

Test 2 Exam practice

Reading and Use of English • Part 6

You are going to read an article written by an art student. Six sentences have been removed from the article.

Choose from the sentences **A–G** the one which fits each gap (37–42). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Tip! Underline any words in sentences A–G which might link the sentence with a particular paragraph, for example pronouns, tenses or linking words. Look carefully to see if any of the sentences are adding a similar or contrasting idea.

Tip! Remember that words in the sentences might refer to something before or after the gap.

Art is good for you – it's official!

Did you know that looking at a painting you really love can be very beneficial for the brain? According to recent experiments by scientists, it can actually increase the blood flow to your brain by as much as 10%! And the more you like the painting you're looking at, the better the effect.

Art has always been my passion, so I was really pleased to read that. And I've always believed that actually doing some art is really beneficial too. It's a great way to express yourself and cheer yourself up when you feel fed up. **37** And that's an important positive effect.

But apart from making you feel better, creating art can also teach you numerous different practical skills. For example, many of the actions involved in making art, such as holding a paintbrush, are essential for building what are called 'fine motor skills' at an early age. So children may well think that their teachers just want them to have fun drawing a circle or painting a face. **38** And talking about shapes and colours helps increase vocabulary by using descriptive words.

What's more, learning how to make art can also help you with problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. Just think, for example, of all the times you've decided on a project you really want to get started on. **39** But making art helps you learn the skills to deal with them. And the experience of making decisions and choices when you're working on a piece of art can carry over into other areas of life. That experience will help you become a thinking, inventive person who'll come up with new ideas and not just follow instructions.

I have to admit, though, I hadn't really appreciated how much the formal study of art, such as art history helps you to interpret what you see. **40** But we also need to be given the opportunity to develop those skills through actually doing some art, too, to help us understand that images have a meaning. Otherwise we might find it hard to operate in the real world, where we're constantly having to respond to graphics and symbols, for example on a computer.

And in addition to all of these benefits, my art tutor also maintains that research has shown there's a link between studying art and doing well in other areas of study. She says that someone who regularly does art is more likely to get really good academic results. **41** And even if not everyone makes it to the top, doing art gives many talented young people the chance to at least shine at something that they're good at.

Finally, I should say something about the sheer beauty that art brings into our lives. **42** Taking time to study paintings – really study them, and not just glance at them as you pass by – is what helps us understand what the artist was trying to say, and to have the chance to look closely at something beautiful. And that's certainly essential to my life.

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| A I had always thought that understanding pictures just came naturally to everyone. | E It's easier said than done to produce the kind of work that's needed. |
| B Just imagine how grey the world would be if there weren't works of art to look at. | F In fact, though, the aim is to develop the coordination needed for writing. |
| C There's also evidence to suggest it can really help if life becomes hectic. | G There's a tendency to go on and achieve in all sorts of different fields. |
| D Then suddenly problems arise that have to be sorted out. | |

Advice

38 Why might a teacher encourage children to draw or paint? What useful skills might they be learning?

42 The writer mentions beauty. Which of the options links best to this?