

BLOSSOM & ROOT

INTEGRATED LANGUAGE ARTS // LEVEL 6

# *Creativity & Community*

INDIVIDUAL NOVEL STUDY

LESSON GUIDE

THE FIRST RULE OF PUNK  
BY CELIA C. PÉREZ



[www.blossomandroot.com](http://www.blossomandroot.com)

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# *Blossom & Root*

Integrated Language Arts,  
Level 6:

## *Creativity & Community*

A Hands-On, Secular Language Arts Curriculum

**Individual Novel Study For:**

***The First Rule of Punk***  
**by Celia C. Pérez**

**Blossom & Root Integrated Language Arts**  
**Level 6: Creativity and Community**

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# Blossom and Root Novel Studies

## Level 6

### Important Note to Parents and Guardians

Level 6 novel studies are designed to be done independently by students. However, while some learners will be ready to work independently at this level, others will still need (or prefer) the guidance of an adult. Please consider the options on the following page, and decide which one fits your family best. Regardless of the option you choose, please follow these guidelines:

1. **Always screen any and all films, website links, and books before allowing your student access to them.** Some of these will not be appropriate for every family.
2. **This guide is designed for a parent or guardian to oversee their student's work, even if they are using the independent option.** Please take time to look over this lesson guide at the beginning and end of each week. Decide what your learner will and won't be expected to complete, as there are many optional activities. Decide which links you want them to access or skip. Mark the guide as needed to help your learner understand what to do and what to skip.
3. Please always sit with (or supervise) your student when they're using the internet for research, to access links, etc. Please note that ads on some websites, commercials before certain videos, and comment sections can sometimes feature content that will not be appropriate. This is a good age to start teaching your learner how to navigate the internet safely and responsibly.

### Scheduling Options

Weeks 1 - 3 are the heart of the curriculum, but we have included a fourth week to provide additional breathing space, review, and deep dives for families that prefer a more relaxed pace.

- **Three-Week Schedule:** Complete Weeks 1 - 3. Omit Week 4, or select desired activities from Week 4 to fold into the third week.
- **Four-Week Schedule:** Complete Weeks 1 - 4.
- **Beyond Four Weeks:** If your family loves deep dives and rabbit trails, please take as much time as you like to complete this novel study. The scripted daily schedules are only suggestions.

# Make It Yours

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## How to Teach This Curriculum

"You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have."

- Maya Angelou

### **Part One: Exploring Literature**

Your student will spend time each week reading the literature selections, or you can read them together. After reading, they'll explore elements of story through short prompts provided in the curriculum. They will then explore the literature through journal prompts, narrations, and a variety of activities, from hands-on projects, to rabbit-trail options, and more. Please note that we continue to provide space for drawings and illustrations in this level, but it is completely optional. Students who do not enjoy coloring and drawing need not feel pressured to do so every week.

Before having your student read any of the novels in this curriculum, we highly suggest you read ahead. Some stories may contain elements, words, or imagery that are not appropriate for your family's values, or perhaps too intense for your child's individual sensitivities. Some stories may also contain references to alcohol or drug use, adult situations, violence, racism, peril, gambling, or cruelty.

### **Part Two: Vocabulary, Writing, Grammar, and Punctuation**

#### **Vocabulary**

Your child will explore new vocabulary through a variety of exercises, or by writing an original sentence, poem, meme, joke, song lyric, billboard, or whatever else they can think up, using provided vocabulary words. Sometimes, the vocabulary lesson uses match-up prompts instead. All vocabulary words from this novel study are reviewed in Week 4.

### **Part Two, cont.**

#### **Copywork, Dictation, and Grammar**

We have provided copywork prompts and passages each week in the student notebook. These are meant to help children practice handwriting, spelling, and punctuation, and to explore grammar concepts. If your child needs more room (or larger lines) for their copywork, feel free to use a separate notebook or loose pages created for middle-grade writers. Our copywork includes grammar prompts to complete first. Some weeks also include an optional dictation exercise. You will read the dictation passage slowly out loud and they will write it down. You may need to read it several times. When they finish, give them the passage from the lesson guide to check their work and make any corrections to their own passage. Cursive copywork pages have been included at the back of this guide and can be switched out for the regular print copywork if you wish.

#### **The Super Secret Notebook Guide**

The Super Secret Notebook Guide replaces the Creative Extensions Guide (from Levels 2 and 3) in Levels 4 and up. This guide is designed to get your child playing with words, sentences, paragraphs, short essays, and stories in a gentle and creative way. It is the primary writing portion of this curriculum. These prompts are designed to be done by your student independently, but you are welcome to adapt them to be parent-led instead if that fits your needs better. Please refer to the guide itself for further details.

Please note that Super Secret Notebook prompts are contained in a separate PDF.

#### **Independent Reading**

We recommend that most Level 6 students read from a level-appropriate book for at least 40 minutes per day. We highly recommend letting them choose their own books for independent reading at this level, from both fiction and non-fiction sources.

#### **Part Three: Social Studies Prompts**

Each week includes an optional social studies prompt that ties into the literature selection. ALL social studies prompts in this curriculum are completely optional. Do not feel pressured to complete them all.

# Scope & Sequence:

## Novel Study for *The First Rule of Punk*

### "Elements of Story" Focus:

- Exploring how an author introduces and reveals a character through actions, thoughts, dialogue, reactions, background information, physical descriptions, idiosyncrasies, objects, possessions, and physical spaces
- Investigating how specificity breathes life into a character
- Touching briefly on static versus dynamic characters (in Week 4)

### Literature Project:

- Creating a series of zines on a variety of topics inspired by Malú's zines in the novel

### Grammar Focus:

- Pronouns (subject pronouns, object pronouns, possessive pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, interrogative pronouns, indefinite pronouns, and antecedents)

### Punctuation Focus:

- Italicized titles and titles that use quotation marks
- Capitalization in titles

### Super Secret Notebook Project:

- Persuasive writing

### Social Studies Tie-Ins:

- Pan dulce
- Huapango dancing and Irish step-dancing
- José Guadalupe Posada
- The Bracero Program

### Additional Topics Explored:

- Punk rock
- Lola Beltrán
- Robert Frost's poem "Nothing Gold Can Stay"
- Literary allusions
- Making mixed "tapes"

# Week No. 1: The First Rule of Punk

## Day 1

### In the student notebook, complete the journal prompt: "Pie Chart of Myself"

Read the full prompt in the student notebook, then write and illustrate your response.

### Elements of Story: How We Meet a Character

Think of some of your favorite characters from novels or short stories. When you picture them in your mind, what do you see? How would you describe them? What do their physical features look like? What do they like and dislike? What are they excited about or afraid of? How do they feel about the world they inhabit? What special knowledge or skills do they possess? What are their hopes and dreams? Who do they love and trust? Who are their enemies? How do they face up to their challenges? How do they change and evolve over time? Chances are, you can answer these questions easily, and can possibly share a lot more about your favorite characters. That's because a good writer knows how to make a character come alive on the page.

Characters don't just pop up in our minds the minute we turn the first page. They must be established. Writers have many ways to establish a character. Let's take a look at a few of them:

- **Actions**, or what the character does (and how they do it)
- **Thoughts**, or what the character thinks
- **Dialogue**, or what the character says (and how they say it) and what other characters say about them / to them
- **Reactions**, or responses the character has to people, places, and situations within the story
- **Background information**, or details an author provides through exposition, flashbacks, etc.
- **Physical descriptions**, or details an author provides about how a character looks, moves, and dresses
- **Idiosyncrasies**, or interesting mannerisms, habits, characteristics, and details a character exhibits
- **Objects, possessions, and spaces** that belong to or are significant to a character

There is no right or wrong way to introduce a character to a reader, and authors employ many different styles and techniques depending on their purpose when writing a story, play, poem, etc.

As you read through this week's chapters, try to find examples of the eight strategies listed above. How does Celia C. Pérez introduce us to Malú or any other characters in the story? As you find examples, jot them down on the corresponding pages in the student notebook. You can either copy direct quotes or summarize a passage in your own words.

### Start the literature project: Create a zine about your home or your name

During this novel study, you will create several original zines. This week, you will create a zine either about your home or how you got your name. First, look at Malú's instructions on how to make a zine. You can find them at the end of the book. Next, choose which zine you want to make. If you decide to make one about your home, try to include special memories, sensory details, etc. You can see Malú's example at the end of Chapter 1. If you decide to make one about your name, you may want to ask your family to tell you the story behind your name first (if you don't already know it.) You can see Malú's example at the end of Chapter 6. There are no rules about how you fill the pages of your zine. You can use doodles, paintings, drawings, or images from magazines, newspapers, etc. You can include as much or as little text as you like. If you're feeling extra inspired, feel free to create a zine for both topics.

### Optional Independent reading for 40 minutes or more

# Week No. 1: The First Rule of Punk

## Day 2

- In the student notebook, complete the first prompt on the copywork page.
- Begin the prompt for *The First Rule of Punk* Week 1 in the Super Secret Notebook Guide.
- Continue the literature project: Create a zine about your home or your name.
- Optional Independent Reading for 40 minutes or more

## Day 3

- In the student notebook, complete the vocabulary page: Read the instructions and complete the activities in the student notebook. This week you'll explore several vocabulary words in context.
- In the student notebook, complete the second prompt on the copywork page.
- Continue working on the prompt for *The First Rule of Punk* Week 1 in the Super Secret Notebook Guide.
- Continue the literature project: create a zine about your home or your name.
- Optional Independent Reading for 40 minutes or more

## Day 4

- In the student notebook, complete the narration page. Illustrate and retell an event from this week's literature selection.
- In the student notebook, complete the third prompt on the copywork page. Today you will copy the passage (or a portion of the passage) in your best printing.
- Continue working on the prompt for *The First Rule of Punk* Week 1 in the Super Secret Notebook Guide.
- Finish the literature project: create a zine about your home or your name.
- Optional Independent Reading for 40 minutes or more



# Week No. 1: The First Rule of Punk

## Day 5 (optional)

- In the student notebook, complete the dictation exercise.** Ask an adult to read the dictation passage in this guide out loud to you a few times, slowly and clearly. As you listen, copy the passage onto the dictation page in your notebook. When you are finished, use the dictation passage in this guide to check your work. Correct any spelling, punctuation, or grammar mistakes as needed.
- Finish the prompt for *The First Rule of Punk* Week 1 in the Super Secret Notebook Guide, if you have not finished it already.**
- Catch up on any work from the week, if needed**
- Optional **Complete this week's bonus activity: Exploring Poly Styrene and the X-Ray Spex**  
At the end of Chapter 12, Malú shares a zine about Poly Styrene, one of her favorite musicians and the founder of the X-Ray Spex. For this activity, listen to the song "The Day the World Turned Day-Glo" by the X-Ray Spex and read through the lyrics. What do you think Poly Styrene was commenting on with this song? What do you think it's about?

Song from X-Ray Spex Official (YouTube): [https://youtu.be/nfv9VbJqV\\_s](https://youtu.be/nfv9VbJqV_s) (The lyrics are posted in the comments but an adult should screen comments first.)

Song with Lyrics Over It (YouTube): <https://youtu.be/P0gs-gWuWI8> (This version has flashing lights and colors. Photosensitive viewers may want to skip this one.)

Adults, please note: You may also wish to look the song up on your favorite music app and seek out the lyrics using a Google search, but please note that most of the websites that provide song lyrics contain adult images, language, and content that may not be appropriate for every family.

**IMPORTANT: Clickable links from every lesson in this curriculum can be found in the Clickable Links PDF that came with your purchase!**

- Optional **Complete Social Studies Prompt for the Week**  
See next page for details.

# BLOSSOM & ROOT

INTEGRATED LANGUAGE ARTS // LEVEL 6

## *Creativity & Community*

INDIVIDUAL NOVEL STUDY

STUDENT NOTEBOOK



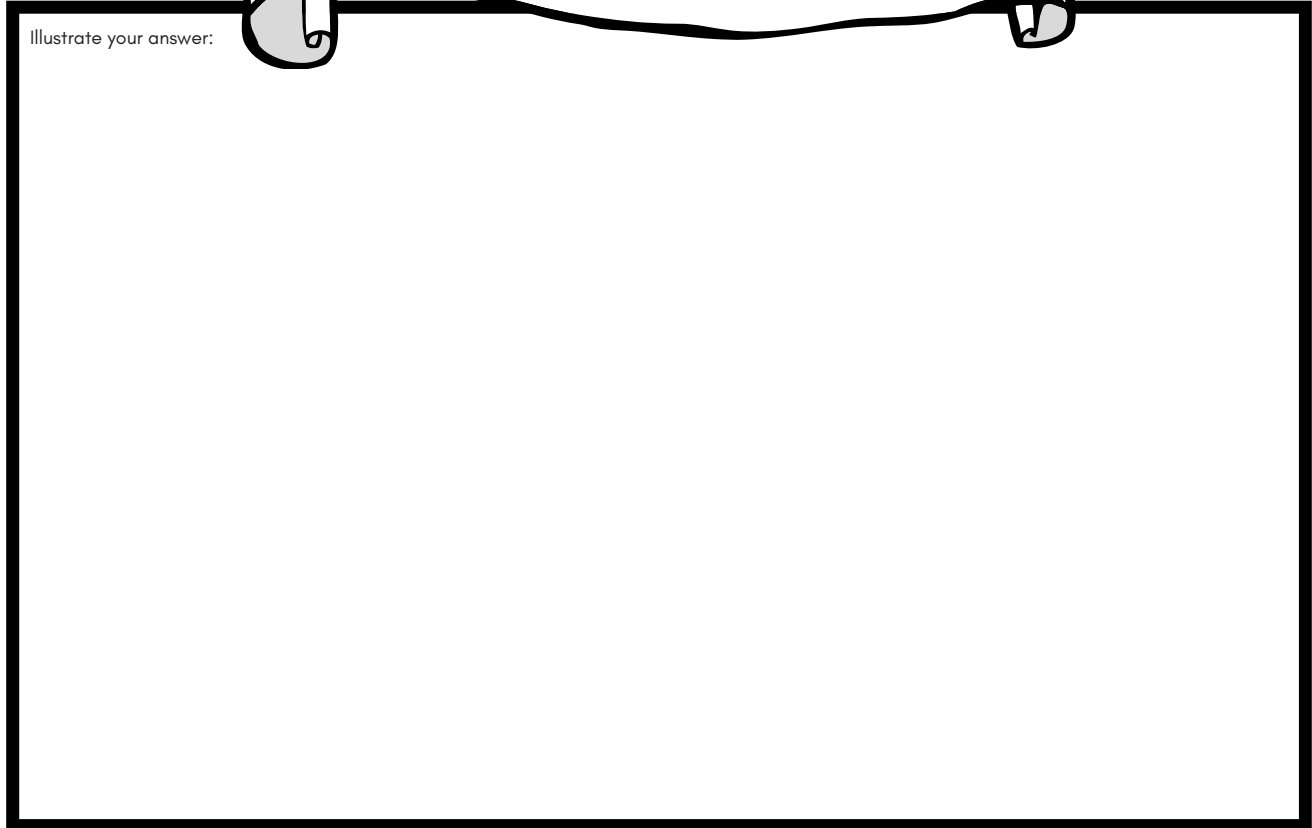
THE FIRST RULE OF PUNK  
BY CELIA C. PÉREZ

Integrating Creativity, Social Studies, Reading, and Writing with Fiction, Non-Fiction, and Poetry

Week 1

# Literature Journal

Illustrate your answer:



**Pie Chart of Myself:** At the end of Chapter 6, Malú creates a pie chart of her mom and herself. If you were to create a pie chart of yourself, which descriptors would you include? Would you include your interests, likes and dislikes, and words that describe how you see yourself? What else would you want to include? In the space above, create and label a pie chart that expresses who you are at your core. Don't worry if you haven't read Chapter 6 yet. You can flip ahead to look at Malú's charts if you would like to see examples. In the space below, elaborate a bit on your chart and how it expresses who you are at a quick glance.

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**How We Meet a Character**

See the "Elements of Story" prompt in the lesson guide for instructions.

**Actions**

**Thoughts**

**Dialogue**

**Reactions**

**How We Meet a Character, cont.**

See the "Elements of Story" prompt in the lesson guide for instructions.

**Background Information**

**Physical descriptions**

**Idiosyncrasies**

**Objects, possessions ,  
and spaces**

**Read first:** According to the lesson guide, you will complete prompt 1 below on Day 2, prompt 2 on Day 3, and prompt 3 on Day 4. The corresponding passage can be found on the "copywork passage" page.

**Prompt 1:** All of the words in the entire world can be sorted into eight categories called the parts of speech. They are nouns, pronouns, adjectives and articles\*, verbs, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. (\*In this level, we will group articles with adjectives.) In this novel study, we are going to focus on pronouns.

Pronouns are substitutes for nouns. They take the place of a noun, which helps us to avoid repeating the noun again and again. Instead of saying "Jun picked a flower and then Jun brought the flower home," we can say, "Jun picked a flower and then *he* brought *it* home" Pronouns can save us from writing or saying more than we need to, and they help keep our sentences tidy.

You use pronouns all the time in your everyday life, and you're probably already at least a bit familiar with them. Today we're going to focus on two really important groups of pronouns. They are subject pronouns, or pronouns that stand in for a subject, and object pronouns, or pronouns that stand in for an object. They are not interchangeable--subject pronouns are always used to replace a subject and object pronouns are always used to replace an object. Remember that the subject of a sentence is the noun that is "doing the action" of the sentence, and the object of a sentence is the noun that is being affected by the action or involved in the action. In our example sentence above, Jun is the subject--he is picking. He is "doing the action." The flower is the object. It is what is being picked by Jun. All complete sentences have a subject (though it may be implied in a command) but not all complete sentences have objects.

On the following page, sort the subject and object pronouns by writing each pronoun in the word box under the correct category. If you get stuck, try plugging the word into the sentence at the top of the page to see where it makes sense. Be careful--some words can be both! (Answers for copywork prompts can be found at the bottom of the dictation page in the lesson guide.)

**Prompt 2:** Let's review what we learned about subject and object pronouns. The passage at the bottom of the following page contains several errors concerning subject and object pronouns. See if you can find them, then cross them out and write the correct pronouns above them. (Answers for copywork prompts can be found at the bottom of the dictation page in the lesson guide.)

**Prompt 3:** Today, you will copy the copywork passage (or a portion of the passage), using your best printing. Can you spot the subject pronoun hiding in the passage? Highlight or underline it, and check your answer against the dictation page in the lesson guide.

Prompt 1: Place the pronouns in the word box into the correct categories below.

\_\_\_\_\_ **forgot to bring** \_\_\_\_\_ .

Subject

Object

**Subject Pronouns**

**Object Pronouns**

Word Box:

**you**

**him**

**they**

**it**

**I**

**me**

**us**

**he**

**she**

**we**

**them**

**her**

Prompt 2: Correct the Passage

**Rae had a party last Saturday. Her invited James, Farzeen, and Brynn. When them got there, she gave they each an apron to wear. They put they on, and her led them into the garage. It had been transformed into a potting studio. Them spent the afternoon throwing clay and making bowls.**





**zine**

looking or feeling embarrassed because you have done something silly or wrong

**omen**

an immeasurably deep gulf or great space

**sheepish**

a formal written request, typically one signed by many people, appealing to authority with respect to a particular cause

**snarky**

sarcastic, impertinent, or irreverent in tone or manner

**abyss**

the main enemy of someone

**archnemesi**

a phenomenon that is believed to foretell the future; a good or bad "sign" of things to come

**semantics**

the branch of linguistics and logic concerned with meaning

**petition**

a noncommercial (often homemade or online) publication usually devoted to specialized and often unconventional subject matter

### Exploring Words in Context

#### Step One:

This week, you'll explore some vocabulary words in context. These are all words that appear in *The First Rule of Punk*. Look at the clues on the next page, then come back to this page and match the words in the first column above with their definitions in the second column above. If you need a little more context to discern the meaning of a word, open your copy of the book to the page listed after the provided quote. (Some copies of the novel will have different page numbers than those listed.)

#### Step Two:

Create a doodle, comic, song lyric, dialogue, slogan, poem, etc. using one or more of the vocabulary words provided above. Try to choose words that you're not familiar with yet and use this exercise to help you memorize their meanings in a fun way. A blank page has been provided for you to use after the following page.

**zine**

context:

"Zines are self-published booklets, like homemade magazines, and they can be about anything..." (page 3, Chapter 1)

**omen**

context:

"Mom's never-ending knitting project. It's a bad omen." (page 14, Chapter 2)

**sheepish**

context:

"I gave Dad a sheepish grin." (page 20, Chapter 2)

**snarky**

context:

"...you know what else is homey? *Our real home.*'  
'Malú, why don't you go pick out your room?' Mom said, ignoring my snarky comment." (page 24, Chapter 3)

**abyss**

context:

"...I'd be afraid we were going to drop off into an abyss and be eaten by a giant sea serpent."  
(page 37, Chapter 4)

**archnemesiis**

context:

"...I inspected my Soyrito for signs of cilantro, my culinary archnemesiis..." (page 37, Chapter 4)

**semantics**

context:

"Almost thirteen.' I said. 'Semantics. You're twelve, señorita.'" (page 44, Chapter 5)

**petition**

context:

"Hey, will you sign my petition?" (page 84, Chapter 11)

*Week 1*

## Vocabulary Part Two

Use the space below for your doodles, comics, song lyrics, dialogues, slogans, poems, etc.





# BLOSSOM & ROOT

INTEGRATED LANGUAGE ARTS // LEVEL 6

## *Creativity & Community*

INDIVIDUAL NOVEL STUDY

SUPER SECRET NOTEBOOK GUIDE



**THE FIRST RULE OF PUNK**  
**BY CELIA C. PÉREZ**

Creative Writing, Storytelling, and Foundations for Academic Writing

# Start Here: Choosing Your Super Secret Notebook

## Preparing Your Super Secret Notebook

### The Secret Mission:

Choose a book to be your super-secret notebook.

### Supplies You Will Need:

- access to a store (in person or online)
- an adult to help you purchase your notebook

**Note: If you've already created your notebook for the year, skip ahead to Week One.**

### What To Do:

#### Learn About the Super Secret Notebook

During the year, you will keep a **super secret notebook**. You'll have a prompt each week for an activity to do in your notebook, but you can write or draw in it any time you like--you can write or doodle every day if you want! This is your super secret notebook, and you never have to share anything in it with anyone (unless you want to!) Throughout the year, you will share final drafts of some of the projects you create using this notebook with a parent or another adult, but the final draft (which is what you'll share) isn't even in the super secret notebook--it's always written or typed onto clean, loose paper.

Your notebook is a safe place to keep your thoughts, and all of the fun and messy processes that go into storytelling and writing: brainstorming, planning, drafting, pivoting, revising and rearranging, doodling (of course), editing, and more.

Your notebook is for you, and you alone. If you want to show a friend or family member the work you do in your notebook, that is your choice. All we ask you to share are the final drafts you will create for some of the projects, which are written outside of the notebook itself.

Each week, you have the option to do a page prep. This notebook isn't just for experimenting with words, it's for experimenting with art, too. The page prep gives you a chance to play with paint, markers, collages, and other art techniques. You can skip these if you like a plain notebook. You can invent your own page prep if you don't want to follow the suggestions. Or you can do the recommended page prep some weeks and not others. Again, this is your notebook and you get to decide!

*If you did the Super Secret Notebook in Levels 4 and 5, you will recognize some of the page prep ideas because many of them are the same. But you can create your pages from these prep ideas in new and exciting ways this year!*

# *Start Here: Choosing Your Super Secret Notebook*

## **What To Do, cont.:**

### **Ask a Grown-Up to Help You Choose and Buy Your Notebook**

Ask an adult to help you choose and purchase a notebook (from a store or online.) We recommend something bigger, so you'll have a lot of room to write, doodle, and play with paint. We recommend choosing something with watercolor paper or mixed media paper if you plan to do a lot of the page prep work. Regular paper doesn't hold up well to paints and glues in high amounts. A large mixed-media sketchbook would be perfect! If you're not planning to do any page prep, any old notebook will do. It doesn't have to be fancy. You'll also want to gather up or purchase the art supplies at the beginning of the guide if you plan to do the page prep activities.

## **The Weekly Format**

Each week's prompt will have three steps:

### **Step 1: Prep Your Page**

This step is always optional. If you want to prep your page, you can use the suggested prep prompt, invent your own or look for ideas on the internet (with an adult's supervision.) Conduct a search using terms like "art journal ideas."

### **Step 2: Wake Up Your Storyteller Brain**

This step is also always optional. These are short, fun prompts to get your "storyteller brain" up and running. If you don't feel like completing a particular prompt--that's fine! You can always journal freely instead, jotting down your thoughts, doodling, writing down favorite song lyrics, or anything you like to get your hand and your mind moving.

### **Step 3: The Main Projects**

Each week, you'll work on a long-term project. These projects are usually three to four weeks long and are broken down into mini-steps each week. Follow the instructions in the prompt to see which steps you'll need to complete.



