

1. Graffiti

The subject of this week's lesson is something that is part of urban landscapes all over the world: graffiti.

Level

Intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B1 and above)

How to use the lesson

1. Ask your students how they would define graffiti. Presuming there are some examples of graffiti in your students' town or city, ask your students what they think of them. If your students think graffiti is a bad thing, how do they think it should be combated? Can graffiti ever be a good thing, and if so, under what circumstances? When, if ever, does graffiti become art?

You could perhaps also mention the question of whether the word *graffiti* should be treated as a singular or plural noun. Strictly speaking, it is the plural of "graffito," a word hardly ever used, but it is treated so often as singular, as in this lesson, that this use has become widely accepted.

2. Give your students between five and ten minutes to read through Worksheet A, encouraging them to look up new vocabulary. Note that many of the words that might be new are not in the glossary because they form part of Exercise 1.

3. Give each student a copy of Worksheet B, then divide the class into pairs and ask students to work together to complete Exercise 1, in which they have to find the words to match the definitions. (You might want to mention that the verbs defined on Worksheet B are not necessarily in their infinitive form on Worksheet A.)

4. Check answers in open class.

5. Ask the students to turn over their copies of Worksheets A and B, and their glossaries. Keeping the students in their pairs, hand out Worksheet C, which contains the text from Worksheet A with twenty incorrect words that the students have to identify and correct. The words containing the mistakes are all in bold, as are five other words that are correct. Point out that the mistakes are all grammatical or lexical, and that no correction requires them to write more than one additional word.

6. Check answers in open class.

Answers:

Exercise 1

1. crack down on 2. demolish 3. vandalism 4. volcano 5. justify 6. scrawl
7. in question 8. aerosol 9. skill 10. elaborate 11. council 12. authorize

Exercise 2

1. vandalism 2. on 3. factors 4. appear 6. demolished 7. justified 8. skill
9. multicolored 10. signature 11. passionate 12. justification 14. around
15. remains 16. erupted 17. bald 19. deal with 20. elsewhere 22. agreement
23. removed 25. owner

Words in bold that are correct: 5. to 13. strong 18. authorities 21. spray 24. left

2. Related Websites

Send your students to these websites, or just take a look yourself.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/05/nyregion/05graffiti.html>

A *New York Times* article (2010) about famous New York City graffiti artist Eric Felisbret's thoughts on graffiti in the 1970s and today. Includes a slide show of graffiti images. Challenging for intermediate level.

<http://www.nydailynews.com/news/world/2010/04/16/2010-04-16-rios-christ-the-redeemer-stature-marred-with-graffiti.html>

A short article from New York's *Daily News* (2010) on the graffiti that briefly appeared on Rio de Janeiro's iconic Christ the Redeemer statue in April of this year. Accessible to intermediate level.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/2009/aug/31/graffiti-art-bristol-public-vote>

A *Guardian* article (2009) on the decision by the local council in the UK city of Bristol to let people vote on whether or not graffiti by artists such as Banksy should be removed. Intermediate level and above.