

IDEAS 69

**International Online Teachers Society
Debate
Educational Materials For
Advance and Upper Intermediate
Students**



**International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee**



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THE 69th INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

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DEALING WITH ART AND THE ARTIST WITHIN

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The color wheel is perhaps the most common method to make children aware of the wonders of color. Who hasn't made one during their early childhood in school? The introduction to the primary, secondary and tertiary colors thru the color wheel is an experience shared by children of yesterday and today. I have seen my kids working on their own color wheel projects for Art, which has now become integrated with Music and Physical Education.

I have also helped my kids create their art projects using egg shells. I particularly dislike having to crush the eggshells and color them in various hues. It takes a certain kind of patience to guide your child as he glues the eggshells onto the pattern, but I have found it a unique opportunity to bond with my children. I wonder if Van Gogh's mom was also able to enjoy such activities.

Visual art has emerged from various ancient movements to more contemporary pop art. We've had famous and highly-celebrated pop artists like Andy Warhol, Keith Haring, Roy Lichtenstein, and Tom Wesselmann. Their works have influenced much about contemporary living, including Swatch watches and clothes and apparel. The abstract way they view contemporary life in general has enabled them to produce art works that fetch millions in dollars. What most likely sets them apart from us ordinary mortals is their ingenious perception of such everyday things as a can of tomato soup or a collection of everyday objects, faces, etc.

Although pop art seems to have a less orderly approach, it still does not take away the fact that it has readily established itself as a popular visual art form. Perhaps those among us who have been used to the flowing lines and sensual rhythm of ancient artists' works might feel a little lost in the varying challenges of understanding pop art. But we need to understand that art, like everything else in life, also evolves with the times. And artists undergo much of the evolution process to be able to come out as their own.

Those who've visited a Museum of Modern Art know very well how contemporary art has influenced advertising, the news, product innovations and many other things. Pop art aims to define popular culture in ways that the artists themselves perceive them to be: common and at the same time irreverently exaggerated. Perhaps pop artists consider popular culture to be rather an unnecessary nuisance that they must both hurdle over and describe for people adequately.

Whatever a pop artist's objective is, it is still a relief that we have been blest with the works of such artists as Rembrandt, Monet, Dali, and Van Gogh. They soothe us with the emotional truth and fluid lines of their creations and give us a peek into the beauty there is in simplicity of presentation and color.

Let us, as parents, allow the artists in our kids to find their own niches. Let us teach them that art inspires people in countless ways, some in greatly lovelier manner than others.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Do you like art? Why or why not?
2. Why is art essential in life?
3. Be able to describe your childhood art classes in school. What do you remember most about them?
4. If you could articulate your feelings about your career in a painting, what will you paint?
5. How has art influenced your life?



ART THEN AND ART TODAY—A JUXTAPOSITION

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Have you ever heard of people being so strongly affected by a work of art that they end up crying before a painting? Or seen people crying unabashedly during a play? What is more common, perhaps, is seeing individuals severely affected by what they see onscreen in a movie or TV drama. In all three situations, we see how art influences people and moves them to express emotion.

Sometimes, we see images that move us to action. A well-executed photo of animals being mistreated or abused could incite animal lovers to instigate action against animal cruelty. Nothing is more likely to create vivid imagery than what is perceived thru the eye. Images affect us, sometimes more profoundly than we think.

We see a nude woman in a sexy pose with fruits and vegetables covering her private parts and we think going vegetarian or vegan is beautiful. We see a flawless face and the latest anti-ageing miracle cream this side of the planet and we think we can become much more pleasant-looking if we try the product advertised. We see muscled or well-toned bodies seamlessly executing exercise moves and we get inspired to lose weight and live healthily. And with the advent of such technological wonders as Photoshop, we are bombarded by seemingly-perfect images and representations. Things that make us wonder sometimes, is this at all natural?

There was a time when artists and their subjects had to endure hours of sitting to be able to capture those perfect images. Now, we have gadgets that capture everything in a split second and reproduce images countless times. We can even do alterations and enhancements to those images at the touch of a button.

I remember the scene in the movie Titanic where a very nervous Leonardo DiCaprio made a sketch of a naked Kate Winslet. Who knows if Leonardo DiCaprio indeed made the drawing? What I did know was how lovingly the sketch was produced so that it impressed the subject enough to make her fall in love with the artist. It gave way to one of the most poignant love stories to be immortalized onscreen.

In my own country, history describes the likes of great Filipino artist Juan Luna, who painted the Spoliarium. The painting has served as a testament that there were talented Filipino artists that could produce great opuses too, in those times.

We've heard of great masterpieces created by unrivalled masters of art. But I believe that there are still Van Goghs and Rembrandts and Dalis among today's youth. They are those who are willing to chart uncharted courses of their own in order to make us appreciate life more fully. The inspiring and artful way they live life motivates us to become masters of our own fates and captains of our souls.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What is your opinion of having photoshopped images of actors and actresses? Is it better or worse than having plastic surgery?
2. Is Photoshop a serious form of art? Why or why not?
3. Has a painting or art piece ever affected you greatly? How?
4. What are art forms that you prefer? What makes this art form special to you?
5. If you could emulate an artist during ancient times, who would it be and why?



SEEING ART IN LIFE

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Life imitates art. We tend to live our lives based on what we perceive to be pleasing, pleasant and commendable. We have an inclination to live our lives based on rules, principles and accepted concepts of living. Anything that goes beyond norms of living are always considered aberrant, depraved or reprehensible. Who seriously wants to view life in such a manner?

Art imitates life. It's a funny thing that the transposition between the subject and the object in the first statement will seldom create a completely believable fact, if ever. Sometimes, art depicts life in a more exaggerated way than possible. We've had movies inspired by true events, art work depicting real life situations. We have had cartoons providing a rich source of satire. They are only funny in their sheer honesty and depiction of truth.

Perhaps the Connecticut gunman who shot down 20 school children and 6 school staff at Sandy Hook School had a twisted view of life as an art. With the school kids who fell in the tragedy with ages ranging from 5 to 10, no parent, American or otherwise, can ever remain unaffected by the overwhelming grief that the parents of those innocent children must feel today. It's difficult to comprehend how such a crime can ever be planned, much less perpetuated by a sane individual. If anyone could ever describe such a horrific tragedy in art, he'd probably end up with an incomprehensible collection of splashes of blood-red colors in a background of black. It simply is not possible to describe the tragedy in a comprehensible art piece. That would require lots of willpower and determination to complete.

Then there was the very recent Oregon mall shooting and the Columbine High School shooting way, way back. The United States has not been the only country with such tragic events unfolding. We've also heard of school shootings in Asia, Europe, Australia and South America. Reading and hearing of such tragedies, one can not help but wonder why the act of killing always proves so horrific in learning institutions. Is it simply because of the fact that schools have the highest population of people with undiscovered potentials and so much promise? Or is it because schools are supposed to be a haven of safety for our children that we can't really imagine such grim scenarios to happen within those walls? I honestly believe that it's both.

We live our lives enclosed in our safety nets, assuring ourselves that nothing can ever go seriously wrong to mar our preset concepts of artful living. We can not continue misleading ourselves into believing that living will always be idyllic, tranquil and peaceful like a meadow scene or a calm blue sea in a painting. We need to be prepared for the eventualities of a dark, grim image before our eyes, and pray for greater strength to overcome such representations with faith in ourselves and each other.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. If you could describe your life through artwork, what colors would you choose? Why?
2. How does life imitate art, in your opinion?
3. How does art imitate life?
4. Talk about your favorite artist and his/her works. What sets this artist apart from others?
5. Do you like going to art galleries and museums? Why or why not?



ART - A SELF-EXPRESSION

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Art can be a way of self-expression when a person needs to put out and make known his feelings. There are a lot of good and bad things that happen in our daily life. There are times that we are overjoyed with the special people and events that surround us. Of course we don't just feel overwhelmed but we also encounter horrible and nerve-wracking incidents as we go along with our daily living. Then we need to escape from all of this reality that we are faced with and art proves to be a panacea to get away from all the hullabaloo of life itself.

Although, it looks like we are running away from reality, but the truth is we would like to express our inner self. As a matter of fact, every individual has the right to decide whatever art or entertainment he would want and not want, that is, the freedom of expression. Freedom of expressing your inner thoughts and emotions is just like what Mahatma Gandhi has once said, "I want freedom for the full expression of my personality." This holds very true for art, for expressing oneself is what art is all about. Call it an escape, an evasion, an eschewal or simply an outlet; it is an outright show of self-expression, of what is truly lurking inside that vast emotion of yours.

As for me, the expression of art is a documentation of what you think and feel inside of you. It is a record of what's going on with the world and how you see it, a record of our emotion and a record of what our minds can perceive and ever imagine. It is the greatest way of escape in every needs of our life. Moreover, it can be a quick stroke of a paint brush in a canvas or maybe a subtle detail of a pencil. If you want to feel better, then it can plainly be a sketching of a little picture or anything under the sun and even sculpting clay.

Putting out our thoughts is an art. Others express it in singing, scribbling or writing like what I have been doing for quite some time. This only means that there is no exact way of showing whatever you have in mind because it can be very simple and yet be very complicated. Art is anything we want to be, of what we make out of it. For others it can serve as a therapy too. To put it plain and simple, art is a way to be yourself, letting it come out in your masterpiece.

In reality, art is delving into one's feelings and emotion and even the spiritual agony within us through seeing and listening. Self-expression reveals the sources of personal struggle, trying to figure out what brings about or sparks spiritual discomfort. Despite our varied skill levels, we can all be connected through art, for art generates personal exploration through self-expression.

Questions for discussion:

1. Do you express your inner self through art? In what way do you do it?
2. Is it rewarding to use art as a self-expression? Why or why not?
3. Do you believe in the diversity of art? How do you show it?
4. What is the true meaning of art for you?
5. Are you an art-lover? How does it manifest in your life?



Art: A Mirror to Human Intelligence

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Art is the ultimate expression of human intelligence. It is a diverse part of human evolution and it focuses primarily on human creativity. Human beings have expressed art through a number of applications ranging from sculpturing, photography, painting, and writing. The beauty of art has also been expressed in the realms of music and dance. People express their artistic talents through composing music and creating lyrics. Various cultures also create their different dances and they consider such dances as a form of artistic expression. We can also see art the form of poetry, in plays, and in novels.

Art is a science. It is studied in colleges and various types of institutions. Architecture is considered as one of the visual arts and it is studied by millions around the globe. Decorative arts and interior designing, as well as fashion designing is also studied in various institutions. Schools consider art as a skill and an expression to man's imagination. Through imagination, schools teach students to express their aesthetic sense through creating brilliant works of art. In lectures, professors show pre-historic art to students through showing them caveman drawings. They also show their students with various patterns of contemporary art and shades of artistic excellence which are made by painters and artists. Indeed, art has been a crucial part of human evolution.

Today, as the artistic scene becomes paramount, companies tune in to substance and style. Aesthetic considerations can be found in the simplest products. There is beauty in clothing, in electronic gadgets, in automobiles, in books, and even in modern decors. The food that we eat everyday is also applied with strong aesthetic considerations.

Art is expressed through various forms. There are specific shapes and designs which can influence its form. A good example of this is a sculpture. A simple sculpture can be created through theme, dimensions and gravity. It can be based on a human being, a goddess or even a simple fruit. The form of a particular work of art depends on the imagination and style of the artist. Most artists have a certain type of gender which he follows. Some artists base their works of art in brush texture while others base their works of art in visual interactivity and linearity.

What brands an artist is his style of artwork. Art connotes mastery and years of training. Edgar Allan Poe has based his writings to the macabre while Jackson Pollock based his paintings on Abstract Expressionism. Again, artworks are based on the theme and the style of the artist. They often based their works of art according to depth and technique. Because of their technique, other artists cannot easily duplicate their artworks and that is why most masterpieces are expensive.

Questions:

- 1) What is the technique of Edgar Allan Poe?
- 2) What are companies today applying to their products?
- 3) What is a good example of an art form?
- 4) What type of artistic skill do you have?
- 5) Why is art an expression of human intelligence?



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