

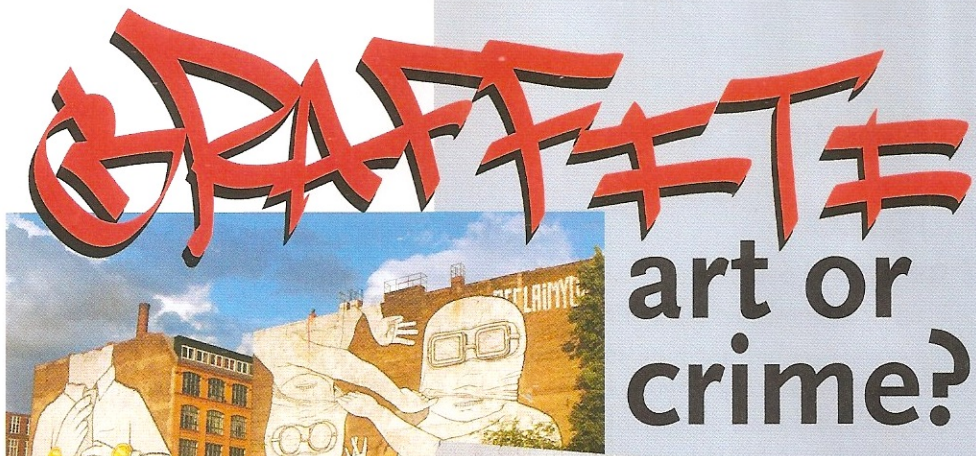
## UNIT 11 Crime

### Reading 2

#### WARM-UP

#### 1 DISCUSS in pairs.

- 1 What do you think about graffiti and tagging? Is it an effective art form or is it an ugly and destructive eyesore?
- 2 Is there any graffiti in your area? How is it dealt with? Is it left and admired or cleaned away at public cost?



**Left:** Five Pointz, a world renowned outdoor exhibit space featuring the works of numerous graffiti artists in Queens, New York.

**Top:** Planet Process graffiti by BLU in Schlesische Strasse, Berlin, Germany.  
**Right:** Banksy's graffiti in Fitzrovia, central London.



#### FCE Reading – Part 3

- 2 MULTIPLE MATCHING.** You are going to read four different opinions about graffiti. For questions 1–15, choose from the choices (A–D). The people may be chosen more than once.

#### Which person

- |   |    |                          |
|---|----|--------------------------|
| complains about the cost of removing graffiti?                                      | 1  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| thinks graffiti is a strong statement?  | 2  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| sees graffiti as positive artistic expression?                                      | 3  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| says someone has made a lot of money from street art?                               | 5  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| sees graffiti as an art form that has always existed?                               | 6  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| thinks graffiti can express local problems effectively?                             | 7  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| would like to see graffiti cleaned off as soon as possible?                         | 8  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| suggests that graffiti encourages crime?  | 9  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| disapproves of tagging?   | 10 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| talks about someone anonymous?  | 12 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| thinks young people need to be encouraged to use art to express their feelings?     | 13 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| says street art gives a voice to certain sections of a community?                   | 14 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| says street art deliberately tries to draw public attention to particular problems? | 15 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

#### A. Banksy: an artist

Banksy is perhaps the most famous, or notorious, artist alive. Considered by some a genius and by others a vandal, he inspires admiration and provokes anger in equal measure. He is my favourite artist. He became famous through his street art in public spaces – on walls in London, Brighton, Bristol and even on the West Bank barrier separating Israelis and Palestinians. His works now sell for hundreds of thousands of pounds and have become collectors' items among celebrities. If he wasn't so controversial, his works wouldn't be worth so much, would they? He is also notorious for his publicity stunts, like when he left an **inflatable** doll dressed as a Guantanamo prisoner in Disneyland, California, or when he hung a smiling version of the Mona Lisa in the Louvre, in Paris. Despite his fame, however, the most provocative fact of all is that Banksy's true identity has always been a secret, known to only a **handful** of trusted friends. Sadly, had he revealed his true identity at any time, he could have been arrested for vandalism.

#### B. Art: an art teacher

I try to integrate graffiti into my teaching. It's high time people accepted local graffiti as an attempt at artistic expression. My pupils see graffiti as a legitimate way of expressing

themselves, so I decided to help them include the art they viewed and knew from their communities into new forms of art. If you think about it, people throughout history have always wanted to leave their mark – whether a prehistoric animal painted onto a cave wall or individuals' names **scratched** on the ancient walls of Pompeii. Suppose some local official had decided to clean the walls in Pompeii? I let my students use graffiti or aerosol art in their work, although I don't allow the use of tagging or anything that is associated with a particular **gang**. I think it promotes more creativity, and I see it as a way of making a difference and showing students that art is very broad and ever-changing. After all, art is all to do with expression, isn't it? I see my role as an art teacher as getting students to express themselves and encouraging the end result, which is self-confidence.

### C. Vandalism: a town hall official

Our experts and city leaders have been meeting to discuss a **battle plan** against graffiti. Many of us fear that graffiti is destroying our towns and cities and threatening the survival of entire communities. An enormous amount of local tax money is spent cleaning up and preventing more of the pictures and writing on the walls of public buildings. We feel it is a criminal activity that should be punished. Suppose someone came into your house and started painting the walls, you would be furious, wouldn't you? Most so-called graffiti artists are young vandals who **spray** and run. Some are in gangs marking territory, but most are just taggers spraying their names or symbols to gain personal recognition. The neighbourhood begins to deteriorate, and then that invites first minor crime and then major crime, doesn't it? Getting the young people to clean up their own graffiti is not enough. Local authorities agree that the best approach is zero tolerance – removing graffiti within twenty-four hours. We all want cleaner, crime-free cities, don't we?

### D. Art: an art critic

Graffiti can be very colourful and can **brighten up** an area. For many, the negatives and positives of each community are directly reflected in graffiti, from the misunderstanding and neglect of some sections of the population by those in authority, to the celebration of creativity, originality and freedom. There are no other art forms that have this power, are there? What if people used violence instead of art to express their frustrations? Graffiti can display the artist's feelings or opinions about the world around them. In one example in south London, there is a painted mural in graffiti style along a public walkway. It captures the ethos of a local conflict resolution charity which encourages positive relationships across different sections of the local community. I wish more local communities would use art as a way of highlighting an important local **issue** – then we might have fewer problems with local aggression.

(691 words)

### 3 COMPLETE the sentences using the **highlighted** words from the text.

- 1 In the past lots of tourists ..... their names on public monuments.
- 2 Whether street art can be considered real art or just vandalism is a controversial ....., isn't it?
- 3 Colourful street art can certainly ..... a dull public building, like a car park, can't it?
- 4 An enormous ..... castle has been placed in the local playground for small children.
- 5 In most street art, the artists ..... the paint onto the walls.
- 6 Only a small ..... of street artists have become famous in the world of art.
- 7 Tagging is usually a form of identification for a local .....
- 8 Some local authorities have created a ..... for dealing with graffiti in their area.



### YOUR TURN

4 **DISCUSS.** Many artists and art forms were originally condemned by the establishment or caused scandals. Can you think of other examples in art, music or literature?

5 **LOOK** at these two pictures and discuss with a classmate whether they can be considered true 'works of art'. Give reasons for your answer.



Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968), *Fountain*, 1917. Tate Gallery, London, England.



Jackson Pollock (1912–56), *Blue Poles* (detail), 1953. National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Australia.