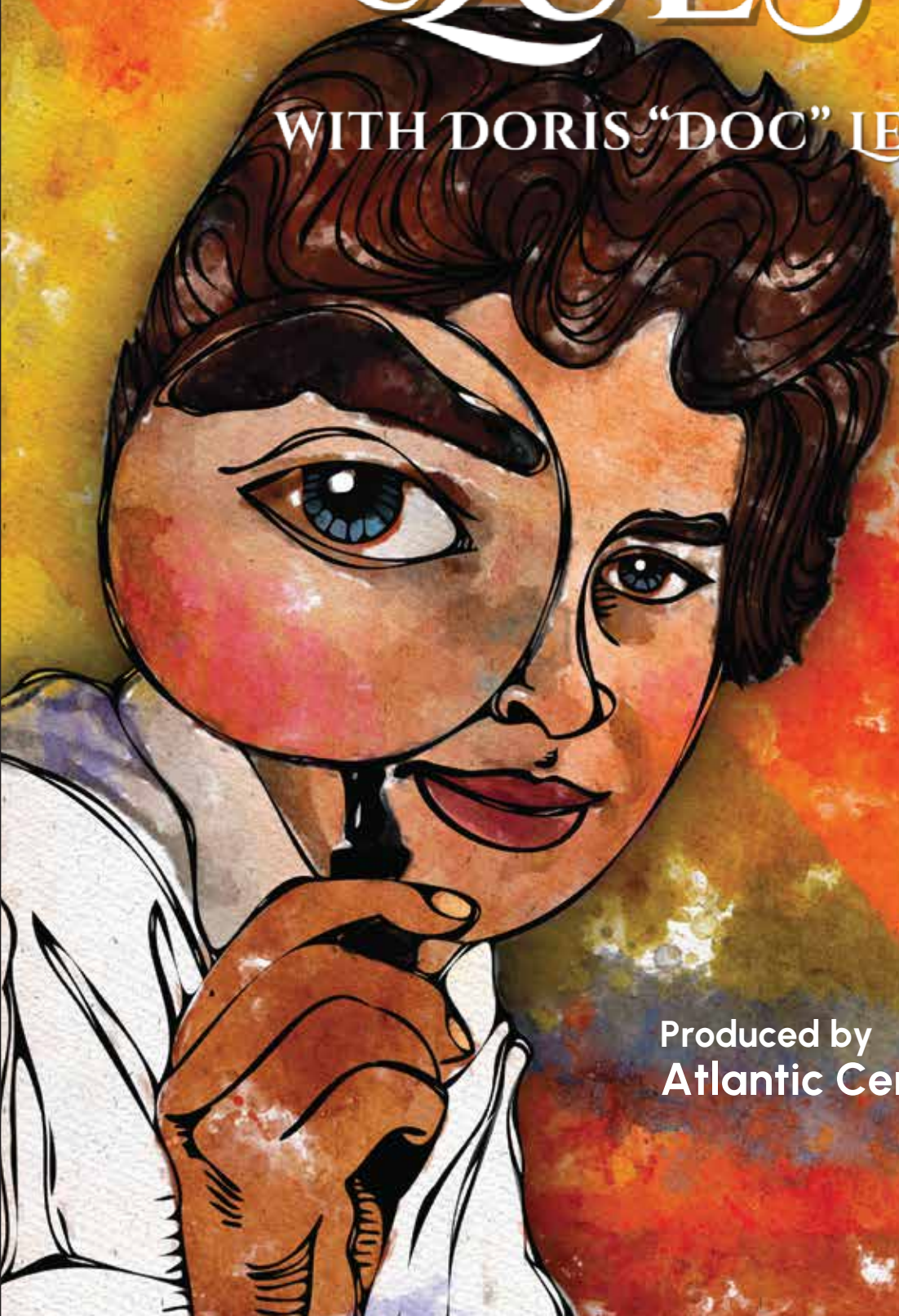


A CREATIVE QUEST

WITH DORIS "DOC" LEEPER



Produced by
Atlantic Center for the Arts



Early life and inspiration

Doris Marie "Doc" Leeper dreamed of becoming a doctor, but when her uncle gave her a magnifying glass, it changed her life FOREVER!

As a young child Doris, whose nickname was "Doc", held a clump of sand in her palm. As she raised her magnifying glass to it, what she saw would leave a lifelong impression. In Doc's imagination, those tiny grains transformed into a portal of potential, turning what seemed insignificant into something extraordinary. It was as if she'd discovered a new world in the palm of her hand.

This book is your book of wonder. Through these activities you're now on your own journey. We hope you'll be inspired by Doc Leeper's love for art, nature, and community as you complete the activities. Just like the handful of sand that ignited her imagination, you might find that a handful of sand holds more than you thought, and discover amazing things all around you.



Doc in her studio
Photo credit: From the archives
of Atlantic Center for the Arts

Hi Friends!

Are you ready for an extraordinary adventure that will unleash your creativity? This workbook is for you and you're the captain of your creative ship! Doc Leeper's life was like an overflowing sand bucket of art, ideas, and plans. Think of this book as a treasure map left to you by Doc herself. This book is your own playground of thoughts and ideas. In it, you'll find:



**Interactive prompts
and activities**



**Codes to unlock
deeper exploration**



**History about
Doris "Doc" Leeper**

You'll need: basic art supplies like pens, markers, paper, paint and some other random things.

Tip: ask a teacher at school if there are some spare supplies you can use. Dive in and start creating!

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Doc's contributions

Doc Leeper was born in Charlotte, North Carolina, but she later moved to New Smyrna Beach, Florida in 1958, which became her home for the rest of her life. She first settled in the barrier island community of Eldora (now Canaveral National Seashore), surrounded by the wilderness of coastal Florida. As an artist, she approached everything with a sense of wonder and possibilities. She wanted to inspire young artists and encourage them to experience the beauty and magic of nature.

Living in New Smyrna changed Doc and helped her become a better artist. Just like how a handful of sand made her think of new ideas, Doc inspired other artists, women, and people who care about nature. She quickly became a well known name in the art world and did all of this while living in the small town of New Smyrna Beach in Volusia County, Florida.

Doc Leeper started Atlantic Center for the Arts and helped protect natural areas like Canaveral National Seashore (a 58,000 acre stretch of undeveloped beach on Florida's east coast) and the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve (protecting 2,513 acres in New Smyrna Beach and Port Orange). Both of these protected lands give animals a safe place to live and people a beautiful place to visit. She brought artists and nature lovers together to make a difference.





ACTIVITY #1

Draw your inspiration

Six steps to grow your creative spirit!
Let's go on an inspirational journey and uncover your artistic passions.

What you'll need:

Sketchbook or loose sheets of paper
Pencils and erasers
Colored markers or colored pencils

Steps:

Step 1: Mindful moment

Take a look around. What do you see? Look closely at shapes, colors, textures, light and shadow. What grabs your attention the most?

Step 2: Nature's art studio

Find a cozy outdoor spot and take in your surroundings.
Sketch what you see. Bugs, flowers, leaves – anything you notice!
Feel the outdoors – Is it hot? Humid? Windy? Put those feelings into your art.

Step 3: Indoor inspiration

Look around your home or school. What cool things catch your eye?
Books on a shelf?
Light through the window?
A pattern on a rug or wall?
Take your artsy tools and turn these things into art or a story.

Step 4: Your happy place

Think about what brings you joy.
Is it a book, a hobby, a pet, friends, or a memory?
Jot these down in your sketchbook or journal.
Draw a picture of what inspires you or clip it from a magazine!

Step 5: Mix it up

Take all of your ideas and create a colorful collage of inspiration!
Use markers, pencils, paints to make your bold statement.
Combine all the ideas on a page – make it neat or make it messy!

Step 6: Show and tell

Get together with your artist buddies and share or exchange your artwork.
Take turns sharing the stories of what inspired you.
Share what you learned about yourself as an artist.





Exploring Doc's artistic adventure

Collecting, sketching, and drawing filled Doc's childhood with wonder and learning about nature. The art world was buzzing with influential artists like Josef Albers, who kicked off the "Homage to the Square" show, inspiring what we now call "Hard Edge" artists. When Doc traveled to Europe, she soaked up Cubism and Matisse's art vibes. From there, Doc's art journey took off! She experimented with router boards, corrugated cardboard, and all kinds of materials. Imagine landscape paintings and giant monochrome silhouettes inspired by the living world – cool, right?

In the '60s, she perfected her signature style, using triangle forms that kind of shook up the traditional line between floor and wall art. Check out her art – it's like a wild ride through creativity. Ever wondered if those childhood grains of sand stayed with her? Spoiler alert: They totally did!





ACTIVITY #2

Your creativity in action

How to make creative ideas come to life.

What you'll need:

Drawing or writing materials

Online resources

Presentation tools (smartphone, poster board, etc.)

Inspirational quotes, images, or short videos

Introduction:

You have unique ideas that you might not think of as creative – but they are. This activity will help you find them and take that exciting, scary first step to make them come to life!

Shhhh! Quiet time to think (15 minutes):

Find a quiet and cozy space that will help you keep out the noise. Set a timer for 5-10 minutes of quiet time to journal ideas or listen to music without lyrics.

Think about what you love doing. How do those talents and interests connect with being creative? What activities make you happy? How do you like sharing your thoughts and ideas?

Resource treasure hunt – the fun part! (20 minutes):

Gather, gather, gather! Explore resources related to creativity and action like online articles, videos, reels or quotes. Take notes on ideas that speak to you. What do YOU think is interesting?

Brainstorming time (15 minutes):

Take all of your research and now write your ideas. Don't worry about ideas being good or bad. Get those ideas on paper.

Bring it to life! Project planning (30 minutes):

Pick one thing from your brainstorming session. Outline a plan for your "one thing." Make it simple! Don't overcomplicate it! Think about what you need to create your creative project.

You be YOU (45 minutes):

Carve out ample time to work solo on your creative project. Start the process while being open to seeking support as needed. Ask an adult or a teacher to give you a hand if you need it.

Reflect and Record (20 minutes):

Think about the process of taking your creative ideas into action. This is indeed a big step and the hardest part for many. Congratulations!

Write about what you learned and what challenged you.

This will be helpful for you in the future when you encounter challenges to new creative projects.

Share (15 minutes):

Whether you vlog or post on socials or just share in class, consider ways others might enjoy what you've created. Encourage yourself and others to explore creativity every day.





Exploring Atlantic Center for the Arts

Ever wondered what happens when artists from around the globe come to live in one place? Well, that's exactly what happens at Atlantic Center for the Arts (ACA). It's not just any art center; it's an artistic community where creativity takes center stage.

Living the artist life

When artists score a spot in a "residency," it means they get to live and breathe art right here in New Smyrna Beach. Picture this: Painters teaming up with rappers and dancers, grooving alongside violinists – it's a mashup of creativity. They learn, collaborate, and create art that'll leave a mark for generations to come.

All art, all welcome!

What makes ACA super special? It's "interdisciplinary" – a fancy word that simply means ALL kinds of art are best pals here. Painters and poets, sculptors and singers – everyone hangs out together! The result? A colorful explosion of creativity that the whole community gets to enjoy.

Doc's vision comes to life

Here's the scoop: Doc had this wild dream about artists from everywhere joining forces. People doubted it, said it wouldn't work, but Doc had a vision. She found the perfect spot, gathered like-minded folks, and invited artists from all over the country. Today, artists from every corner of the world have created magic at ACA. Could YOU be the next artist living the dream and making art that rocks? The adventure awaits!

*Doc's sculpture **Celebration** at Atlantic Center for the Arts
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts*





ACTIVITY #3

We go together

This solo project invites you to explore the connection between architecture, art, and sound while nurturing your creativity and independence.

What you'll need:

Recyclable materials (cardboard, plastic bottles, newspapers, etc.)

Craft supplies (markers, glue, scissors)

Drawing paper and pencils

Rulers and measuring tape

Smartphones or audio recorders

Steps:

1. Dive into the architecture, art, and soundscapes of your city or town. What catches your eye? Start there.
2. Design and build your section using recyclable materials, blending architectural and artistic elements. This can be any size you decide (as big as dioramas, or tiny as miniatures).
3. Hit Record! Add the sounds that fit the vibe of the place you're making. Use your phone for background music or search for natural and urban sounds that fit the vibe.
4. Create a short reel or presentation showcasing your cityscape and its soundtrack.
5. Share your cityscape with others, playing the recorded sounds as you walk them through your creation.
6. Journal: Reflect on how the integration of art, architecture, and sound has enriched your project.

This solo project invites you to explore the connection between architecture, art, and sound while nurturing your creativity and independence.



Doc's commitment to environmental conservation

Ever wondered how Doc, our nature hero, started her journey into protecting the environment? Well, it all traces back to her childhood adventures and endless love for nature.



*Doc at her home in the Eldora community (now Canaveral National Seashore)
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts*



Nature's playground

Imagine spending endless hours as a kid, not indoors, but surrounded by the wonders of nature. Doc's childhood was like an exciting expedition filled with play and curiosity. Whether she was playing in the great outdoors or exploring with sketches and collections, nature was her ultimate playground.

Eldora enchanted

One day in 1958, while exploring New Smyrna Beach, Doc stumbled upon an abandoned house in the hammock land known as Eldora. She fell in love with it and bought it immediately, calling her property Caper's Acres. Eldora was a small, sparsely populated community on the land that is now Canaveral National Seashore. It became the starting point of her incredible journey in environmental conservation.

Painting New Smyrna Beach

Doc's love for New Smyrna Beach and nearby areas was immense. Picture her strolling along the beach, accompanied by her Great Dane canine companions. She would spend hours sketching, and she had a unique way of painting "en plein air" – outdoors. What's even cooler? She didn't need fancy canvases. Doc painted on anything she could, like the back of wrapping paper. Her creativity knew no bounds.

Champion of Canaveral National Seashore

Doc's adventures in the Eldora community inspired her to protect the beautiful stretch of land that is now known as Canaveral National Seashore. Imagine being one of the earliest advocates for this breathtaking place. Doc truly played a significant role in keeping it safe for future generations.

A local haven: Spruce Creek Preserve

As you travel around Volusia County, you might come across the Doris Leeper Spruce Creek Preserve. It's a nature haven she helped protect; a special place dedicated to preserving the beauty she cherished. Protecting the place YOU love!

Now, young explorers, doesn't Doc's journey make you curious about the wonders of nature and the awesome places she worked to protect? Who knows, maybe you'll have your own Eldora or paint your masterpiece "en plein air" someday. Keep the adventure alive and let your curiosity guide you through the amazing world of environmental conservation.





ACTIVITY #4

Florida eco-influencers

It's time to become the stars of social media and protect the amazing nature around us, just like Doc did. Florida is an awesome place - a peninsula with over 1,300 miles of coastline, nearly 8,000 lakes and 1,700 rivers and streams, and incredible wildlife like black bears, manatees, panthers and more. Doc spent most of her adult life in Volusia County working to ensure that wild places, like Canaveral National Seashore, were protected for you to enjoy today. The beauty and wildness of Florida is facing some tough challenges like pollution, erosion, and threats to wildlife. What's missing? Your voice.

This is your chance to use your creativity and love for Florida to make a real difference and build on Doc's legacy. Using the power of social media, you'll be able to help spread the word about ways to help ensure that Florida's wild places are protected for future generations:

Steps:

1. Do some research on the environmental issues in Florida that you really care about. Learn from reliable sources and get those facts straight.
2. Think about how you can use your skills to raise awareness through reels, pics, or graphics. This is your time to get creative.
3. Organize a brainstorming session with your crew. Unleash your wildest ideas for awesome social media posts.
4. Work solo or with your squad to create posts. Just make sure to check your facts with accurate info.
5. Get feedback to make those posts shine even brighter.
6. It's campaign time! Start posting your content using our official hashtag #LeepersSeekers. Like, share, and comment on each other's posts to spread the word.
7. After the campaign, we'll talk about the impact you made and which posts got the most traction. You could earn special awards and recognition!

This is your chance to flex your creative muscles and show the world how much you care about Florida's environment. Get ready to become the Florida Eco-Influencers this state needs. Doc would be so proud!





*Doc assembling **Untitled Edition Serigraphs**, at the Hunter Museum of Art
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts*



Doc's determination

Embrace the challenge

Doc was a talented artist who chased her dreams and painted the world with her imagination. People sometimes laughed at her big ideas, but she didn't let that stop her. "I love a challenge," she has often been quoted as saying. Sometimes, people might not understand what you're trying to create, and that's okay. Maybe you've felt the same way about someone else's ideas. What's important is believing in yourself and knowing that your ideas are worth sharing with the world.

Stick with it

Doc's path to success wasn't quick or easy. She spent hours every day working on sculptures, paintings, and other projects. Doc spent years creating what would become Atlantic Center for the Arts. It also took years of Doc's committed advocacy to create what we now enjoy as the Canaveral National Seashore. She faced lots of challenges, but she turned them into opportunities. Every problem became a chance to figure out a new way, a new path.

Keep creating

Doc would tell you to keep chasing your dreams, but she'd also likely tell you it's about commitment. Remember, every bit of progress is worthy. The toughest parts of your journey might end up being the coolest parts of what you create. And when you finish one project, go ahead and start the next one.



Doc and assistant Kris Ross working at Regional Service Center, Jacksonville, FL

Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts



ACTIVITY #5

Beat of ambition

Create an awesome playlist that gets you fired up and helps you stay focused on your dreams. This energizing soundtrack is a map towards making those huge goals a reality – a way to level up and start step-by-step.

What you'll need:

Journals or notebooks
Art supplies (markers, colored pencils, etc.)
Whiteboard or flip-chart paper
Inspirational quotes or stories
Timer or stopwatch
Access to music (speakers, streaming service, etc.)

Get ready to make a motivational mixtape!

Intro (15 mins):

Think about how music pumps you up or calms you down. Pick some favorite jams.

Goal setting (20 mins):

Write down a big goal you want to crush and the key skills you'll need.

Vision board time (30 mins):

Create a vision board with pics, words, or song titles that represent your goal. If you don't have a clear goal, start small with thoughts or ideas. Have confidence that those thoughts will pave the path to the next idea.

Obstacle course (15 mins):

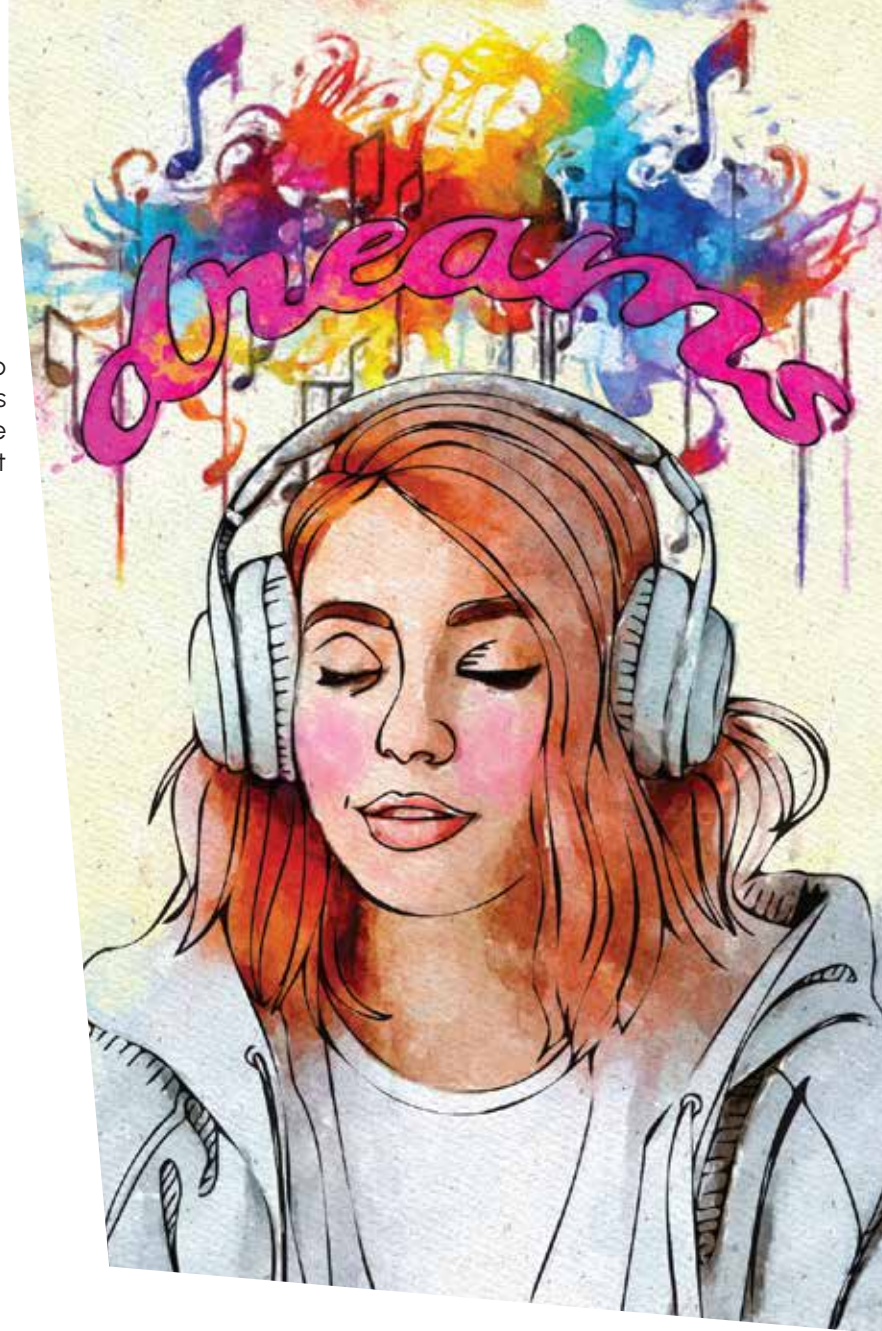
What roadblocks might get in your way? How could music help you overcome this? Think about how music moves you and how lyrics, like poetry, inspire you. Focus on those key lyrics that speak to you and add them to your vision board. They could be a springboard to a project.

Music discovery (20 mins):

Explore new music genres and find songs that motivate and inspire you.

Mixtape mania (30 mins):

Make a playlist with songs that speak to you in a way that is both creative and inspires you to want to express your artistic side - whether that is painting, drawing, dancing, singing, writing or any other outlet where you design the idea.



Playlist premiere (15 mins):

Share your motivation mixtape with a friend! Explain why each song is meaningful. Maybe your friend will get inspired to create their own mix.

Reflection (15 mins):

Journal about what your playlist means and how it'll drive you.

Wrap it up (10 mins):

This personal mixtape is your fuel for achieving your dreams. Listen to it often!



ACTIVITY #6

The passion path

Discover what you love in areas like art, science, music, health, film, architecture, technology, business, cooking, social media, and inventing. This will help you learn more about yourself and what you might want to do in the future.

What you'll need:

Paper and pen or a computer

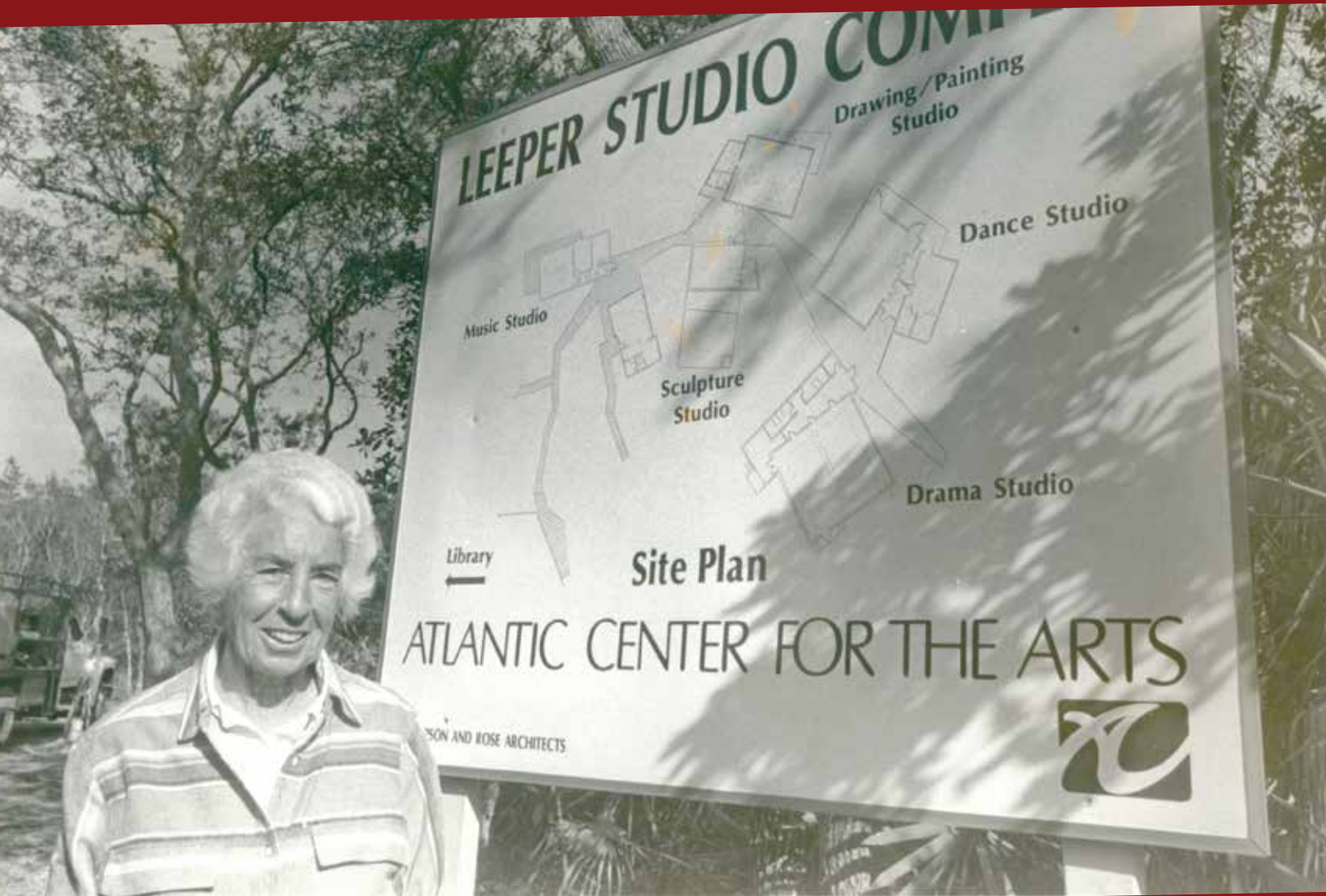
Internet

Art supplies (if you like)

Steps:

1. Interest map: Draw a big circle in the middle of your paper and write "My Interests" inside. Then draw lines coming out from it with different interests topics. Add things you like under each topic.
2. Thinking puzzles: For each topic, answer questions like "What do I find cool about science?" or "What kind of recipe would I like to invent?" This helps you think deeper about why you like certain things.
3. Picture board: Make a board with pictures or words that show what you're interested in. You can cut these out from magazines or print them.
4. Online search: Look up websites or videos about the topics you like. Write down what you find interesting and why. Maybe check out some cooking blogs or tech invention videos.
5. Thought journal: Look at everything you've made and written. What do you notice? What makes you feel excited? Write about it.
6. My interests statement: Write a few sentences about what you really enjoy and why. Think about how you might use these interests when you're older. Could you be a chef, a social media star, or invent a new gadget?
7. Next steps: Think of fun ways to explore your interests. Join or start a club, try a mini project, or reach out to cool websites you found. Maybe you could write a blog post or create something to solve a problem at home or school.
8. Wrap-up: Keep your stuff in a special spot. It'll remind you of what you like. Everyone's interests are different, and that's okay!

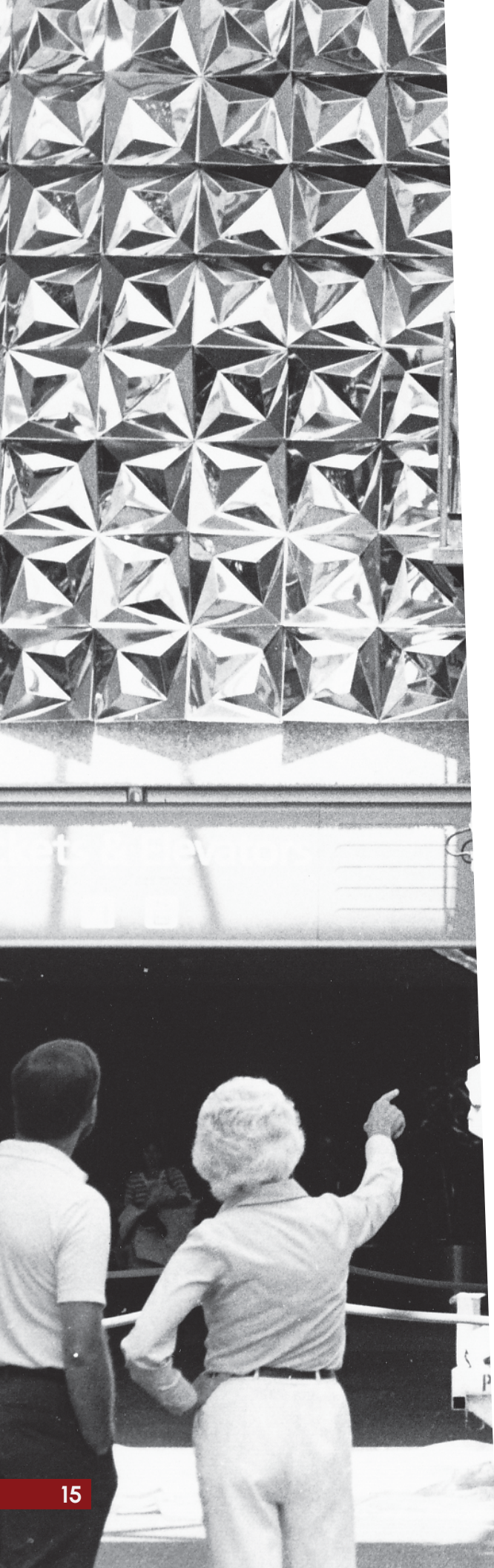




*Doc in front of the sign for the Leeper Studio Complex at ACA
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts*



*The Leeper Studio Complex at ACA
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts*



Doc's community building

Doc brought people and ideas together. Her life made a tremendous impact on Florida's coast and backcountry. Doc wasn't just captivated by the beauty of the surroundings; she was a true champion for protecting Florida's diverse ecosystems. Picture her as a guide, bringing people together and leading the charge to preserve the environment, ensuring that it's here for you, the vibrant minds of today.

Creating a home for art

Imagine a world where art comes alive, and creativity knows no bounds. Doc, in her unique way, brought this magical concept to life in New Smyrna Beach. She didn't just create an art center; she crafted a haven where artists, teachers, and staff collaborated to make art a shared experience. Thanks to Doc's efforts, collaborative art is a living, breathing entity, waiting for YOU to be a part of this wondrous process.

Community begins with you

If you explore Volusia County, you'll find Doc's vision, energy, and art embedded in the narrative. But what comes next? Here's the exciting part – the next chapter is in your hands! You, yes, you holding this book, are the key to continuing Doc's legacy. Your work, your art, your vision, and your voice are the threads that weave into the beautiful tapestry of this continuum. Doc's hope was for you to carry the torch forward, and now, it's your turn to shine. Let your creativity soar, for the next adventure in Doc's inspiring story is waiting to unfold through you.

*Doc installing **Steel Quilt** at the Orlando International Airport
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts*



ACTIVITY #7

Community change makers

Ready to make your mark on the world? Let's dive into a project that'll show you how to tackle big issues in your community. Remember, Doc's amazing career didn't happen overnight. She spent years creating art and creating positive change for her community. Now, it's your turn.

Here's your game plan for the next few weeks (perfect for summer break).

1. **Spot the Problem (1 week):** Look around your neighborhood. What bugs you? What needs fixing? Watch some videos, read some stuff, and chat with your friends about it. Pick an issue that excites you.
2. **Detective Work (2 weeks):** Time to get curious and dig into your chosen issue. Who's involved? What resources do you need? Brainstorm some new ideas to solve it.
3. **Craft Your Battle Plan (1 week):** Okay, strategist, map out your moves! Set some goals you can actually reach. Think about cool ways to kick things off. Maybe a letter-writing campaign or a social media challenge?
4. **Action Time! (4-6 weeks):** This is where it gets real and commitment is key. Put your plan into action! Don't be shy about asking for backup if you need it. And hey, document your journey. It could go viral!
5. **Victory Lap (1 week):** You did it! Now's the time to look back at what you achieved. What worked? What did you learn? What's next on your world-changing agenda?

Need a hand? Reach out to teachers, community leaders, or anyone who knows their stuff. They'd love to see you succeed!

When you've completed this effort, show off your problem-solving skills and teamwork. You might be surprised at how much you've grown and how you've helped your community.

Remember, just like Doc said about her art, your passion project could be your greatest achievement. Jump in and make some noise! Even the smallest step can create a ripple that will make a positive impact.





Jack Mitchell portrait of Doris "Doc" Leeper
Photo credit: Jack Mitchell by permission of Atlantic Center for the Arts



Doc said...

Although Doc was proud of all of her accomplishments, she wrote:

"I hope...that people will remember first and foremost that I was an artist."

"I consider my career as an artist my number one achievement."

"If you had a world with no music, no dance, no visual arts – I don't want to even think about how horrible that would be."

"I was taken by Florida's light. It was so different from the Carolinas where I lived all my life. This is where I wanted to do my life's work."

"Your work mirrors you."



ACTIVITY #8

Inspirational quote collage

Quotes from people we admire or leaders who have made a difference can inspire our own work and journeys.

What you'll need:

Poster board

Glue stick

Scissors

Internet

Printer and paper

Search the internet for quotes that resonate with you. Maybe you wish to use a quote from a friend or teacher? Collect a few and print them out. Arrange the quotes on your poster board, then glue them in place. Feel free to draw and decorate around the quotes to bring them to life. Keep your quote collage prominently displayed in your room, your school locker, or on the refrigerator so you can read them often for motivation. Soon, you'll be crafting your own quotes that will inspire others!



Untitled Sculpture, commission for News-Journal Corp., Daytona Beach
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts



Support local

Doc loved bringing artists together. Whether through collaborations or friendships, one thing was certain about Doc's life: she loved artists.

A collaboration that lives on today

In 1996, Doc and friend Ed Harris collaborated on the launch of an art gallery. Now, it wasn't just any gallery. This gallery was going to showcase F-L-O-R-I-D-A artists. Together they established Arts on Douglas.

Today, you can visit the gallery, which is right in the heart of New Smyrna Beach (123 Douglas Street), and you'll get lost - in a good way - in a wave of Florida painters, sculptors, mixed media artists, photographers, and others from all across the state who are making their art and sharing it with the world. Exhibits are always changing, so every visit is a new adventure.

- Can you find one example of each of these artforms: sculpture, mixed media, painting, and ceramics?
- Which artform resonates with you the most?
- Did you find an artist that really speaks to you in terms of their style?
- How does their work make you think or feel about art?
- Try viewing artwork from a distance, then close up. How does your viewpoint change how you feel about the piece?

This gallery was another of Doc's gifts left to you. Doc would say: visit, get inspired and most of all - CREATE!



Top to bottom: Ed Harris and Doris Leeper at Arts on Douglas gallery;
Views of local artwork at Arts on Douglas gallery
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts



ACTIVITY #9

Echoes of the past

This is a listening activity that brings your attention to cultural and natural sounds in the environment. You will listen to the sounds that are active now, then imagine how this same location sounded throughout history.

Steps:

1. Visit Atlantic Center for the Arts at 1414 Art Center Avenue, New Smyrna Beach. Take a walk through the campus. Along the way, stop to listen in silence for at least 60 seconds at each location along the boardwalk trail. At each stop, think about (or discuss with a friend) the sounds of a specific time in history. These sounds identify a place and time through changes in technology, animal habitat, and the many different people who have lived here over time. Notice all the sounds, and use your imagination to think about sounds that no longer exist here.
2. What sounds do you notice right now? Are these sounds only heard in this time period? Some examples are the sounds made by digital devices, new models of cars, boats, airplanes, etc.
3. In what decade were your parents born? Which sounds would they have heard at this location? Are these different from today? In what decade were your grandparents born? Which sounds would they have heard at this location? Which sounds would have been different from the sounds your parents heard? An example is that in the early 1900s, America began to hear motorboats, cars, airplanes, and telephones. The sounds of these machines have changed in each decade.
4. In what time period did European settlers set up businesses and tourism in this location? The sounds in our environment changed dramatically after the Industrial Revolution (late 1800s). Were there trains moving through this land? Horses? What did people use for cooking fuel?
5. What about the sounds heard by people native to this land (the Seminole and Timucuan peoples)? What did they hear? Some examples are a crackling fire, stone carving, children playing, tribes telling stories or preparing for ceremonies, etc. Can you imagine hearing these sounds now?
6. Which sounds that you heard today (or imagined hearing from the past) make you feel good? What sounds would you like to change in this location?

ACA main campus is free to visit and is open Tuesday through Friday from 10am-4pm and on Saturday from 10am-2pm. You may tour the Visitor Center & Gallery and walk the boardwalk and gravel trails. Consider dressing for the weather with comfortable outdoor shoes and a refillable water bottle or snacks.



*The Leeper Studio Complex at ACA
Photo credit: From the archives
of Atlantic Center for the Arts*





ACTIVITY #10

Zoom-in & find out

Ever noticed how different things look when you zoom in? This activity is all about that: Getting a closer look at nature. Inspired by Doc's childhood adventures with a magnifying glass, we're going to explore the world around us in a whole new way. It's pretty amazing what you can discover when you take the time to really look. Eventually, like Doc, you'll build your own collection of nature observations. Finding something new and seeing things in a different light is like a gift that only nature can give.

So grab a magnifying glass and let's see what secrets nature has been hiding in plain sight. Ready to zoom in and explore?

What you'll need:

Magnifying glass (or a smartphone magnification app)
Paper or sketchbook
Pen or pencil
Watercolors (if you want to get fancy)

Steps:

1. **Search:** Find something cool from nature. It could be a leaf, rock, seashell, or a twig. Whatever catches your eye!
2. **Study (Part 1):** Look at your object for 15-20 minutes without the magnifying glass. Draw it or write about what you see.
Think about:
 - A. Its shape and size
 - B. What colors you spot
 - C. How it feels when you touch it
 - D. Why it might be important in nature
 - E. How other plants or animals might use it
3. **Study (Part 2):** Now use the magnifying glass for another 15-20 minutes. Get ready to be amazed!
Draw or write about:
 - A. New details you discover
 - B. Any wild patterns or textures
 - C. How it looks different up close
 - D. Any new ideas that pop into your head
4. **Save:** Keep your notes and sketches safe. You're building your own nature collection!
Over time, you might use these to:
 - A. Write stories
 - B. Create art
 - C. Come up with ideas to help the environment
 - D. Appreciate how awesome nature really is



Doc Leeper with her sculpture, *Celebration*
Photo credit: From the archives of Atlantic Center for the Arts

Promise to myself

Congratulations! You've made it through this entire creative quest. You did it! You've successfully completed this amazing adventure. Now, as you look back on all your hard work, we at ACA hope that you'll keep this special book close to your heart. Imagine it as a treasure map to your creativity, filled with ideas that might bloom throughout your life.

Think about it:

What cool things did you discover about yourself on this journey?
Are there creative ideas you want to remember forever?
Any exciting creative activities you want to explore more?

Here's the grand finale:

Make a promise to your creative self. Write down a commitment to bring your artistic dreams to life, whether it's creating art, helping your community, or taking care of the environment. It doesn't have to be super complicated. Maybe it's as simple as promising to draw or write every day, play a musical instrument, or lend a hand in a beach clean-up. Your promise can be your own special way to shine creatively. So, what's your promise to your creative self? Write it down and let your imagination soar.



*Doc Leeper with her Great Danes at her home in the Eldora community
Photo credit: Florida Development Commission*

ACA

Atlantic Center for the Arts
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Writer - Frances Nevill

Illustrator - Mishou Sanchez of Studio Mishou

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Editor - Carol Anderson-McLean

ACA Executive Director - Jennifer Coolidge

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ACA Community Arts Director - Eve Payor

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Additional creative contributions by Nancy Lowden Norman, Meghan Martin, and Heather Paternoster.

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1414 Art Center Avenue

New Smyrna Beach, FL 32168

386-427-6975

www.atlanticcenterforthearts.org

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