**Lesson 2**

**Realism**

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

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

**Date of submission: ………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

*Before you read*

**Warm-up questions**

What is the dominant motive of ‘Realism’? Was it a reaction against

‘Romanticism’? How did ‘Realism’ announced its existence for the first

time? Was it a popular artistic movement?

**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 activity)**

Discuss the following terms in groups and compare your answers with

your partners.

• Reality of life • Objectivity

• *Leonardo da Vinci* • Naturalism

• Working class • Art for everyone

*Part Ι. Reading*

**Realism**

[1] ‘Realism’ in the arts may be generally defined as the attempt to represent

subject matter truthfully, without artificiality and avoiding artistic

conventions, implausible, exotic and supernatural elements. In its most

specific sense, ‘Realism’ was an artistic movement that began in France in

the 1850s, after the 1848 Revolution. Realists rejected ‘Romanticism’,

which had dominated French literature and art since the late 18th century.

‘Realism’ revolted against the exotic subject matter and exaggerated

emotionalism and drama of the Romantic Movement. Instead it sought to

portray real and typical contemporary people and situations with truth and

accuracy, and not avoiding unpleasant or sordid aspects of life. Realist

works depicted people of all classes in situations that arise in ordinary life.

The popularity of such ‘realistic’ works grew with the introduction of

photography — a new visual source that created a desire for people to

produce representations which look “objectively real.”

[2] In general, ‘Realists’ depicted everyday subjects and situations in

contemporary settings, and attempted to depict individuals of all social

classes in a similar manner. Classical idealism and Romantic

emotionalism and drama were avoided equally, and often sordid or untidy

elements of subjects were not omitted. ‘Social realism’ emphasizes the

depiction of the working class, and treating them with the same

seriousness as other classes in art. As an art movement Realism was a

reaction in the mid 19th century against what was seen as the artificiality

of Romanticism, led by *Courbet* in France. It spread across Europe and

was influential for the rest of the century and beyond, but as it became

adopted into the mainstream of painting it becomes less common and

useful as a term to define an artistic style.

**Image: GUSTAVE COURBET (1819-1877) \_ *Stone-Breakers***

[3] The development of increasingly accurate representation of the visual

appearances of things have a long history in art. It includes elements such as

the accurate depiction of the anatomy of humans and animals, of

perspective and effects of distance, and of detailed effects of light and

color. As well as accuracy in shape, light and color, Realist paintings show

an unscientific but effective knowledge of representing distant objects

smaller than closer ones, and representing regular geometric forms such as

the roof and walls of a room with perspective. The depiction of ordinary,

everyday subjects in art also has a long history, though it was often

squeezed into the edges of compositions, or shown at a smaller scale. This

was partly because art was expensive, and usually commissioned for

specific religious, political or personal reasons, that allowed only a

relatively small amount of space or effort to be devoted to such scenes.

[4 Renaissance theorists opened a debate, which was to last several

centuries, as to the correct balance between drawing art from the

observation of nature and from idealized forms. All admitted the

importance of the natural, but many believed it should be idealized to

various degrees to include only the beautiful. *Leonardo da Vinci* was one

who championed the pure study of nature, and wished to depict the whole

range of individual varieties of forms in the human figure and other things.

[5] In the 19th century ‘Naturalism’ or the ‘Naturalist school’ was

somewhat artificially erected as a term representing a breakaway submovement

of Realism, that attempted (not wholly successfully) to

distinguish itself from its parent by its avoidance of politics and social

issues, and liked to proclaim a quasi-scientific basis, playing on the sense

of "naturalist" as a student of Natural history. The originator of the term

was the French art critic *Jules-Antoine Castagnary*, who in 1863

announced that, “the naturalist school declares that art is the expression of

life under all phases and on all levels, and that its sole aim is to reproduce

nature by carrying it to its maximum power and intensity; it is truth

balanced with science”. *Emile Zola* adopted the term with a similar

scientific emphasis for his aims in the novel. Much Naturalist painting

covered a similar range of subject matter as that of Impressionism, but

using tighter, more traditional brushwork styles, and in landscapes often

with more gloomy weather.

**Images: FRANCOIS RAFFAELLI (1850-1919)**

**\_*Outskirts of Paris***

**VASILY PEROV (1833-1882) \_ *The drowned***

[6] Broadly defined as “the faithful representation of reality”, ‘Realism’ as

a movement in literature was based on ‘objective reality’, and focused on

showing quotidian activities and life, primarily among the middle or lower

class society, without romantic idealization or dramatization. It may be

regarded as the general attempt to depict subjects as they are considered to

exist in third person objective reality, without embellishment or

interpretation and ‘in accordance with secular, empirical rules.’

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

**Champion (v.)** /ˈʧæmpIən/

(1) Support the cause of (2) Defend.

*Maradona* ***championed*** *Argentina in World cup 1986.*

**Declare (v.) /** diˈkle(ə)r/

Say something in a solemn and emphatic manner.

*To be selected as the president, he* ***declared*** *his economic goals in detail.*

**Embellish (v.)** / emˈbeliʃ/

(1) Make (something) more attractive by the addition of decorative details

or features. (2) Make (a statement or story) more interesting or

entertaining by adding extra details, especially ones that are not true.

*She* ***embellished*** *her message with respectable words.*

**Exotic (adj.) /** igˈzatik/

Originating in or characteristic of a distant foreign country.

*If you go to Africa you would see many* ***exotic*** *cultures.*

**Implausible (adj.)** /imˈplɔːzəbəl/

Not seeming reasonable or probable; failing to convince; not believable.

*You cannot justify your absence with these* ***implausible*** *excuses.*

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**Mainstream (n.)** /ˈmeɪnˌstri:m/

The ideas, attitudes, or activities that are regarded as normal or

conventional; the dominant trend in opinion, fashion, or the arts.

*Our protest reflects* ***mainstream*** *distaste at a long military occupation.*

**Quotidian (adj.)** /kwɒˈtɪdɪən**/**

Of or occurring every day; daily.

*I am tired of the* ***quotidian*** *exercise of cleaning the refrigerator.*

**Secular (adj.) /**ˈsekjələr/

Denoting attitudes, activities, or other things that have no religious or

spiritual basis.

*Keeping your religious faith is a great advantage in this* ***secular*** *world of*

*capitalism.*

**Sole (adj.)** /səʊl/

One and only.

*Be sure that the* ***sole*** *reason was money.*

**Sordid (adj.)** /ˈsɔːrdid/

Arousing moral distaste and contempt.

*It is strange to think that such* ***sordid*** *motives might affect the company's*

*policy.*

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**Squeeze (v.) /**skwi:z/

(1) Firmly press (something soft or yielding), typically with one's fingers.

(2) Manage to get into or through a narrow or restricted space.

*The hard economic situations* ***squeezed*** *my family.*

*Part ΙΙΙ. Exercises*

**A. Open questions**

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

1- How are ‘Realism’ and ‘Naturalism’ different?

2- Did ‘Realism’ have similar effects in different countries?

3- Why did ‘Realist’ paintings try to depict the sordid aspects of life?

4- Where did ‘Realism’ originate from?

5- Is it possible to call “realism” an objective school of art? Can an

artwork be totally objective?

**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. Realism revolted against the exotic subject matter and

portrayed exaggerated emotionalism.

……. 2. The popularity of Realism grew with the introduction of

photography.

……. 3. In Realism usually sordid or untidy elements of subjects were

omitted because they devalued the art work.

……. 4. Courbet is the founder of Realism.

……. 5. Naturalism declares that art is the expression of life under all

phases and its aim is to reproduce emotions by its maximum

power and intensity.

……. 6. ‘Realism’ like other schools of art originated from France.

**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- ‘Realism’ revolted against …………….

A) the exotic subject matter.

B) exaggerated emotionalism.

C) the drama of the Romantic Movement.

D) All of the above.

2- The popularity of ‘realistic’ artworks grew with the introduction of

…………….

A) industry. B) radio.

C) photography. D) technology.

3- Realism’ was …………….

A) secular and objective. B) secular and subjective.

C) empirical and subjective. D) religious and empirical.

4- ‘Naturalism’ is famous for …………….

A) its avoidance of politics and social issues.

B) Its quasi-scientific basis.

C) playing on the sense of Natural history.

D) All of the above.

5- ‘This’ in paragraph 3 refers to …………….

A) the expense of artworks.

B) the depiction of ordinary, everyday subjects.

C) the edge of compositions.

D) ‘Realism’.

**D. Word formation**

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

Make necessary changes.

**Noun Verb Adjective Adverb**

declaration declare declarative declaratively

secularization secularize secular secularly

embellishment embellish

commission commission commissioner

1- She was introduced to all the members of the ………………...

2- After the Renaissance a(n) ……………. happened in Europe.

3- According to the party ……………. no one can nominate for the

next election.

4- On his birthday, flowers ……………. the tables everywhere in her

house.

5- This was a very ……………. speech. I hope you have found the

answers to your questions.

**E. Synonym finding**

Find a single word in the passage which means:

1 keep away from (para.1) ……………………..

2 dirty (para.2) …………………….

3 body structure (para.3) …………………….

4 press (para.3) …………………….

5 discuss, argue (para.4) ……………………..

6 differentiate (para.5) ……………………..

7 declare publically (para.5) ……………………..

8 generally (para.6) ……………………..

9 everyday (para.6) …………………….

10 scientific, experimental (para.6) ……………………..

**F. 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 convince (……) a. unusual, odd

2 contempt (……) b. size

3 exotic (……) c. hatred, scorn

4 factual (……) d. persuade

5 scale (……) e. founder, initiator

6 originator (……) f. redolence

7 dramatization (……) g. objective

h. storytelling

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**G. Cloze test**

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

choice for each blank and mark it in your book.

A recurring trend in Christian art was "realism" that emphasized the

….(1)….. of religious figures, above all Christ and his physical ….(2)….

in his Passion. Following trends in the related literature, this was

developed in the Late Middle Ages, where some painted wooden

sculptures portrayed Christ covered in wounds and ….(3)….., with the

intention of stimulating the viewer to meditate on the suffering that Christ

had …...(4)….. on his behalf. These were especially found in Germany

and Central Europe. After fading into the Renaissance, …..(5)……works

re-appeared, especially in Spanish sculpture.

**1**. A) divinity B) humanity C) certainty D) curiosity

**2**. A) sufferings B) happiness C) problems D) habits

**3**. A) tears B) water C) wine D) blood

**4**. A) addressed B) watched C) seen D) undergone

**5**. A) identical B) religious C) similar D) spiritual

**References**

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