**Theme 2: Art – Forms, genres, media and style**

**COURSE TEXT and WORKSHEET (required to be completed and submitted)**

**Name and parallel group (A or B): …………………………………………………………………………….**

*Before you read*

**Warm-up questions**

What do you know about an artwork’s style and form? How are artworks

put into different genres? Which one is more important for interpreting an

artwork: form or content? Is it possible to classify traditional artworks into

different genres?

**Skimming the text**

Read the text’s title (headings and subheadings) and

 Write some of the text’s keywords in the following blanks.

……………… ……………… ………………… ………………

 Write the names of some important people and places given in the

reading passage.

……………… ……………… ………………… …………………

 Read the first sentences of each paragraph. What do you think the

reading is probably about?

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

**Group work (classroom task)**

Discuss the following terms in groups and compare your answers with

your partners.

 Genre  Medium (media)

 Style  Pointillism

 Form/content  Archeology

*Part Ι. Reading*

**Forms, genres, media and style**

[1] The creative arts are often divided into more specific categories, each

related to its technique, or medium, such as decorative arts, plastic arts,

performing arts, or literature. Unlike scientific fields, art is one of the few

subjects which is academically organized according to technique. An

artistic medium is the substance or material the artistic work is made from,

and may also refer to the technique used. For example, paint is a medium

used in painting, and paper is a medium used in drawing.

[2] An art form is the specific shape, or quality an artistic expression takes.

The media used often influence the form. For example, the form of a

sculpture must exist in space in three dimensions, and respond to gravity.

The constraints and limitations of a particular medium are thus called its

formal qualities. To give another example, the formal qualities of painting

are the canvas texture, color, and brush texture. The formal qualities of

video games are non-linearity, interactivity and virtual presence. The form

of a particular work of art is determined by the formal qualities of the

media, and is not related to the intentions of the artist or the reactions of

the audience in any way whatsoever as these properties are related to

content rather than form.

[3] A genre is a set of conventions and styles within a particular medium.

For instance, well recognized genres in film are western, horror and

romantic comedy. A particular work of art may bend or combine genres but

each genre has a recognizable group of conventions and clichés. Genre is

the term for any category of literature or other forms of art or entertainment,

e.g. music, whether written or spoken, audio or visual, based on some set of

stylistic criteria. Genres are formed by conventions that change over time as

new genres are invented and the use of old ones is discontinued. Often,

works fit into multiple genres by way of borrowing and recombining these

conventions.

[4] Genre began as an absolute classification system for ancient Greek

literature. Poetry, prose and performance had a specific and calculated

style that related to the theme of the story. Speech patterns for comedy

would not be appropriate for tragedy, and even actors were restricted to

their genre under the assumption that a type of person could tell one type

of story best.

[5] In later periods genres proliferated and developed in response to

changes in audiences and creators. Genre became a dynamic tool to help

the public make sense out of unpredictable art. Because art is often a

response to a social state, in that people write, sing and dance about what

they know about, the use of genre as a tool must be able to adapt to

changing meanings.

[6] The style of an artwork, artist, or movement is the distinctive method and

form followed by the respective art. A particular style may have specific

cultural meanings. For example, Roy Lichtenstein is known a painter

associated with the American Pop art movement of the 1960s, despite his

use of dots. Lichtenstein used evenly spaced dots as a style to question the

‘high’ art of painting with the ‘low’ art of comics, thus commenting on class

distinctions in culture. Pointillism, a technique in late Impressionism

(1880s) developed especially by the artist *Georges Seurat*, employs dots to

create variation in color and depth in an attempt to approximate the way

people really see color. Both artists use dots, but the particular style and

technique relate to the artistic movement adopted by each artist.

[7] In the visual arts, style is a “distinctive manner which permits the

grouping of works into related categories” or “any distinctive, and therefore

recognizable, way in which an act is performed or an artifact made or ought

to be performed and made.” It refers to the visual appearance of a work of

art that relates it to other works by the same artist or one from the same

period, training, location, art movement or archaeological culture; “the

notion of style has long been the art historian's principal mode of classifying

works of art. By style he selects and shapes the history of art".

[8] Style is often divided into the general style of a period, country or

cultural group, group of artists or art movement, and the individual style of

the artist within that group style. Divisions within both types of styles are

often made, such as between ‘early’, ‘middle’ or ‘late’. In some artists,

such as *Picasso* for example, these divisions may be marked and easy to

see but in others they are more subtle. Style is seen as usually dynamic, in

most periods always changing by a gradual process, though the speed of

this varies greatly, between the very slow development in style typical of

pre-historic art or ancient Egyptian art to the rapid changes in modern art

styles. Style often develops in a series of jumps, with relatively sudden

changes followed by periods of slower development.

[9] These are all ways of beginning to define a work of art, to narrow it

down. The decision to cast a sculpture in bronze, for instance, inevitably

affects its meaning; the work becomes something different from how it

might be if it had been cast in gold or plastic or chocolate, even if

everything else about the artwork remains the same. Next, you might

examine how the materials in each artwork have become an arrangement

of shapes, colors, textures, and lines. These, in turn, are organized into

various patterns and compositional structures. In your interpretation, you

would comment on how salient features of the form contribute to the

overall meaning of the finished artwork, although, the meaning of most

artworks is not discussed in terms of materials, techniques, and forms.

Most interpretations also include a discussion of the ideas and feelings the

artwork engenders.

*Part ΙΙ. Word study: Pronunciations, definitions and examples*

***Translate (in writing) and learn the following vocabulary:***

**Affect (v.) /**əˈfɛkt/

(1) Have an effect on; make a difference to. (2) touch the feelings of

(someone); move emotionally.

*The data was analyzed to determine the extent to which health can* ***affect***

*mental behavior.*

**Approximate (v.) /**əˈpraksəmit/

Come close or be similar to something in quality, nature, or quantity.

*Important Note: All sizes are* ***approximate*** *measurements only.*

**Cast (v.)** /kæst/

Throw (something) forcefully in a specified direction.

*It is up to you to* ***cast*** *a critical eye.*

**Constraint (n.) /**kənˈstreɪnt/

A limitation or restriction.

*This* ***constraint*** *makes the project harder to progress.*

**Dimension (n.) /**dɪˈmɛnʃ(ə)n/

An aspect or feature of a situation, problem, or thing.

*Reading comprehension is only one* ***dimension*** *of language learning.*

**Gravity (n.)** /ˈgræviti:/

The force that attracts a body toward the center of the earth, or toward any

other physical body having mass.

*Newton discovered the earth's* ***gravity*** *in 17th century.*

**Inevitably (adv.) /**inˈevitəbli:/

(1) In such a manner as could not be otherwise. (2) as is certain to

happen; unavoidably.

***Inevitably*** *there will be some students who do not like English exams.*

**Respective (adj.) /**riˈspektiv/

Belonging or relating separately to each of two or more people or things.

*When I finish the project I would receive the* ***respective*** *money.*

**Salient (adj.) /**ˈseɪlɪənt/

Most noticeable or important.

*This can provide* ***salient*** *problems with immediate feedbacks.*

**Texture (n.) /**ˈtɛkstʃə(r)/

The feel, appearance, or consistency of a surface or a substance.

*Its richness of* ***texture*** *justifies its price.*

*Part ΙΙΙ. Exercises*

**A. Open questions (classroom task)**

Based on the text you have read, answer the following questions orally.

1- What is the definition of an artistic ‘medium’?

2- How is the ‘form’ of a particular art work determined?

3- How ‘style’ is defined in visual arts?

4- How is it possible to classify the artworks based on their ‘styles’?

5- What does genre mean?

**B. Comprehension check**

Read each statement and decide whether it is true or false. Write “T”

before true statements and “F” before false ones.

…..... 1. Like other scientific fields, art is academically organized

according to technique.

……. 2. An art form is the specific shape, or quality an artistic

expression takes.

……. 3. An artistic style refers to the visual appearance of a work that

relates it to other works by the same artist.

……. 4. Medium is usually a dynamic process and changes gradually in

different periods.

……. 5. Genre is a dynamic tool to help the public make sense out of

unpredictable art.

……. 5. Form features of an artwork contribute to the overall meaning

of that artwork.

**C. Multiple choice questions**

Read the reading passage carefully and select the most appropriate

answer for each of the following multiple-choice test items.

1- The artistic …………. contribute to the overall meaning of the artwork.

A) materials B) forms

C) styles D) media

2- An artistic …………. is the substance or material the art work is made

from.

A) genre B) medium

C) style D) form

3- Cultural values of a society are highly related to the …………. of an

artwork.

A) style B) genre

C) medium D) form

4- The form of a particular work of art is determined by the formal

qualities of the media, and is not related to ………….

A) reactions of the audience.

B) genre of the artwork.

C) medium of the artwork.

D) content of the artwork.

5- ‘It’ in the fourth line of paragraph 7 refers to ………….

A) style. B) visual art.

C) same artist. D) visual appearance of an art work.

**D. Synonym finding**

Find a single word in the passage which means:

1 in line with (para.1) ……………………..

2 limit (para.2) …………………….

3 therefore (para.2) …………………….

4 type, kind (para.3) …………………….

5 create (para.3) ……………………..

6 imagination/guess (para.4) ……………………..

7 adjust (para.5) ……………………..

8 use/utilize (para.6) ……………………..

9 fast/speedy (para.8) …………………….

10 remarkable/note (para.9) ……………………..

**E. Matching**

Match the words in column Ι with their appropriate equivalents in

column ΙΙ. Insert the letters in the parentheses provided. There are more

choices in column ΙΙ than required.

**column Ι column ΙΙ**

1 organize (……) a. amusement

2 particular (……) b. idea, concept

3 horror (……) c. connect, relate

4 entertainment (……) d. special

5 proliferate (……) e. approximation

6 notion (……) f. fright

7 associate (……) g. grow, produce

h. put in order, arrange

**F. Word formation**

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words from the following table.

Make necessary changes.

**Noun Verb Adjective Adverb**

approximation approximate approximate approximately

inevitability inevitable inevitably

**Noun Verb Adjective Adverb**

salience salient saliently

respect respective respectively

1. Every day, my friend and I go to school together but after the school

we take our …………. ways home.

2. The weather changes are …………. in different seasons of the year.

3. It is …………. to know that if you want a success in future you

should try as best as your ability.

4. …………., it is 10 p.m. and I am a little bit late.

5. John and Peter are brothers and they study physics and math,

………….

**G. Cloze test (classroom task)**

There are some missing words in the following text. Find the best

choice for each blank and mark it in your book.

In literature, genre has been known as a clear taxonomy. This taxonomy

implies a concept of …..(1)…… or that an idea will be stable forever. The

earliest recorded systems of genre in western history can be …..(2)….. back

to Plato and Aristotle. *Gérard Genette*, a French literary theorist described

Plato as creating three imitational genres: dramatic dialogue, pure narrative

and epic (a mixture of dialogue and narrative). Lyric poetry, the fourth and

final type of Greek literature, was …..(3)…… by Plato as a non-mimetic

mode. Aristotle later …..(4)….. Plato's system by eliminating the pure

narrative and distinguishing by two additional criteria: the object to be

imitated and the medium of ……(5)…… such as words, gestures or verse.

**1**. A) sequence B) certainty C) containment D) contempt

**2**. A) traced B) looked C) dated D) found

**3**. A) created B) concluded C) included D) excluded

**4**. A) made B) revised C) studied D) destroyed

**5**. A) depiction B) description C) presentation D) explanation

**References**

Dana, A. and Margaret, I. (2003). *Art and Thought*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

De Zegher, C. (1996). *Inside the Visible*. MIT Press.

Hatcher, E. (1999). *Art as Culture: An Introduction to the Anthropology of Art*.

Holly, M. A. and Moxey, K. (2002). *Art History and Aesthetics of Visual Arts*.

New Haven: Yale University Press.

Shiner, L. (2003). *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History.* Chicago: University

of Chicago Press.

Source: KHAGHANINEJAD, Saber Mohammad. *English for the Students of Art*. Fars: Shiraz University Press 2016. ISBN 9789644626636.

(Adapted for Academic English course, Catholic theological faculty, Charles University, Prague.)