walk past. Alternatively, you could put a positive message in your window.

Community

TRY THIS:

Pick one word from each of the lists below. If you have one, use a dice to help you choose. Start a timer for three minutes and write a very short story that incorporates the three words you've chosen.

Descriptions:	Places / Things:	Actions:
1. Welcoming	1. Park	1. Connect
2. Quiet	2. Model	2. Imagine
3. Vibrant	3. Place	3. Hope
4. Undiscovered	4. Keyboard	4. Share
5. Lively	5. Leaf	5. Move
6. Courageous	6. Library	6. Breathe

TRY THIS:

In this mini challenge you will be writing a short form of traditional Japanese poetry called Haiku. Haiku poems are made up of three short lines and each line has a specific number of beats per word (syllables).

A beat or syllable is the break up of a word. For example:

Man - ches - ter = has 3 beats

Com - mu - ni - ty = has 4 beats

Ar - tist = has 2 beats

In Haiku poems, the number of beats or syllables in each line needs to be 5, then 7, then 5. Haiku's don't normally rhyme and they are often inspired by nature.

When I begin writing poetry, I usually try and build a 'Word Bank' to help me. A 'Word Bank' is a brainstorm of words associated with a subject or a theme. Our theme is Community and some of the words I included in my 'Word Bank' are: honey, bee, rain, industry, food, together, energy.

These are my Haiku examples:

My city is home,	Manchester's special.
We'll rise through this.	Friendship forms like rain falls.
Bee's make honey well.	Please stay safe 'r kid.

Now you try! Your Haiku should be themed around Community.

Word bank:

Your Haiku:



This challenge was set by Nasima.

Nasima Begum is a performance poet, producer and creative practitioner. She is also currently the Youth Development Lead at Ananna, the Manchester Bangadeshi Women's Organisation. She is a trustee of writers group Young Identity and has performed nationally and internationally.

Unexpected

TRY THIS:

Using the space below, draw a big scribble. Look at it - do you see anything in it? Does it look like anything in particular? Using your pen, transform your scribble into something else!

TRY THIS:

You are going to be creating the opening scene for a movie. The film is called 'the unexpected visitor'...

1. Create your central character using your imagination. It shouldn't be someone who already exists. To know what your central character would do or say, you need to decide some things about them. To create your character, come up with answers for the following questions:

- What is their name?
- How old are they?
- Where do they live?
- What is their family situation?
- Who are their friends?
- What is their favourite music, food and TV show?
- What are they good at?
- What makes them happy?

2. On a separate page or at the back of this booklet, draw out a rough sketch of the scene using simple drawings or stick-people to show where everyone is.

3. Each character says a line either out loud or a thought in their head, what do they say? Add speech or thought bubbles to your drawing.

4. List everything that is said in order from what gets said first to what gets said last, and write the name of the character saying that thing next to each line.

Character name: what they say

Well done. You've written the first scene of a movie!



This challenge was set by Fran.

Frances Nutt specialises in participatory theatre and facilitates creative programmes for young people. She is Co-founder and Artistic Director of Tandem Theatre, a participatory arts charity that works across Greater Manchester.

Connect

TRY THIS:

Draw a cluster of simple line drawings, taking inspiration from what you see around you. Keep adding shapes to this page. Try to keep an even space between the shapes you draw. Each new shape should be influenced by the shapes already there. You might have to invent a few shapes and add in some extras to get a tight fit.

If you are feeling adventurous you could use this technique to draw the people and the things you see in your community.



TRY THIS:

Draw around your hand to create an outline, then go and find an object from somewhere near you. Maybe its a bowl, a book or a piece of clothing - anything you can hold freely.

Pick up the object and touch it for 3 minutes. Set a timer if you can. You might want to close your eyes. Really concentrate on how it feels to touch and how it feels to hold that object.

What is the surface like? How does it feel against your skin? Is it heavy or light? What kind of shape it it? How does it feel for your hand or fingers to follow the lines of the object's shape. Are there different parts of the object that feel different? How do they contrast with each other? Think about all of your senses.

After three minutes, fill the hand outline with writing about those sensations and feelings. Write as descriptively as you can about that experience of touch.



This challenge was set by Beth.

Beth Powell is a creative youth and community worker. She loves creating projects and arts activities that boost confidence, wellbeing and community spirit. She is Founder & Managing Director of Creative City, a Manchester-based community arts non-profit.

Voice

TRY THIS:

There are loads of ways of expressing yourself. Sometimes the kind of energy or determination used to make a mark on a page can express more than words would.

Set a timer for five minutes and fill the space below using a range of mark making techniques. Take inspiration from the examples shown at the bottom of the page.

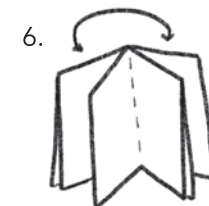
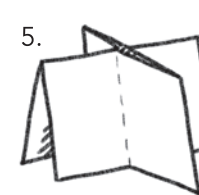
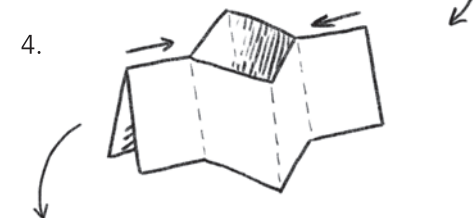
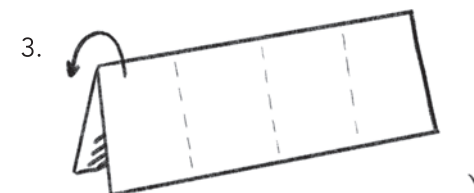
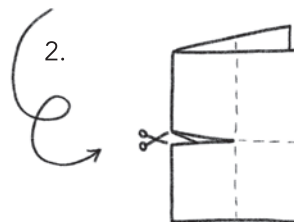
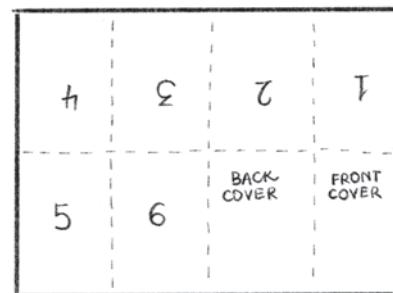
TRY THIS:

Zines are a great way to use your voice. Zines are home-made publications, and can be about anything! Your interests, a political message, a series of poems, drawings, comic strips or collages - there are no rules! Zines are often created in a way that can be photocopied, to be able to share with others cheaply.

Using the one-page method, create a Zine about your recent experiences. You might want to include some of the techniques you've used during this project, or use it as a diary over the next few days.

Here is how you fold one page of paper to create a zine...

1. Fold a sheet of paper into 8



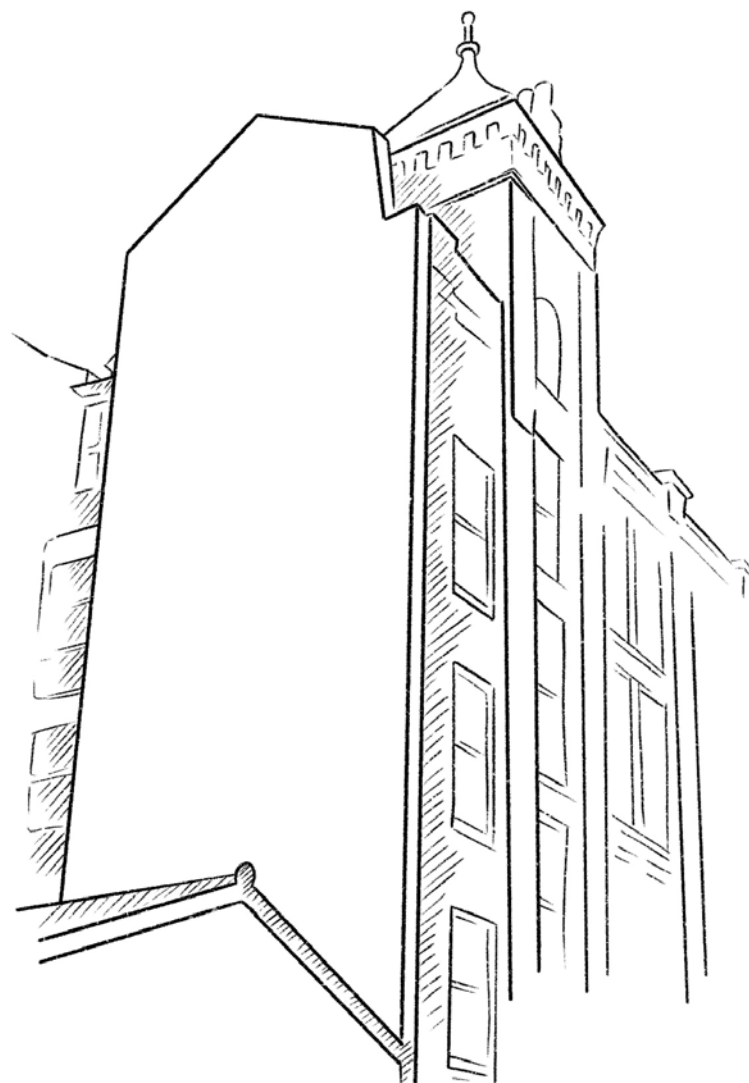
Once it's folded, start to fill with your creativity!



TRY THIS:

This is the site of a powerful graffiti piece by Case Maclain which depicts a man in distress and is dedicated to a Manchester charity supporting disadvantaged adults.

What causes do you feel strongly about?
What emotive mural would you create here to highlight that issue?
You could use words or images.





USE THIS:

Blank pages for your creative work.



USE THIS:

Blank pages for your creative work.

STAY CREATIVE & CONNECTED ASK FOR SUPPORT IF YOU NEED IT

If you are offline during lockdown, we know it might be harder to find support when problems arise.

For the things you'd normally get help with at the library, or if you want to get involved with more creative activities, you can phone your Creative Spaces library and they'll try to help you by phone.

For support with other issues, we've put together a list of help services and helpline phone numbers.

Help Services and Helplines:

Manchester Community Response Hub:
0800 234 6123
Help during COVID-19 with food and medication, loneliness, and fuel payments. For Manchester residents who are isolated without support.
Open: 8.30am to 5.30pm, Mon to Sat

Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Adviceline:
03444 111 222
CAB Help to Claim (Universal Credit Support):
0800 144 8 444

Hope Again: 0808 808 1677
Emotional support for anyone affected by bereavement
Open: 9.30am to 5pm, Mon to Fri

NHS Chat Health: 07507330205
Text service for advice on all health issues for ages 11-16.
Open: 9am to 4pm, Mon to Fri

Kooth.com
Free mental health online counselling for 11-25 year olds.

Young Minds: Text YM to 85258
Mental health and personal crisis support for 14-25 year olds

Self Injury Support: Text 07537 432444
A text service for girls and young women affected by self-harm
Open: 7pm to 9.30pm Tues, Weds and Thurs

Childline: 0800 1111
Talk about your worries. For children up to 19 years old.
Open: 9am to midnight

Samaritans: 116 123
Free to call anytime for a supportive conversation

The Mix: 0808 808 4994
Support with a range of issues for young people under 25
You can also message them online at themix.org.uk

Papyrus Hopeline UK: 0800 068 4141 or Text 07860 039967
Helpline for children and young people under the age of 35 who are experiencing thoughts of suicide.
Open: 10am to 10pm Mon to Fri. Weekends and Bank Holidays 2pm to 10pm.

National Domestic Abuse hotline:
0808 200 0247
Open: 24 hours, 7 days a week

Emergency services - 999
In an emergency or when you feel unsafe, you should call 999.

Just want to get involved with more creative activities or local youth groups?

Creativecity.org.uk
Creative City has helpful suggestions for creative activities and youth groups you could get involved with from home. If you are offline text 07496084487 to request a callback.
Open: 10am to 5pm most weekdays

The Horsfall Gallery
Arts projects and competitions for young people aged 10-25
Contact Rod Kippen on 07823 349237

Follow Manchester Libraries on social media for more creative activity ideas.

Your Creative Spaces libraries are:

North City Library:
0161 219 6442

Longsight Library:
0161 227 3706

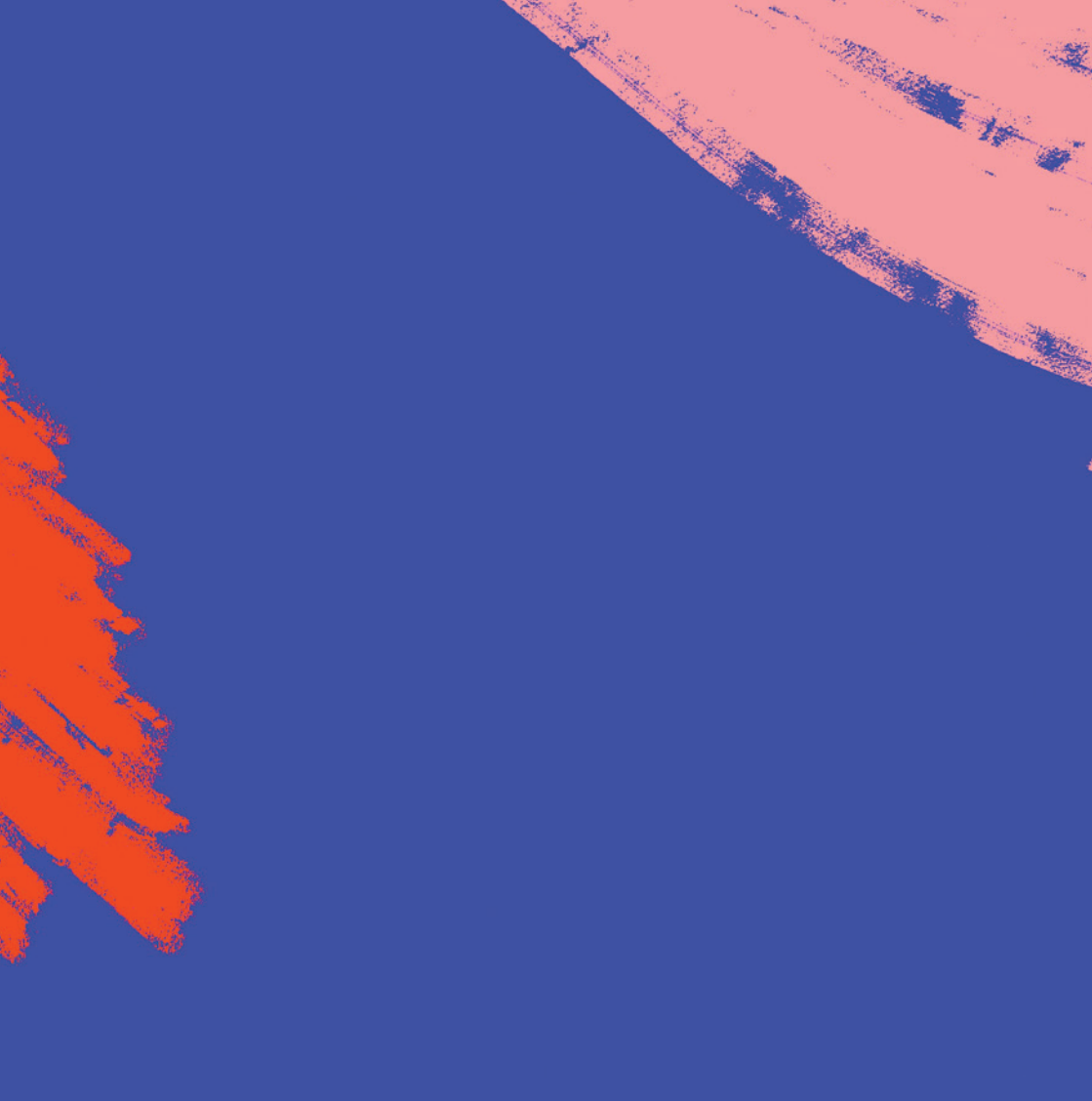
Wythenshawe Forum Library:
0161 227 3770

 CreativeSpacesMcr
 MancLibraries
 ManchesterLibraries
 manchester.gov.uk/libraries
 manclibraries.blog

#CreativeSpacesMcr

Well done! How do you feel now?
By completing this 10-week challenge you've probably flexed some key skills muscles that are vital **Skills for Life**. For example, creativity, self-belief, self-motivation and the courage to try something new!

Follow @_SkillsForLife on Twitter for more information about how to build your **Skills For Life**



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