READING PRACTICE

Reading Passage 1

Graffiti - Art or Crime?



A People love to make their mark, and graffiti such as initials or drawings written or spray-painted onto subways, walls, or footpaths is a universal phenomenon. It has existed since ancient times, and one of the oldest pieces of still-existing graffiti is an advertisement for a brothel in the ancient town of Ephesus, in Greece. There are many types of graffiti, and also a variety of views about it. Some see it as an art form, some use it as a form of protest against authority, others regard it as needless and destructive vandalism, and it is often seen as the precursor of gang-related crime in a neighbourhood.

B The heyday of graffiti was in New York City in the 1970s. At that time, there was little money for the policing of graffiti, and artists targeted the subways and subway cars in particular. Graffiti became so popular at this time that artists wanted to identify their own particular work. They began to create distinctive stylised signatures, and thus, the art of tagging was born. Sales of spray paint increased significantly at this time, as more and more street artists began to explore this new medium of expression, and graffiti became bigger and more elaborate. Artists were competing to cover the whole city of New York with their work, and finally, the Metro Transit Authority (MTA) began to battle with graffiti artists, locking gates and removing pictures from subway trains. At the same time, graffiti began making its way into art galleries, as the established art world began to recognise it as a legitimate modern art form.

C By the 80s, graffiti culture in New York was beginning to decline. It was becoming associated with the local drug scene, and legal penalties for vandalism became more severe at this time. In particular, the MTA hugely increased its anti-graffiti budget, and it became much harder for artists to create elaborate pieces on subway cars, so graffiti was restricted to the streets, where it has stayed until today. By mid-1986, the 'war on graffiti' was being won, and there were fewer graffiti artists in New York. In the 90s, under Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, the anti-tagging task force set out to eradicate graffiti vandals by banning sales of spray paint to under 18s and by hugely increasing fines for the offence.

D Of course, graffiti is not only a North American phenomenon, and there are thriving cultures throughout the world, especially in Brazil where graffiti is endemic. Some people say that the huge gap between rich and poor in the country has fuelled the growth of graffiti as a form of anonymous political protest against economic injustice. It is also becoming more common in various countries in the Middle East, probably also as a protest by people who feel marginalised or repressed by existing political regimes. In general, cities around the world have problems with graffiti artists, who are often seen by the establishment as mindless, drug-fuelled vandals.

E This is particularly the case with tagging, as one common use of tags is as turf markers for gangs, who use them to mark out territory in a neighbourhood. Tagging is seen as the first sign of gang activity in an area and, consequently, many cities seek to stamp it out to prevent the growth of crime and lawlessness. Common methods for fighting graffiti include banning sales of spray paint, the creation of online tagging databases, fines, and even imprisonment, but the taggers continue, seeing an arrest as a badge of honour rather than as a deterrent. At the same time, graffiti has become a recognised art form with commercial uses by companies such as Sony and even ultra-conservative IBM, which was recently fined to pay for the cleanup of a graffiti-based advertising campaign.

F So is graffiti a form of mindless, criminal vandalism, or is it a vibrant and exciting modern art form? As with so many phenomena of modern life, this is all in the eye of the observer.

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Multiple Choice

Choose the appropriate letter, A, B, C, or D.

1. Graffiti includes
   A drawings on walls.
   B initials on footpaths.
   C drawings and initials on subways.
   D All of the above

2. According to the reading passage,
   A graffiti was common in ancient Greece.
   B one of the oldest known examples of graffiti is in Ephesus.
   C graffiti has only existed in the last hundred years.
   D All of the above

3. The 'heyday' of graffiti means
   A the time it was the most popular.
   B the time there was the least graffiti.
   C the way graffiti artists talked to each other.
   D All of the above

4. 'Tagging' refers to
   A graffiti done with spray paint.
   B graffiti on subway cars and walls.
   C personal stylised signatures.
   D All of the above

5. To say graffiti became a 'legitimate modern art form' means
   A it was often sold for large sums of money.
   B it was not removed, like other graffiti was.
   C some people considered it a valid style of art.
   D All of the above

Identification of Information

Do the following statements agree with the information in the reading passage? Write:

TRUE *if the statement agrees with the information in the text*
FALSE *if the statement contradicts the information in the text*
NOT GIVEN *if there is no information on this*

6. _____ More and more graffiti artists were creating graffiti in New York in the 1980s.
7. _____ During the 1980s, the fines for graffiti became a lot higher.
8. _____ During the 1980s, many graffiti artists were imprisoned because of their graffiti activities.

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9. _____ The MTA spent a lot more money on graffiti removal.
10. _____ Because of this, very detailed graffiti appeared on the subways.
11. _____ During the 1990s, laws were passed to prevent young people buying spray paint.
12. _____ The fines for graffiti under Mayor Giuliani were unchanged.

Classification

Write the correct letter, A–E.
According to the information in the reading passage, classify the following as being:

A graffiti as personal art expression
B graffiti as a marker of territory
C graffiti as protest against political repression
D graffiti as protest against economic inequality
E graffiti as an advertisement

13. ____ graffiti in Ephesus
14. ____ graffiti in New York in the 1970s
15. ____ graffiti in Brazil
16. ____ graffiti in the Middle East
17. ____ graffiti used by gangs

Sentence Completion – Type A

Complete the sentences below. Choose NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS or A NUMBER from the reading passage for each answer.

18. Graffiti can be seen as an art form, a kind of _____, or as vandalism.
19. By the late 1970s, the MTA was beginning to fight graffiti on the subways by _____ and eradicating graffiti images.
20. In the 1980s, people in New York associated graffiti with the _____.
21. Giuliani's anti-graffiti campaign focused on preventing teenagers under 18 years old from buying _____, as well as increasing fines for the offence.
22. Graffiti artists in Brazil are believed to be protesting against _____.
23. Many people consider that graffiti artists are thoughtless, _____.
24. Gang members usually use tags to _____ in the areas they control.
25. Despite bans on spray paint, fines, prison sentences, and other such controls, many tag artists think that being arrested is a _____.

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Reading Passage 2

Great Minds

A Emotional intelligence. Colour psychology. Personality according to place in the family. Do you hear references to issues such as these and wonder what they are about? Join the thousands who click on Google to satisfy their curiosity! Along with medical issues, psychology is one of the most popular topics researched on the Internet. Many people want to increase their knowledge and understanding of their own thought processes as well as the behaviour of other people. It is also a subject area with varied branches of study, such as cognitive, clinical, developmental, and social psychology, just to name a few examples. In July 2002, a ranking of the 99 most important psychologists of the past 100 years was published in the Review of General Psychology. The ranking was developed on the basis of survey responses of 1,725 members of the respected American Psychological Association, as well as evidence the frequency with which other writers referred to them in journals and textbooks. The final position in the top 100 was left open as the reader's choice. Today, we are going to consider a small group of these influential thinkers. They are all people who have made important contributions to the development of psychology as a significant field of study.

B Top of the list was B.F. Skinner, who became a full professor at Harvard in 1948. His theories explained human and animal behaviour in terms of conditioning. He based his theory of 'operant conditioning' on experiments with rats, which learned to obtain more food by pressing a lever. In other words, he argued that what happens after we do something will affect how we behave in the future. If we do something and get a reward, we will repeat this action; however, if something bad happens, we will quickly stop. His theories dominated his peers' thinking, and behaviourism underlies some therapy techniques still in use today. His theories influenced education as well as psychology, as he applied them to overcoming difficulties in learning.

C Another very influential thinker was Sigmund Freud, writing in Austria in the early part of the 1900s. His most important insights related to his belief that not all mental illnesses can be traced back to physiological causes. He also investigated how cultural differences affect people's psychology and behaviour. The work done by Freud has had a lasting influence on the areas of clinical psychology, human development, and the study of abnormalities in psychology. He also contributed a great deal to our understanding of personality differences.

D An eminent psychologist who expanded our knowledge of how children think and develop was a Swiss named Jean Piaget. His observations, which were truly original when first published in 1936, were described as being so obvious that it took a genius to think of them. His research provided evidence that a child thinks differently to an adult, and he identified stages in the development of children's brains. His work contributed to various branches of psychology, such as cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, and educational reform.

E Next, consider Erik Erikson, who was born in Germany. He studied psychoanalysis with Anna Freud, the daughter of Sigmund Freud, and later moved to the United States where he first published in 1950. He became renowned for his focus on psychosocial development, human development through the lifespan from childhood to adulthood to old age. His studies also added to the understanding of the development and shaping of personality over the course of people's lives.

F There are many other significant names in the history of psychology; we can only mention a few more. Ivan Pavlov (Russian), who died mid-20th century, is remembered for his contribution to the development of behaviourism through his work on conditioned reflexes and his experiments with dogs. Albert Bandura (Canadian), who began his career at Stanford University in 1953, stressed the importance of observation, imitation, and modelling in learning. Carl Rogers (American), who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987, is renowned for his emphasis on human potential. Finally, there is Carl Jung, another Swiss, who studied under Freud; he focused on the unconscious and is considered to be the founder of analytical psychology.

G Even such a brief survey of some of the eminent thinkers in psychology shows the variety of approaches and perspectives in this field. None of these men has worked alone; as with any scholar, they can be said to have 'stood on the shoulders of giants'. But these are some of the key names that have emerged in the field of psychology, and whose work has contributed so much to our current understanding of human thought processes, brain development, and social organisation.

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Identification of Writer's Views

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in the reading passage? Write:

YES *if the statement agrees with the views of the writer*
NO *if the statement contradicts the views of the writer*
NOT GIVEN *if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this*

26. ____ The Internet is the best way to find information on health problems.
27. ____ Many people use the Internet to read about popular issues in psychology.
28. ____ These Internet users' main research interest is researching famous psychologists.
29. ____ The report on influential psychologists aimed to establish their order of importance.
30. ____ The ranking of the most influential psychologists of the 20th century was based solely on the responses of 1,725 members of the American Psychological Association.
31. ____ The 99 psychologists who were chosen have all improved our knowledge of psychology.

Matching

Look at the following theories (Questions 32–37) and the list of psychologists below. Match each theory with the psychologist associated.

Note: You may use any letter more than once.

32. ____ – development over course of life from birth to old age
33. ____ – learning through watching, imitating, and following models
34. ____ – operant conditioning
35. ____ – analytical psychology
36. ____ – clinical psychology
37. ____ – a child's mental growth and thought processes

A. Skinner	E. Pavlov
B. Freud	F. Bandura
C. Piaget	G. Rogers
D. Erikson	H. Jung

Table Completion

Complete the table on the next page. Choose NO MORE THAN ONE WORD from the reading passage.

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Name	Nationality	Contribution
Freud	Austrian	investigated physiological causes of 38. _____ illness
Jung	Swiss	founder of 39. _____ psychology
Pavlov	40. _____	conditioned reflexes; dog experiments
Skinner	American	explained animal and human behaviour in terms of 41. _____
42. _____	Swiss	identified stages in development of children's brains
Erikson, Bandura, Rogers	Various	various fields of 43. _____

Summary Completion

Complete the summary, using words from the box below.

Many people want to understand more about how they think and why other people 44. _____ the way they do, so psychology is high on the list of things that people research on the Internet. A study of some of the most 45. _____ psychologists of the previous hundred years leads to famous names such as Freud, Jung, Pavlov, Skinner, and Piaget. Others who have emerged during the latter half of the 20th century include Erikson, Bandura, and Rogers. Psychology is a subject area with many different 46. _____ of study, and this is illustrated by the range of areas 47. _____ to by the eight psychologists mentioned above. Some examples include behaviourism, clinical psychology, analytical psychology, cognitive psychology (the stages of development of children's 48. _____), psychosocial development, and the importance of 49. _____ and modelling in learning. Although these scholars have certainly earned their fame, many other researchers have also contributed to our 50. _____ of how human brains develop and how people think.

branches	understanding	imitation	contributed
organisation	eight	social	Jung
Skinner	brains	perspectives	behave
psychology	survey	influential	emphasis

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