**Theme 1: History of Art**

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

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

*Before you read*

**Warm-up questions**

What is the oldest art? Which civilizations (Eastern or Western) have been more influential in the art’s development?

Traditional or modern art, which one do you prefer?

**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.

 Civilization  Iconography

 Cave paintings  Calligraphy

 Biblical art  Modernism

*Part Ι. Reading*

**History of Art**

[1] The history of ‘art’ is a multi-disciplinary science, seeking an objective

examination of ‘art’ throughout time, classifying cultures, establishing

periodizations and observing the distinctive and influential characteristics

of ‘art’. The study of the history of art was initially developed in the

Renaissance, with its limited scope on the artistic production of western

civilization. However, as time has passed, it has imposed a broader view

of artistic history, seeking a comprehensive overview of all the

civilizations and analysis of their artistic production in terms of their own

cultural values (cultural relativism), and not just western art history.

[2] Sculptures, cave paintings, rock paintings and petro-glyphs dating to

roughly 40,000 years ago have been found, but the precise meaning of

such art is often disputed because so little is known about the cultures that

produced them. The oldest art objects in the world—a series of tiny,

drilled snail shells about 75,000 years old—were discovered in a South

African cave. Containers that may have been used to hold paints have

been found dating as far back as 100,000 years.

[3] Many great traditions in art have a foundation in the art of one of the

great ancient civilizations: Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, India,

China, Ancient Greece, Rome, as well as Inca and Maya. Each of these

centers of early civilization developed a unique and characteristic style in

its art. Because of the size and duration of these civilizations, more of their

art works have survived and more of their influence has been transmitted

to other cultures and later times. Some also have provided the first records

of how artists worked. In Byzantine and Medieval art of the Western

Middle Ages, much art focused on the expression of Biblical and religious

truths, and used styles that showed the higher glory of a heavenly world,

such as the use of gold in the background of paintings, or glass in mosaics

or windows, which also presented figures in idealized, patterned forms.

Nevertheless, a classical realist tradition persisted in small Byzantine

works, and realism steadily grew in the art of Catholic Europe.

Renaissance art had a greatly increased emphasis on the realistic depiction

of the material world, and the place of humans in it, reflected in the

corporeality of the human body.

[4] In the east, Islamic art's rejection of iconography led to emphasis on

geometric patterns, calligraphy, and architecture. In further east, religion

dominated artistic styles and forms too. India and Tibet saw emphasis on

painted sculptures and dance, while religious painting borrowed many

conventions from sculpture and tended to bright contrasting colors with

emphasis on outlines. China saw the flourishing of many art forms: bronze

work, pottery, poetry, calligraphy, music, painting, drama, fiction, etc.

Chinese styles vary greatly from era to era and each one is traditionally

named after the ruling dynasty. So, for example, Tang Dynasty paintings

are monochromatic and sparse, emphasizing idealized landscapes, but

Ming Dynasty paintings are busy and colorful, and focus on telling stories

via setting and composition.

[5] The western ‘Age of Enlightenment’ in the 18th century saw artistic

depictions of physical and rational certainties of the clockwork universe,

as well as politically revolutionary visions of a post-monarchist world,

such as *Blake*'s portrayal of *Newton* as a divine geometer, or *David*'s

propagandistic paintings. This led to Romantic rejections of this in favor

of pictures of the emotional side and individuality of humans, exemplified

in the novels of Goethe. The late 19th century then saw a host of artistic

movements, such as Symbolism and impressionism among others.

[6] The history of twentieth century art is a narrative of endless possibilities

and the search for new standards, each being torn down in succession by the

next. Thus, the parameters of Impressionism, Expressionism, Cubism,

Surrealism, etc. cannot be maintained very much beyond the time of its

invention. Increasing global interaction during this time saw an equivalent

influence of other cultures into western art, such as *Pablo Picasso* being

influenced by African sculpture. West has had huge impacts on Eastern art

in the 19th and 20th centuries, with originally western ideas like

Communism and Post-Modernism exerting a powerful influence on artistic

styles. Modernism, the idealistic search for truth, gave way in the latter half

of the 20th century to a realization of its unattainability. Relativism was

accepted as an unavoidable truth, which led to the period of contemporary

art and post-modern criticism, where cultures of the world and of history are

seen as changing forms, which can be appreciated and drawn from only

with irony. Furthermore, the separation of cultures is increasingly blurred

and some argue it is now more appropriate to think in terms of a global

culture, rather than regional cultures.

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

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

**Appreciate (v.)** /əˈpriːʃɪeɪt/

Recognize the full worth of; be grateful for (something).

*We really* ***appreciate*** *your contribution.*

**Blur (v.) /**blər/

Make or become unclear or less distinct.

*The drops on your glasses* ***blurred*** *your vision****.***

**Calligraphy (n.)** /kəˈlɪɡrəfi/

The art of producing decorative handwriting or lettering with a pen or

brush.

*The stage floor was carpeted with large open books whose white pages*

*were covered with bold* ***calligraphy.***

**Convention (n.)** /kənˈvɛnʃ(ə)n/

(1) A way in which something is usually done, esp. within a particular

area or activity. (2) An agreement between countries covering particular

matters, especially one less formal than a treaty.

*There is a UN* ***Convention*** *on the Rights of the Child.*

**Expression (n.) /**ɪkˈsprɛʃ(ə)n/

The process of making known one's thoughts or feelings.

*This was the new* ***expression*** *of the church.*

**Flourish (v.) /**ˈflʌrɪʃ/

(Of a person, animal, or other organisms) Grow or develop in a healthy or

vigorous way.

*It is possible to* ***flourish*** *during hard economic situation.*

**Global (adj.) /**ˈɡləʊb(ə)l/

Of or relating to the whole world; worldwide.

*She won* ***global*** *acclaim for her last book.*

**Glory (n.) /**ˈɡlɔːri/

High renown or honor won by notable achievements.

*These are the* ***glory*** *days of public satisfaction.*

**Impact (n.) /**ˈɪmpækt/

The action of one object coming forcibly into contact with another.

*This has a devastating* ***impact*** *on your health.*

**Invention (n.) /**ɪnˈvɛnʃ(ə)n/

(1) The action of inventing something, typically a process or device. (2)

Creative ability.

*The* ***invention*** *of wheel highly influenced the human's life.*

**Propagandistic (adj.)** /ˈprepəgændistik/

propagandist: of or relating to or characterized by propaganda.

*Forget these* ***propagandistic*** *declarations. Reality is something else.*

**Relativism (n.) /**ˈrelətəvizəm/

The doctrine that knowledge, truth, and morality exist in relation to

culture, society, or historical context, and are not absolute.

*The term ' moral* ***relativism*** *' is understood in a variety of ways.*

**Revolutionary (adj.) /**rɛvəˈluːʃ(ə)n(ə)ri/

(1) Engaged in or promoting political revolution. (2) A person who works

for or engages in political revolution.

*The company cannot adapt to such a* ***revolutionary*** *change.*

**Sparse (adj.) /**spa:rs/

Thinly dispersed or scattered.

*The trees became* ***sparse*** *in winter.*

**Steadily (adv.) /**ˈstedi:li/

(1) At a steady rate or pace. (2) Firmly fixed, supported, or balanced; not

shaking or moving.

*He developed an abscess in the ear which* ***steadily*** *worsened.*

**Succession (n.) /**səkˈsɛʃ(ə)n/

A number of people or things sharing a specified characteristic and

following one after the other.

*I have put the books I read in the alphabetical* ***succession****.*

**Survive (v.) /**sərˈvīv/

Continue to live or exist, esp. in spite of danger or hardship.

*She could never* ***survive*** *the years of suspense****.***

**Transmit (v.) /**tranzˈmit/

Cause (something) to pass on from one place to another.

*Affected men can* ***transmit*** *the virus.*

*Part ΙΙΙ. Exercises*

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

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

1- Where has the oldest human’s artwork been found?

2- Where were the art-centers of the pre-historic time?

3- Why are medieval artworks inspired by the Bible?

4- What do you know about different Chinese styles of art?

5- How did artworks change after the renaissance?

**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. The study of the history of art was initially developed before

the Renaissance

……. 2. The first signs of human artistic activity date back to 100,000

years.

……. 3. All art works of ancient civilizations have survived and their

influences have been transmitted to other cultures.

……. 4. Chinese art styles vary greatly from era to era and each one is

traditionally named for its symbolic features.

……. 5. Impressionism was an artistic movement in Europe dating

back to late 19th century.

……. 6. Relativism was accepted as an unavoidable truth during the

postmodern era.

**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. *Renaissance artworks have greatly emphasized …………….*

A) The realistic depiction of the material world.

B) The human’s position in the world.

C) The corporeality of the human body.

D) All of the above.

*2- Which one of the followings has not been the focus of Islamic art?*

A) iconography B) calligraphy

C) geometry D) architecture

*3*- *What was the foundation of modern/post-modern criticism?*

A) Communism B) Relativism

C) Cubism D) Globalization

*4- The study of the history of art was initially developed …………….*

A) in Middle Ages. B) from the renaissance.

C) from 19th century. D) in Age of Enlightenment.

*5- Why have most of the art works of ancient civilizations been survived?*

A) Because of their political power

B) Because of their good quality

C) Because of their originality

D) Because of their size and duration

**D. Synonym finding (voluntary)**

Find a single word in the passage which means:

1 complete (para.1) ……………………..

2 find out (para.2) …………………….

3 basis (para.3) …………………….

4 divine (para.3) …………………….

5 grow, increase (para.4) ……………………..

6 family (para.4) ……………………..

7 picture, depiction (para.5) ……………………..

8 universal (para.6) ……………………..

9 story (para.6) …………………….

10 equal, alike (para.6) ……………………..

**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 objective (……) a. sketch, plan

2 tiny (……) b. theater

3 corporeal (……) c. sequence, order

4 outline (……) d. very small

5 drama (……) e. current, present-day

6 succession (……) f. real, based on facts

7 contemporary (……) g. blur

h. bodily

**F. Word formation**

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

Make necessary changes.

**Noun Verb Adjective Adverb**

appreciation appreciate appreciable/appreciative

expression express expressive expressively

glory glorify glorious gloriously

revolution revolutionize revolutionary

1- If you want to ………….. your disappointing life, you should have a

reasonable goal in your mind and a practical program in your hand.

2- The letter you have written has a good English ………….. It seems

that your English is very good.

3- One should read a lot of books if he wants to know about …………..

civilization of Iran.

4- As a(n) ………….. person, she has very deeply-rooted beliefs.

5- I would ………….. if you let me know the exam’s date.

**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.

The history of art is the history of any activity or product made by humans

in a visual form for aesthetical or communicative purposes, ……(1)…..

ideas, emotions or, in general, a worldview. Over time visual art has been

classified in diverse ways, from the medieval ……(2)…… between liberal

arts and mechanical arts, to the modern distinction between fine arts and

applied arts, or to the many contemporary definitions, which define art as

a manifestation of human’s ..….(3)…... Today, art enjoys a wide network

of study; the 20th century has seen the proliferation of institutions,

foundations, art museums and galleries, in both the public and …..(4)…..

sectors, dedicated to the analysis and cataloging of works of art as well as

exhibitions aimed at a mainstream…..(5)……..

**1**. A) destroying B) opening C) expressing D) fastening

**2**. A) distinction B) composition C) location D) description

**3**. A) creativity B) ability C) responsibility D) validity

**4**. A) personal B) governmental C) local D) private

**5**. A) artists B) people C) audience D) students

**References**

Adams, L. (2007). *Art across Time*. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Gombrich, E. H. (1990). *The Story of Art*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall,

Honour, H., and Fleming, J. (1999). *The Visual Arts: A History*. New York:

Henry N. Abrams.

Margueron, J. (2002). *La literatura sumeria. Los mesopotámicos.* Madrid:

Cátedra.

Thomas, N. (1995). *World of Art.* New York: Thames and Hudson.

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.)