

# Street art: a modern trend, an opportunity for self-expressions or a form of art?

---

## English Language Acquisition Phase 6 Summative Assessment Task

### Important Reminders

#### Unit title

Telling Tales from different cultural perspectives

#### Key concept

Creativity

#### Related concepts

Stylistic choices

Purpose

#### Global context

Personal and cultural expression: *Artistry, craft, creation, beauty*

#### Statement of inquiry

Narratives are creatively and purposefully crafted to express oneself and one's culture.

### Instructions to students

*Study the following sources below.*

"Graffiti is ugly, stupid and threatening – there's more creativity in crochet."

<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2015/mar/13/graffiti-ugly-stupid-threatening-ruining-world-david-lynch> accessed 12 February 2016

"Mobile lovers by Banksy." <http://www.stencilrevolution.com/banksy-art-prints/mobile-lovers/> accessed 10 February 2016

"Paintings on the face of brick" by Javairia Henry. <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/art/weekly-poem-graffiti/> accessed 10 February 2016

#### Image

<https://theartstack.com/artist/banksy/mobile-lovers>

*Answer the following questions in the space provided. Use your own words as much as possible.*

*Refer as closely as possible to the texts, justifying your answers and giving examples when asked.*

*Dictionaries are not allowed to be used in this task.*

*Answer the questions in English.*

**You have 70 minutes to complete the task.**

**Assessment**

Criterion B: Comprehending written and visual text, phase 5

Source

Middle Years Programme Language Acquisition Guide. © International Baccalaureate Organisation, 2014, p.p. 83-84

Achievement level	Level descriptor
0	The student <b>does not</b> reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1-2	The student: i. <b>has difficulty</b> analysing information or main ideas and supporting details; <b>is not able</b> to draw conclusions ii. <b>has difficulty</b> analysing basic conventions including aspects of format and style, and author's purpose for writing iii. engages <b>minimally</b> with the written and visual text by analysing <b>few</b> ideas, opinions and attitudes; <b>has difficulty</b> making a response to the text based on personal experiences and opinions from a global perspective. The student shows <b>limited</b> understanding of the content, context and concepts of the text as a whole.
3-4	The student: i. analyses <b>adequately</b> and draws <b>some</b> conclusions from information, main ideas and supporting details ii. analyses <b>some</b> basic conventions including aspects of format and style, and author's purpose for writing iii. engages <b>adequately</b> with the written and visual text by analysing <b>some</b> ideas, opinions and attitudes and by making <b>some</b> response to the text based on personal experiences and opinions from a global perspective. The student shows <b>some</b> understanding of the content, context and concepts of the text as a whole.
5-6	The student: i. analyses <b>considerably</b> and draws conclusions from information, main ideas and supporting details ii. analyses <b>most</b> basic conventions including aspects of format and style, and author's purpose for writing iii. engages <b>considerably</b> with the written and visual text by analysing <b>most</b> ideas, opinions and attitudes and by making a response to the text based on personal experiences and opinions from a global perspective. The student shows <b>considerable</b> understanding of the content, context and concepts of the text as a whole.
7-8	The student: i. analyses <b>thoroughly</b> and draws conclusions from information, main ideas and supporting details ii. analyses basic conventions including aspects of format and style, and author's purpose for writing iii. engages <b>thoroughly</b> with the written and visual text by analysing ideas, opinions and attitudes and by making a response to the text based on personal experiences and opinions from a global perspective. The student shows <b>thorough</b> understanding of the content, context and concepts of the text as a whole.

## Source 1

***"Graffiti is ugly, stupid and threatening – there's more creativity in crochet."***

*<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2015/mar/13/graffiti-ugly-stupid-threatening-ruining-world-david-lynch> accessed 12 February 2016*

David Lynch, that champion of the arts, says graffiti is ruining the world. And he's right – this hypermasculine display is destroying our environment

It's a familiar scenario. Older person gets angry with modern world and rages against the visual white noise of graffiti that is, well, everywhere these days.

Only this time the angry old man is film director David Lynch, whose surrealist pedigree and bizarre sense of style make his condemnation of graffiti difficult to dismiss as mere grey-haired grumpiness. Lynch says graffiti is ruining the world and making our planet ugly. He's right, of course. The fame of street artists like Banksy and a general sense that graffiti is the natural art expression of the kids crushes dissent about this guttural art form. We are all subdued by it. We go along with it, so as not to seem uncool, daddy.

But how much graffiti actually adds anything to the world? It takes someone a sunshakably avant garde in his credentials as Lynch to state the obvious, that scrawled and spray-painted inchoate messages on every corner of every city do not actually enrich our world.

The vast majority of graffiti is ugly, stupid and vaguely threatening. A tiny portion of it is witty or creative. It is the dreck, not the rough diamond art, that most of us encounter most of the time. And we have learned to put on a forced grin and tell ourselves it is the look of our time.

Graffiti is a pretentious subcultural backbeat that is replicated everywhere in much the same style, the same chunky lettering and coded messages. It is boring and expresses a generalised contempt for community, kindness, and the weak. How can leftists like this stuff? After all it is so blatantly hypermasculine, aggressive and destructive of people's desire for a decent environment. It is in fact proof that men are still in charge of the world. There is far more creativity and craft in, say, crochet but because that is traditionally seen as a "feminine" activity no one bends over backwards to praise it as art. But graffiti, associated as it is with alienated young men, is treated with absurd reverence by people who should know better.

So congratulations to Mr. Lynch. He knows how to aim a grouch. It was high time someone stood up to the vile oppression that is graffiti.

**Source 2**

**Image**

<https://theartstack.com/artist/banksy/mobile-lovers>

**Text**

"Mobile lovers by Banksy." <http://www.stencilrevolution.com/banksy-art-prints/mobile-lovers/> accessed 10 February 2016



In this piece Banksy shows the common trend in society with smart phones and relationships. Mobile lovers is an extremely popular piece which is ironically received massive exposure on social media.

The story about the piece is pretty interesting as Banksy painted it outside of a boys club in Bristol and the piece was sold shortly thereafter. Talk about having a good day when Banksy stops by to drop some work on your front door. The work sold to a private collector for the incredible sum of £403,000, yeah you read right. Banksy never seems to amaze, the "Mobile Lovers" work is no different.

**Source 3**

***"Paintings on the face of brick" by Javairia Henry.***

*<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/art/weekly-poem-graffiti/> accessed 10 February 2016*

Tell the story of a man and this chick  
He loved her but she could not see  
That the street was his canvas  
His part of history  
He ran to his place in the darkest of night  
Ready with his paint to take on the fight  
Tell about the memories of the friend he had  
Who fell victim to violence from a fellow gang lad?  
Carving the names of the fallen ones  
Who were put down by the blast from a gun?  
Senseless, foolish he thought in his head  
So many young ones, so many dreams lost  
Dead  
Over to this neighborhood notorious for  
Going to any length to settle their score  
He sprays "Peace and Harmony"  
But they only know brutality  
He runs to the side of this house he loves  
Where he paints the face of a thousand doves  
He hopes these doves will show this city  
That killing each other is just plain silly  
Crying for the brother that he knows  
Who will never be the same because of his foes  
Crying for the daughter he hears at night  
Who will never know her father because of a hood fight?  
This street historian leaves a piece of his heart

With every spray stroke of his street art  
He runs to a park where he once played  
And goes to the bench where he once laid  
He remembers the stories of the people he knew  
There are not many left, just so few  
We go back to the building with the story of  
The street artist and the girl that he loves  
Going out on his night time visits  
To paint his personal city exhibits  
The District of Crimes as they call it now  
The street artist depicts this the only way he knows how  
He shows the city as no one knows  
The festivals, the lights, the cultural shows  
The diversity, the love, the mixing bowl  
The love of his city as a whole  
The piece of his heart, the art of his soul  
We follow the artist back to the brick  
Where he tells the story of him and this chick  
The nighttime life that she didn't know  
Where the artist put on his art show  
The street he loves  
The city he craves  
Tells the artist that is unknown  
This is the life  
This the art  
Through the graffiti  
This is his heart

**Word count:** 913 words

## Markscheme

### Total:

Points total (mark boundary)	Level of achievement
1-4	1
5-7	2
8-10	3
11-13	4
14-16	5
17-19	6
20-22	7
23-24	8

### Strand i

#### Evaluate and draw conclusions from information, main ideas and supporting details

1. Compare the three texts above. What conclusions are made by the authors about graffiti? Refer to the texts to support your judgements. (3 points)

These three texts are very different and have opposing messages. For instance, the first text's author has a really strong negative opinion on graffiti by using such adjectives like 'ugly', 'stupid' and 'threatening'. This text is more opinionated than others as it ~~is~~ ~~biased~~ shows the perspective on street art from a subjective biased opinion. The second text is more informational, although it ~~gives~~ has a good attitude on street art and Banksy in such: 'pretty interesting', 'it's a good day when Banksy stops by to drop some work on your front door'. The most important part of this text is the image of the particular street art by Banksy: 'Mobile lovers'. The third text is portrayed in a form of a poem, which tells us a melancholic story about a street artist, who expresses his love to the city <sup>and street</sup> through graffiti. It has a good attitude towards graffiti, calling it 'the life' and 'the art'.

2. Based on the visual image (Source 2) what do you think about the "common trend in society with smart phones and relationships"? How culturally specific is the trend? (2 points)

Social media is very popular among people of every culture, of course excluding communities that are not that developed to use smartphones. It actually ruins ~~their~~ relations between humans by giving the opportunity to text some particular person at any moment as smartphones are carried everywhere. These smartphones diminish the amount of time people actually talk face-to-face. Most of the people now prefer talking online, as not one ~~can~~ is able to see what the person actually feels because you usually don't see the person and his/her body language.

3. Which craft form is compared to graffiti and why is this craft form not praised as art? (1 point)

Crochet is compared to graffiti and because of being considered as a "feminine" activity is not praised as art. To be considered as art, it should be engaging both to men and women.

4. Analyse the texts to explore on three commonly shared aspects that illustrate the importance of street art as an urban cultural phenomenon. (4 points)

Street art is very popular in social medias and the majority of people are keen about it.

~~Street art often has a story behind it~~

Street art is more of a masculine form of art, a tiny portion of women are actually engaged in street art. Source calls graffiti "hypermasculine", source 2 talks about a <sup>famous</sup> street artist, who is a male and finally,

Source 3 is basically a poem about a man, who sprays graffiti at nights. So, we may actually say that street art is definitely more popular among males.

Source 1 and source 3 share the opinion about the brutality of graffiti, as reads Source 1: "It is so blatantly hypermasculine, aggressive and destructive..." and Source 3: "He sprays 'Peace and Harmony', but he only knows brutality."

## Strand ii

### Interpret the author's choice of style, format and ideas to suit an intended audience and purpose

5. How may the reader's perception of Banksy's work be influenced by the reference to "the fame of street artists" made in Source 1? (2 points)

The statement made in source 1 about Banksy of course makes a negative impression on him, as it actually says that famous artists like him teach bad lessons to the younger generations, ~~and gives by crushing dissent about~~ giving a "general sense that graffiti is the natural art".

6. What is the tone of "Paintings on the face of brick" by Javairia Henry and what does it tell us about the meaning and the creator's attitude towards street artists? (2 points)

The tone of 'Paintings on the face of brick' is very nostalgic and melancholic, as it talks about 'so many young ones, so many dreams lost'. It talks about a man, who loves his street and his fallen fellow friends. The creator's attitude towards street artists is very dramatic and sensitive, as she tells us that a street artist has a story and wants to be heard. The author makes us think that graffiti is not useless senseless vandalism, but the expression of feelings & thoughts.

7. Comment on the author's vocabulary choice in the following extract from "Graffiti is ugly, stupid and threatening – there's more creativity in crochet": "Graffiti is a pretentious subcultural backbeat that is replicated everywhere in much the same style, the same chunky lettering and coded messages". How does the vocabulary choice suit the intended audience and purpose? (3 points)

(Some strong adjectives, like 'ugly', 'stupid', 'threatening')

Personally, I think that the statement is weak and does not persuade me to believe it because of its weak arguments. What is bad about chunky lettering and coded messages? The vocabulary choice should have been better to address teens, as I don't consider 'pretentious subcultural backbeat' as an understandable statement for my age group.

However, the extract's vocabulary is up to the point, even though it could have been stronger.

### Strand iii

Engage with the written and visual text by evaluating ideas, opinions and attitudes and by making a response to the text based on personal experiences and opinions from a global perspective

8. If you were reciting "Paintings on the face of brick" by Javairia Henry, what tone would you choose and why? (1 point)

If I would recite 'Paintings on the face of brick' I would not change the emotional and melancholic tone of the author, as I think that it is the best option to express the idea of the poem.

9. What is your perspective on the street art? Refer back to the points made and examples given in the texts, as well as your personal experiences, to illustrate your opinion. (3 points)

I consider street art as a form of art because people express their thoughts and feelings through it, which is actually the aim of art, as whole. However, I do not think that damaging someone's property must be allowed. In my opinion, street artists should do graffiti on the walls of their houses and in places that are made for it, ~~not~~ otherwise it is vandalism, not art. I do not think that street art is 'ugly' and 'stupid', as said in Source 1. My attitude towards graffiti is somewhat alike to Source 3, which opens up the dramatic side of street artists. Nevertheless, rude and <sup>and emotional</sup> offensive sayings should not be portrayed through graffiti. I get sad and disappointed, when I see graffiti that just includes offending a particular person or swear words.

10. What important message would you communicate to the people of your age in the city you are living if you were given this opportunity? Would you use graffiti or any other art form to communicate the message? How would your final product look like? Please, specify. (3 points)

I would ~~com~~ want to talk about the problem of bride kidnapping in my country, which actually happens quite often and ~~it~~ is often ignored by people. By this, I will be able to make the people of my age think about their future choices. Bride kidnapping is basically the act, which involves a man brutally kidnap a woman, forcing her to become his wife. In my opinion, we must put an end to such activity and I can gain attention by graffiti, as it is quite a provocative form of art and gains a lot of attention on media, such as television or the Internet.

I would make a street art, which will portray the process of kidnapping ~~the~~ on the wall of my house and then, I would upload it in the social media. I am 100% ~~sure~~ sure, that it will get viral around the media and people will start talking about this problem.