Explore Your Creative Side

Welcome to your guide for keeping your mind sharp this summer. These pages are full of activities and challenges to ignite your intelligence, inspire your ideas, and jump-start your creativity!

Make the guide work for you—spend lots of time on what interests you the most and skim over anything that doesn’t speak to you.

How to Use This Guide

The most important thing to know is that there is no right way or wrong way to use this guide. It’s simply a tool to help spark your imagination and creativity this summer.

• Can’t get enough of LEGO® and Minecraft®? Start with some STEM activities.
• Love to write? Start with some prompts that inspire you.
• Work together! Maybe there are some activities in here you’d like to do with a friend, or teach a younger sibling or cousin how to do.

Set Your Own Goals

Just like anything in life, you’ll get out of this guide what you put into it. What do you want to achieve this summer? Do you want to complete five craft or science projects? Write 50 pages of your novel? Spend a little time reading every day, or read five books about people who inspire you? Do you want to develop a new skill?

Share Your Effort

Do it for the ‘gram! Share your successes (or epic fails) with us by tagging @cincylibrary, @cincylibraryteen, #DiscoverSummer. Projects that are particularly picture-worthy are noted with , but we’d love to see your process pics too! Where are you writing? How cozy is your reading nook? What goals did you set? Show us and other teens what you are up to this summer!
Remember that often the fun is in the challenge. If some of the activities are a little outside your comfort zone, give them a shot anyway.

You might be surprised to find you enjoy something you’ve never tried before. If after 20 minutes you’re positive it’s not for you, that’s OK, too. Take a little time to think about why it didn’t work for you, and what tweaks might make it more enjoyable.

Before you begin these activities, take some time to think about what goals are right for you, right now. You can flip through this book to get a little inspiration, or maybe you already have a clear picture of what you want to achieve. It’s really helpful to set goals that are both challenging AND attainable, so you stay engaged, but also don’t get frustrated and give up. Make a plan that shows steps that will get you towards your goals. You might talk through your goals with a family member or friend; sometimes getting a little outside insight can help you stretch yourself a little further and keep you accountable.

Check back in every week or two and review your progress.

► Did you blow through all five activities in one week?
► Are you struggling to find motivation to get started?
► Write your goals down in pencil to start, and you’ll be able to revise them if you need to as the summer goes along.
Speaking of accountability, don’t just set these goals and forget about them!

This summer, I want to...

1. __________________________________________

    July 1: Halfway point! How’s your progress coming? Do you need to make changes?

    __________________________________________
    __________________________________________
    ____________________________
    □ DONE!

2. __________________________________________

    July 1: Halfway point! How’s your progress coming? Do you need to make changes?

    __________________________________________
    __________________________________________
    ____________________________
    □ DONE!

3. __________________________________________

    July 1: Halfway point! How’s your progress coming? Do you need to make changes?

    __________________________________________
    __________________________________________
    ____________________________
    □ DONE!

To dig a little deeper into goal setting, check out this worksheet

A Note on Self Care

It’s important to take good care of yourself in the best of times, and now it’s more important than ever. We hope you are able to make the most of your summer by keeping your brain engaged, but we also want you to know that it’s OK to take some time to just relax or to do things you really enjoy. When you care for your overall well-being, you care for your mind, and you will better be able to focus clearly on achieving your goals.

Stress Journal

Before you can deal with stress, it helps to learn to recognize what causes it. Think about last week and list as many events as you can remember that caused you stress. Use the chart below to record the stressful events. Include everything that will help you decide if there is a pattern to your stress. This journal will help you recognize what causes the most stress in your life. Be sure to rate each event as “high,” “medium,” or “low.” Think of your reaction to the stress. For example: Did your heart start to pound? or Did you feel your temperature rise? Write your reaction in the space provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event (who, what, where)</th>
<th>Stress Level (high, medium, low)</th>
<th>My Reaction</th>
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Now, think of some ways to relieve the stress so you can keep your cool!
Words and Images
Looking to clear your mind? Puzzles and coloring pages help you sort through thoughts and feelings. Others find the stillness of concentrating on a puzzle helpful. Feel free to zone out as you work on these activities.

Free printable coloring pages through Zinio @ CinLib.org/coloringbooks
Sudoku

Every Sudoku has a unique solution that can be reached logically. Enter numbers into the blank spaces so that each row, column, and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9 without repeats.

More to Explore
Free online Sudoku puzzles are available at websudoku.com
Found Poetry

Did you know the poet T.S. Eliot loved to borrow lines from Shakespeare? Eliot’s poems, *The Waste Land*, *A Game of Chess* and *The Love Song for J. Alfred Prufrock* all contain references to Shakespeare’s works.

What you need

- Old magazine, newspaper, junk mail or (unneeded) book
- Black marker
- Camera or smartphone (optional)

How to

Use recycled materials like newspapers, magazines and even books (if you’re sure you won’t need them!) to create Blackout Poetry. Use a marker to circle interesting words that jump out to you, while blacking everything else out. Discover interesting combinations of words while creating a cool piece of visual art.

But don’t stop on the page! What poetry can you find in your neighborhood? Create a photo collage of interesting lines you find from signs, billboards, bumper stickers and posters from your own community.

If you’re uninspired by local signage, try a parallel poem. Write a new poem set to the meter and rhyme structure of an existing favorite poem. See what surprising lines you can come up with without reinventing the wheel!

More to Explore

- Check out the Library’s LitFinder database for access over 150,000 full-text poems as well as short stories, speeches, and plays. [cinlib.org/LitFinder](http://cinlib.org/LitFinder)

- Use the interactive Word Mover tool from ReadWriteThink.org to drag and drop words from famous works or a word bank to create a found poem. [cinlib.org/readwritethink](http://cinlib.org/readwritethink)

- From the Library collection, YA books written in verse:
  - *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo: [cinlib.org/poetx](http://cinlib.org/poetx)
  - *Solo* by Kwame Alexander and Mary Rand Hess: [cinlib.org/soloKwameAlexander](http://cinlib.org/soloKwameAlexander)
  - *Shout: A Poetry Memoir* by Laurie Halse Anderson: [cinlib.org/shoutLaurieHalseAnderson](http://cinlib.org/shoutLaurieHalseAnderson)
Did you know the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County’s Downtown Main Library is home to the Cincinnati Panorama of 1848, the oldest comprehensive photograph of an American city?

**What you need**

- Paper
- Pen or pencil
- Camera or smartphone (optional)
- Your neighborhood!

**How to**

You are exposed to your local neighborhood on a daily basis, but have you taken the time to really look around? Take a trip around your community and try to observe with a new eye. Capture the places that you’ve overlooked before or that have the most meaning for you by taking a photo or drawing a sketch. Write a caption for each image that explains why this place caught your eye or has meaning to you. Is it the history of the place? Is there something unusual that grabbed your attention? Do you have a personal connection or strong memory there? Try to capture the things going on around your community and use your words to share it with the world.

**More to Explore**

- To learn more about how to compose a photo, how to best use your phone to take photos, and more, visit LRNG.com for a playlist of resources: cinlib.org/LRNGplaylist
- Explore the Cincinnati Panorama of 1848 at 1848.cincinnatilibrary.org
- Take a virtual tour of photography exhibits at museums: cinlib.org/MyGobe
- From the Library collection:
  - *Fundamentals of Photography* from The Great Courses on Kanopy: cinlib.org/FundamentalsPhotography
What you need

• Paper
• Pen or pencil
• Camera or smartphone (optional)

How to

This is an unprecedented time — and one you’ll want to remember when you get older. Write a letter or record a video to your future self 10 years from now. Here are some ideas of what to include:

✎ What is the hardest thing about staying home?
✎ How is your life different now when compared to last summer?
✎ Has anything been a pleasant surprise in having to be at home more?
✎ What technology has helped you the most?
✎ What is the best book you have read?
✎ What is the best movie / TV show you have watched?
✎ Have you done any hobbies, crafts or learned a new skill?
✎ Any unique family activities?
✎ Finally, have you learned anything new about yourself? Your family? Your community?

Be sure to save the letter or video somewhere safe to read or view later

Have Gmail? You can send an email to your future self, following these simple steps:

Go to your Gmail and hit compose. Write the letter you would like to send to yourself. (If you already wrote your letter in google docs, just copy and paste it into your email.) Hit the arrow next to send. Click “schedule” in the drop-down menu. Set the date to 10 years in the future and hit send.

More to Explore

► Make an actual Time Capsule! Put your letter in a box, along with some objects that reflect your life right now. Mark the box with a “DO NOT OPEN UNTIL...” date. Put it somewhere where you will be able to find it later!

► Share your personal COVID-19 story in text, images, video, tweets, texts, Facebook posts, Instagram or Snapchat memes, and even screenshots of the news and emails via the A Journal of the Plague Year: An Archive of COVID-19 covid19.omeka.net

► Share your COVID-19 experiences with the Ohio History Connection. They are collecting stories from across the state to document and preserve information about this historic time period ohiohistory.org/learn/collections/covid-pandemic-collection

► From the Library collection, YA novels written (at least in part) in the form of letters:
  • The Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky
  • Dear Martin by Nic Stone
  • I Will Always Write Back by Caitlin Alifrenka and Martin Ganda
What you need

• Paper
• Scissors
• Something to write or draw with
• Optional: needle and thread
• Additional supplies might include old magazines, glue, stickers, washi tape or other items you have on hand

How to

A zine is a self-published mini magazine. There are lots of ways to make a Zine. Here is one way that uses just one sheet of paper.

Now that you have your zine, you can fill it! Need an idea? Try one of these:

✎ An Expert’s Guide to...
✎ Top 10...
✎ My Favorite...
✎ 10 Facts About...
✎ Jokes!
✎ Artwork
✎ Recipes
✎ My city (or neighborhood)
✎ How to make a zine!

Once you have created and filled your zine, make copies to share with your friends! Start your own zine Library by collecting zines from others.

More to Explore

► Watch this video to see how to make your zine: cinlib.org/youtubeMakeZine
► You can access free online magazines with your Library card! Visit cincinnatilibrary.org/eBranch/magazines.html to get started.
► Use the app Pixie to combine text, original artwork, voice narration, and images into a digital Zine. Pixie has paint tools, text options, clip art, and voice recording. Available on iOS and Android.
► From the Library collection, learn how to turn your artistic talent into a career:
  • Dear Ally: How Do You Write a Book? by Ally Carter: cinlib.org/DearAlly
  • Careers in Animation and Comics by W.L. Kitts
  • Make a Nerdy Living: How to Turn Your Passions into Profit, with Advice From Nerds Around the Globe by Alex Langley
Create Your Own Trivia

What you need
• Paper
• Pen or pencil
• Computer, tablet or mobile device (optional)
• Prizes (optional)

How to
• First, decide on a topic for your trivia. Do you have a favorite book, movie, or show? Do you geek out over science or history? Use your own interests as a guide! The questions should start off easy, and get more difficult as your game progresses. Find a platform to host your Trivia Night. Can’t do it live? Try Google Hangouts, Zoom or Kahoot for virtual options. Test out your virtual format before the big day so you know how it works!

• Invite your players. Set a time and date for the trivia, and give people time to prepare the platform on their device, if needed.

• Decide on the rules before you start. As with any game rules are important and the idea is to have fun, not fights. How will you score the game? It can be as simple as one point for each correct response. Are you going to have prizes?

And last, have fun!!!

Explore more
► Need some trivia inspiration? Check out the Library’s FactCite database for information on a variety of topics, including sports, countries, mythology and more. cinlib.org/FactCite
► Learn how to make a quiz on Scratch: cinlib.org/ScratchQuiz
► Use the free Kahoot, Psych!, or QuizUp apps to host your own trivia night. They work on iOS and Android.
► From the Library collection:
  • Check out a documentary on Kanopy to get facts for your trivia night! cincinnatilibrary.kanopy.com
DIY Phone Speaker

What you need

• A paper towel roll

• A paper cup (or plastic cup will also work)

• Duct tape to decorate

• Scissors or craft knife, lead pencil

• A phone or other music payer with a speaker

How to

• Trace around the end of your cardboard tube with a lead pencil onto your paper cup.

• Cut a hole in the cup the exact size you traced.

• Cover the cardboard tube with duct tape.

• Cut a square slit the approximate width of your phone/device on one edge of the cardboard tube furthest from the cup. Poke the other end into the cup.

• Place your phone’s speaker at the open end of the cardboard tube.
See this site for template shape: whatdowedoallday.com/indoor-boomerang

Did you know that King Tutankhamen had an extensive collection of boomerangs? What you need
• Paper
• Pen or pencil
• Camera or smartphone (optional)

What you need
• Heavy paper or cardboard
• Scissors
• Tape or glue
• Pencil
• 360-degree protractor (optional)

How to
• Decide on the shape of your boomerang’s arm.
• Trace the design and cut out 3 or 4 identical pieces.
• Tape or glue the arms together at equal intervals (you can use your protractor here for help).
• Throw it!

If your boomerang doesn’t return to you – don’t worry!
Experiment with the variables to create the best boomerang:
• Try different angles when throwing.
• Try throwing at different speeds.
• Try different types of paper or cardboard.
• Try a different number of arms.
• Try creating different arm shapes.

How does it work?
Returning boomerangs have a special curved shape and two or more wings that will spin to create unbalanced aerodynamic forces. These forces — sometimes called “lift” — cause the boomerang’s path to curve in an elliptical shape, so that it will return to the thrower when thrown correctly.

Explore more
► Explore flight with NASA: www.nasa.gov/topics/aeronautics/index.html
► From the Library collection, learn more about ancient and aboriginal cultures with these videos, available on Kanopy:
  • Dreamings: The Art of Aboriginal Australia: cinlib.org/AboriginalDreamings
  • Aboriginal and Colonial Myths of Australia: cinlib.org/AustraliaColonialMyths
  • The History of Ancient Egypt: cinlib.org/ancientEgypt
► Story starters:
  • Story Starter: I threw the boomerang and watched it disappear.
  • Imagine that you could fly. Where would you go? What would it feel like?
### Making Your Own Ice Cream

#### What you need
- Measuring spoons
- Measuring cup
- Granulated sugar (1 tablespoon)
- Table or sea salt (½ cup)
- Half-and-half; alternatively, milk or whipping cream may be used (½ cup)
- Vanilla extract (¼ teaspoon)
- Ice cubes (4–8 cups)
- Small, pint-sized sealable baggie (one per ice cream portion)
- Gallon-sized sealable baggie
- Oven mitts or a small towel
- Timer or clock

#### How to
- Prepare your ice cream mix by adding 1 tablespoon of sugar, ½ cup of half-and-half (or milk or heavy whipping cream), and ¼ teaspoon of vanilla extract to a small sealable baggie.

- Add 4 cups of ice cubes or crushed ice to a large, gallon-sized baggie. The ice in this baggie is used to freeze your prepared ice cream mix as fast as possible. Add ½ cup of salt to the ice cubes.

- Put the small baggie with the prepared ice cream mixture into the large baggie with the ice cubes and salt. Be sure both baggies are sealed shut.

- Put on oven mitts or wrap the baggie in a small towel and then shake the bag for 5 minutes. Every couple of minutes, feel the smaller baggie and take a quick peek at it.

- When you are done shaking, carefully open the large baggie and remove the small baggie with the ice cream mix.

#### How does it work?
For ice to melt, it takes in heat from its surroundings. Adding salt to the ice reduces its freezing point, so a lot of heat is taken from the little bag. Therefore, the milk and sugar become frozen, creating yummy ice cream!

#### Explore more
- Create your own demo video showing how to make ice cream using Stop Motion Studio, a free app for iOS and Android. Share it with a friend or family member and challenge them to follow your instructions and recipe.

- From the Library collection:
  - Hello, My Name Is Ice Cream: The Art And Science Of The Scoop by Dana Cree
  - The Everything Ice Cream, Gelato, And Frozen Desserts Cookbook by Susan Whetzel
Science of Yoga

What you need
- An open space where you can move freely without danger of hitting anything
- A mat (optional)

How to
- Please perform these next physical exercises with caution and the knowledge of your risk and own ability.
  - Easy Pose: Sit in a criss-crossed position with your legs, back straight, and backs of your hands resting on your knees. Practice breathing deeply or breathing exercises for added benefit.
  - Tree Stand: Balance poses help to focus your mind. Start standing, then lift your right leg to the inside of your left thigh. Bring your hands into prayer position and once you are properly balanced raise them out above your head. Hold and breathe. Then repeat for the other side.
  - Downward Dog: Start on hands and knees then place toes down and straighten legs, straightening arms as well. Focus on pushing hands into the floor and breathing.
  - Warrior II: Start standing, then step your feet apart about four feet. Turn out your right foot and then the left slightly. Bend your right knee and raise your arms parallel to the floor. Look out over your right shoulder. Hold and breathe. Repeat for the other side.
  - Child’s Pose: Start sitting on your knees, bend at your waist until your belly rests on your thighs and your forehead on the floor. You can place your arms out in front of you or at your sides. Breathe deeply.

How does it work?
- Scientists have conducted testing that now leads them to believe that yoga has a measurable effect on our nervous system. They believe that their research now shows not only yoga’s relaxation benefits but also that it causes the body to release feel-good hormones like serotonin.

Explore more
- Trying doing some of these yoga poses once a day. Do you notice a change in your mood or do you feel more relaxed?
- Use the free Map My Fitness app to track your exercise and fitness efforts. Works on iOS and Android.
- Use the free Kahoot, Psych!, or QuizUp apps to host your own trivia night. They work on iOS and Android.
- From the Library collection:
  - Explore free yoga videos from Hoopla at hoopladigital.com
  - Check out the Yoga for Health video series from Kanopy at cincinnatilibrary.kanopy.com

Writing Prompts:
- Imagine you are an ant, walking on the surface of a Möbius strip.
Möbius Strip

What you need

• Measuring spoons
• Paper
• Scissors
• Tape
• Pen or pencil

How to

• Here is one of the strangest loops you will ever see. It’s called a Möbius strip in honor of the German mathematician who first investigated its properties in 1858, August Möbius. To build a Möbius strip, you need a strip of paper about one inch wide and ten inches long. Coil the paper into a simple loop. Then put a single twist in the loop before securing the ends together with a piece of tape.

• Draw a line on one side of the strip. You will soon discover that this loop has only one side!

• Next, predict what will happen if you cut along the line you just drew, then test out your theory. Describe the result. Is it one-sided, or two-sided?

Now, for some problem-solving fun!

If we place two ants side-by-side on a Möbius strip and start them off in opposite directions, will they pass each other? If so, at what point? (Answer: Below)

Answer:

No, they will never pass each other. One ant will be walking on the top side of the strip, while the other will be on the bottom side.

Explore more

▶ Want to know more? Head over to Wolfram Math World’s Möbius strip website to learn more about the mathematics behind the Möbius strip. mathworld.wolfram.com/MoebiusStrip.html

▶ Many have found the concept of a one-sided object fascinating, including graphic artists M.C. Escher. cinlib.org/EscherMöbius

▶ From the Library collection:
  • Explore more Mind-Bending Math: Riddles and Paradoxes from The Great Courses in Kanopy at cinlib.org/MindBendingMath.
  • Check out the work of M.C. Escher in M.C. Escher: 29 Master Prints
Need more Boredom Busters?

► Download a book or stream a video from the Library’s eBranch: cincinnatiliibrary.org/eBranch

► Make digital art using Sketchpad: sketchpad.app

► Make DIY lush bath bombs: diyprojectsforteens.com/diy-bath-bombs-recipe/

► Search a library VIRTUALLY

  Public Library of Cincinnati; cinlib.org/virtualtour
  Library of Congress; cinlib.org/LibraryCongressstour
  New York Public Library; cinlib.org/NYCPublicLibrary

► Download and complete a themed crossword puzzle: cinlib.org/NYTthemecrosswords.

► Watch for ways that you can explore the Cincinnati Art Museum’s 10x10 Teen Art Expo: cincinnatiartmuseum.org/10x10

► Learn to cook! Checkout a cookbook from the Library, use a free app like Yummly, or find a cooking video online.

► Start a journal! Try to write and/or draw in it every day.

► Volunteer! Find a local organization who can use some help, or offer to cut a neighbor’s grass. Take it online and sign up for a site like Volunteer Match.

► Read to a sibling or younger child or demo one of the activities in this guide.


► Redesign your bedroom or another space in your home.

► Organize a yard sale.

► Learn to code with a free resource like Mimo or codeacademy.com. Then, make your own app and enter it into the Congressional App Challenge.

► Work out! Staying active is a great way to relieve stress. Try a free app like Daily Yoga

► Got something to say? Create your own podcast with a free app like Anchor

► Learn to dance! Use a free app like Steezy Audio

► Create an obstacle course for your younger siblings or cousins

► Study for your driver’s permit with these free resources: dmv-permit-test.com/

► Create a DIY escape room with a free resource like: escape-team.com
This program is made possible through the generous support of these donors: