

Graffiti

Task 1 – Graffiti quiz

Do the quiz to find out how much you know about graffiti.

Graffiti quiz

1 Graffiti artists usually use:

- a) spray paint
- b) coloured paint
- c) crayons

2 A graffiti tag is:

- a) a small picture
- b) a signature
- c) a series of paintings

3 Which ancient civilization has evidence of graffiti?

- a) Greek
- b) Egyptian
- c) Aztec

4 Which type of music is related to graffiti?

- a) Grunge
- b) Rock
- c) Hip-hop

5 Which of these walls was graffiti painted from end to end?

- a) The Great wall of China
- b) The wall on Wall street
- c) The Berlin wall

6 What is giraffiti?

- a) graffiti about animals
- b) graffiti in very high, inaccessible places
- c) very colourful graffiti

7 The modern word graffiti is from the Italian word 'graffiato' which means:

- a) illegal
- b) wall
- c) scratched

Task 2 – Art or Vandalism?

Read the article and then answer the questions that follow.

Art or vandalism?

Where do you expect to see graffiti? Probably not in a museum. Bristol city museum, in the south west of England, was the kind of place you go to see classical statues and stuffed animals in cases until the arrival of the 'Banksy versus the Bristol Museum' exhibition in the summer of 2009. The exhibition hosted more than 100 works by Banksy, the world's most famous graffiti artist.

Banksy is a man of mystery. He hardly ever gives interviews and likes to be anonymous. Nobody knows much about his life or his background but many people believe that his real name is either Robin Gunningham, Robert Banks or Robin Banks and that he was born in 1973 near Bristol.

Banksy's controversial 'street art' includes spray paintings on live sheep and cows and graffiti on the huge wall erected to divide Israeli and Palestine. Brad Pitt recently spent over 2 million dollars on a Banksy original. Banksy designed an album cover for the Brit pop group Blur in 2003 but he has refused at least four requests to do adverts for Nike.

Bristol isn't the only place in Britain to welcome graffiti. The DPM Park in Dundee, Scotland has the longest legal graffiti wall (360 ft to be precise) in the UK. Anyone can paint on the council owned wall any time they like. Mike Crilley, the graffiti wall project organiser, promotes the positive side of graffiti and runs workshops for local children.

So has graffiti gone mainstream? Not exactly. It's illegal to paint on somebody else's property so make sure you find a legal graffiti wall like the one in Dundee if you want to have a go.

Glossary

anonymous (adj) – not known by people

background (noun) – personal history

have a go (expression) – try doing something

hosted (verb) – had

mainstream (adj) – seen as part of normal society

refused (verb) – said no

stuffed animals (expression)- dead, preserved animals

What do the numbers and people and places in the text refer to:

Numbers

- 2009
- 100
- 1973
- 2 million
- 2003
- four
- 360

Places and people

- Bristol
- Banksy
- Palestine
- Israel
- Brad Pitt
- Dundee
- Mike Crilley

Task 3 – Discussion

Discuss these questions:

- What graffiti have you seen in your town or city?
- Have you seen any of Banksy's graffiti?
- Is all graffiti the same? Why / not?
- What do you like or dislike about graffiti?
- Is there a place to do legal graffiti in your area?
- Would you visit a museum to see a graffiti exhibition? Why / why not?
- What kind of exhibitions have you seen in museums? Which did you like the most?
- Why do people do graffiti in public places?
- Do graffiti artists like Banksy have a message?
- Who should remove illegal graffiti?

Task 4 – Role play

You are going to do a role play with a partner. Read your role card and prepare your thoughts before you begin.

A – You are Banksy, the world’s most famous graffiti artist. You are a very private person who hardly ever gives interviews. Prepare to answer the journalist’s questions.

B - You are a journalist working for a magazine. You have the chance to interview Banksy, the world’s greatest graffiti artist. Prepare some questions. Remember that Banksy is a very private person who hardly ever gives interviews.