

SURVIVAL

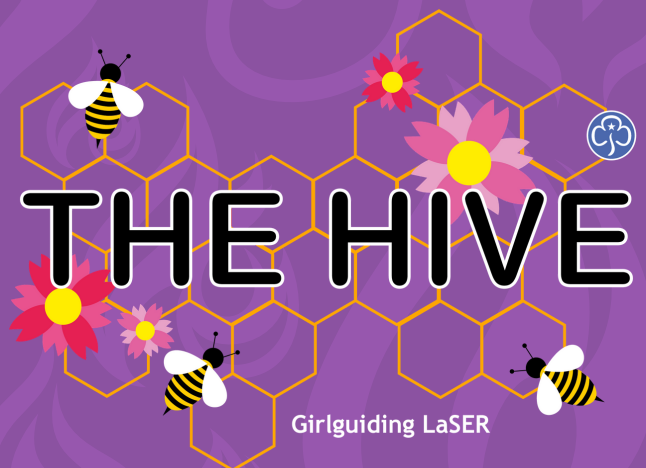
A collection of creative works
from members of Girlguiding
aged 14-30 on the theme of
'survival'

London and South East
England



WE DISCOVER, WE GROW

Girlguiding



The Hive wanted to challenge our members to get creative based on a chosen theme. We chose the theme of 'survival' as it could be interpreted in many ways and in different forms. This is evident from the fantastic entries we received.

Our members have used creative writing, photography, digital art, lino printing, oil pastels and more to convey what 'survival' means to them. We have collected our favourite pieces into this creative anthology, which we are excited to share with you.

The design of this anthology has taken inspiration from the work it features. Fire and water were common themes, as well as skies, storms and plants. We loved that participants took the basic tools for survival and turned them into deeper, more personal meanings.

We hope you enjoy this collection of creative works, showcasing the talents of Girlguiding members from London and South East England region and beyond.



Featuring

'Survival through the cracks' - Georgia Thornhill,
Nottinghamshire

'Simply words' - Sarah Hammond, Derbyshire

'A means to living' - Rachael Palmer, Kent West

'Survival' - Alexia Beale, Dorking

'Silence' - Lucy-Ann Brown, Gloucestershire

'Ignite' - Rai Burroughs, London and South East
England Region

'Separation' - Lois Hilton, Sussex East

'Morning' - Charlotte Allen, Greater London Kent

'(n) pet | ri | chor' - Katie Hodgson, Lambeth

'Failure' - Izzy Attwood, Sussex East



'Survival through the cracks'

by Georgia Thornhill



"The picture shows dandelions in our garden growing through the cracks in the slabs. Dandelions are very hardy and regularly survive harsh weather conditions. Survival requires resilience. Resilience often means using the difficult times/cracks to help grow mentally and physically."



'Simply Words'

by Sarah Hammond

SURVIVAL ISN'T
JUST
FRIENDS
INSTINCT
JOY HOPE
MUSIC FUN
RELAXATION BELIEF
STRENGTH
TOGETHER WE CAN



"My piece is an extremely simple one, to convey what survival can be beyond our natural instinct."

Short words and phrases are used to be 'to the point'; hopefully everyone can recognise some as being part of their own survival."

'A Means to Living'

by Rachael Palmer

Surviving on a desert island is simple, in theory.

Find food.
Find water.
Find shelter.

The essential cornerstones that allow our bodies to continue to function as they should. All that's needed is to establish a routine of ensuring your basic needs are met. Survival, at this stage, may well be all you can do; a necessary focus to get through the day when everything else feels insignificant. It's a reset button, pausing the world around you while you take time to catch up with it.

But what if that survival state becomes a habit, becomes the normal you're living your life by? What happens if on your desert island you've found your food and water, you've made your shelter, and you've waited and waited but the rescue you assured yourself would be coming hasn't arrived.

How long could you keep going? How long before even just survival feels like an effort, when all your days are monotonous and each one is a perfect replica of the last, and you realise how soul-destroying it is to think all you're capable of is just making it through.

Another day.
Another week.
Another month.



Until suddenly, it's another year and all that time you spent convincing yourself that it would be completely different by now just seems to melt away into the most beautiful lie you've ever told.

But beauty does not have to be constructed; reality has it in abundance and uses it to create the moments that make surviving worthwhile. To notice them can be a challenge but you can take it slowly; baby steps are allowed. Tiptoe towards the possibility that there are things out there to look forward to.

They can be little things to begin with: making a cup of tea and watching the milk sink to the bottom before delicate tendrils curl up reaching for the surface; the moment when the tempo of the song you're listening to in the car changes at exactly the same time you accelerate; the feeling when you step on the small patch of carpet that's been warmed by the sun breaking through a gap in the curtains.

But rest assured, there is a waterfall on this desert island that will become your favourite place if you just dare to look for it. And then gradually, bit by bit, hesitantly at first, you find yourself seeking out the bigger things: the relationships; the adventures; the finding your purpose. The things that make you get up in the morning, not because you need to, but because you want to.

This is you building your raft and making your own way. It will go wrong. And it will hurt. The raft will break and the tide will work against you and you'll feel like wallowing in the shallows because you were trying so hard but you've just ended up back where you started. So, you revert to survival.



For a time, you think that maybe this is easier. The tedious nature of predictability is offset by the comfort of familiarity. What you've lost in excitement, you've gained in control because after all, if you don't throw yourself into the risks, then you don't leave yourself open to an infinite number of unplanned for possibilities.

Except now you remember what it was like to live, to relish the exhilaration of the unknown rather than fear it. You find yourself craving that feeling, so tentatively, you try again. In doing so, you realise that actually, you're not right back where you started at all. This time it's easier because your comfort zone isn't just the shelter you built, it's the beach outside too. This time you're not starting from scratch because you know what went wrong last time. It might not be your second attempt, or even a third, fourth, or fifth. It might feel like every improvement you make highlights other flaws, but you are improving each time you try.

Until one day, you strike gold. The journey isn't over, but every mistake you have ever made means you are finally on your way. Your raft is afloat and on it you sit, carried by the strength of your own experience and guided by your desire to explore your horizons. You survive without realising now; it no longer feels like an effort anymore because survival has become a means to living.

"'Survival' reminded me of the classic desert island scenario, which I wanted to use to consider the difference between surviving and living, how they rely on each other, and how survival could feel difficult without finding reasons to enjoy living."



'Survival'

by Alexia Beale

From Baden Powell, sat 'tween,
African plains, wilds untamed,
In sparse expanse, alone.
Kindling tiny flame,
Midst darkness,
Neath star-light;
This his one foremost thought:
Survival.

Then to the first boy scouts,
Smartly lined on parade,
Signalling, laying fires,
Following tracks they'd laid.
With spirits bold,
Cheerful smiles,
Uniformed, playing at:
Survival.

To the Guides, through ages long,
In times of war and peace,
Singing heartily; round
Their campfire, never cease.
Joyful songs,
Helpful, kind,
Together, over the years:
Survival.

To me, in times of trouble,
Sparking a flame of hope,
In t' turmoil of my mind,
When I cannot cope,
Peaceful thoughts,
Chinks of light.
Reaching me, that notion:
Survival.

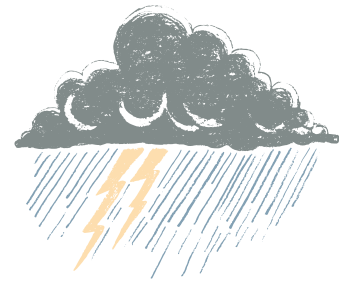


**'Survival' oil pastels on
canvas, by Alexia Beale**



'Silence'

by Lucy-Ann Brown



Silence
The sensation that provides peace
Tranquillity
Space to think.

The absence of distraction
Confusion
Noise.

The ability to have time to breathe
To think
To talk.

The hush of night
Stillness
Quietness.

Space in the air
For contemplation
For relaxation.

For us.

For them,

It's the right to remain.
But at what cost?
Who's choice?

It's the sound of a knife
Cutting through the darkness
Waiting in the night.

It's the sound of the calm
before the storm
Hearts Pounding
Blood Pumping.

It's the sound of a single shot
Echoing through the night
Splitting through the village.

It's the sound of a life being taken
The deafening cry
The last breath
Silence.



'Silence' digital art, by Lucy-Ann Brown



"The response was inspired by how individual experiences can affect us for many years after occurring. People are silenced because of their past situations, yet we all find a way to survive day to day."

'Ignite'

by Rai Burroughs



"Fire is the essence of survival: it produces heat, light, is used to cook, purify water, and work as a signal. For this lino print I used a deep all-encompassing blue that contrasts with the light of the fire."

'Separation'

by Lois Hilton

Separation from you,
Is something I never thought I'd have to do.

Separation from you is hard,
When we used to be as close as the stars
Are to my heart,
Before it all fell apart
Their beauty and view,
Are as beautiful as you.

Separation from you is pain,
As difficult to remove as a stain
I try to keep it out my mind,
But your eyes were too kind,
I always think of you,
Do you miss me too?

Separation from you is weird,
Like my whole life has been steered
Onto a different road I didn't want,
That it's just a haunt,
My mind playing tricks,
But the feeling still sticks.

Separation from you is sad,
I never thought our relationship would be this bad,

We don't talk now,
And I sometimes ask myself how
I let it all happen to this?
When all my life was bliss.

Because separation from you
Is something I thought I'd never have to do.

"I wrote this not specifically from my point of view, but of many. Some aspects I experienced myself, others not. I've always loved writing, and have found poems have always been a great way to let things out and express feelings I never really felt I had. This poem specifically is based on some friends I lost through covid and leaving Secondary School."



'Morning'

by Charlotte Allen



"Each weekend I do the early shift at my local hospital as a volunteer and this is the view I saw last time I was walking to the station- during the pandemic I felt lucky to have the opportunity to help others who were struggling with this illness, it really helped me to have one solid event to look forward to each week."



'(n) pet | ri | chor'

by Katie Hodgson

Rat tail hair with badger eyes.
Sodden socks impossible to dry.
Stomping and splashing to shelter.

A dozen colours breaking through
the sheet of charcoal
that has become this Sunday afternoon.

Laughter and puddles surround you.
Dripping droplets
kissing your face.

Dancing to the beat of patter
and squelches.
A smile on your lips.

You've been here before.
A toddler with too big wellies.
A young lover staring in your own movie.

Running to the bus stop after school.
Pushing your beat up first car to safety.
Using natures mask for tears.

You stop, breathing in the moment.
It's the smell of a thousand memories.
And a thousand new beginnings.

*"Even on the darkest days you can
see hope and survive."*

'Failure'

by Izzy Attwood

I have failed again.

The failure creeps up and reaches out with inky tendrils, latching onto my mind and entangling itself. It clouds my vision and wraps itself around my thoughts, turning them to ash. It tells me I was foolish to hope, that I was never worthy of the prize, that I should succumb to its embrace and fall into easy darkness.

I walk through the festering twilight, teetering on the precipice.

In the distance, I spot a light. On my approach, I realise that it is a small dagger. Reflected in the blade I see my countless hours of preparation, the painstaking growth of my confidence, how much I have already learnt, how far I have already come.

Will I let that go to waste?

I grip the dagger, and in one fluid motion I slash through the darkness, creating a tear. I step through the curtain and it is like taking the first sweet breath after breaking through the surface of water.

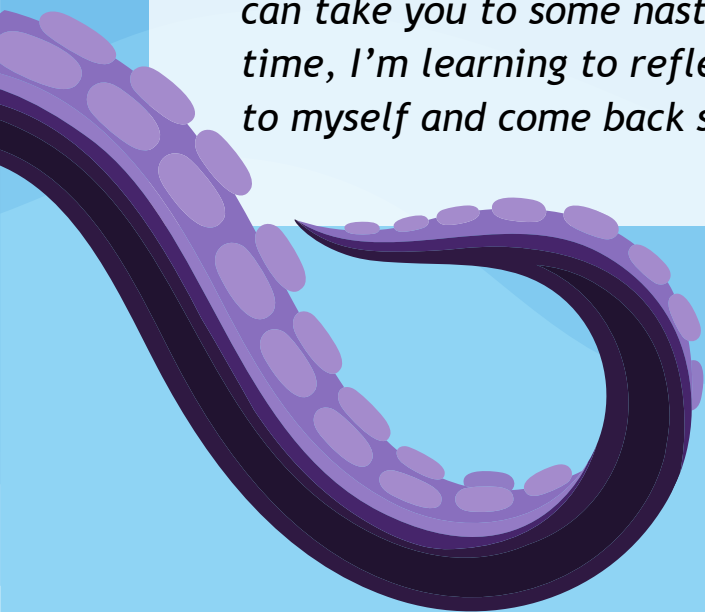
The tendrils recoil as I cut them away and I see the truth the darkness was hiding. My failure is not a weight tied to my ankles, dragging me further down into the murky depths. Upon a closer look it is armour, weaponry, tools to drive myself on to success.

I put on chainmail to protect my heart. A gleaming helmet to strengthen my mind. I gather my past experiences and forge them into weapons; a great longsword, a double-bladed axe, a jewel encrusted bow and quiver.

I battle the darkness, driving it away.

Sometimes the darkness manages to creep its way back in. Sometimes, my weapons break. But it is not the breaking of the weapons that I focus on, it is my choice to reforge them, make them stronger and try again.

"Whether it's your driving test, an interview, or something just didn't work out the way you were hoping for, failing at something S U C K S. It becomes all you can think about and can take you to some nasty places. Though it always takes time, I'm learning to reflect on my experiences, be kind to myself and come back stronger next time."



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Been inspired?
Want to see more from The Hive?

The Hive is a space for all Girlguiding members aged 14-30 to talk about what matters to them. If you've got something you'd like to shout about, get in touch with us - we'd love to hear from you!

Find us on Facebook (@thehivelaser) Instagram (@thehivelaser) or check out our blogs at www.girlguidinglaser.org.uk/the-hive

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England



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