

Image bank: One Nation under CCTV (lower level)**Topics**

Art, Street art

Aims

- To listen for gist
- To listen for specific information
- To listen for detailed information
- (To read for specific information – optional)
- To think and speak about modern art or graffiti

Age group

14+

Level

A2-B1

Time

Approximately 40-60 minutes

Materials

1. [Audio file](#)
2. [Image](#) (One Nation under CCTV)

Introduction

This activity is designed to encourage students to develop their higher-level critical-thinking skills to speak about images. The activity is part of a package of materials, which includes audio to help students develop their listening skills. The focus in this lesson is on listening skills as well as on street art.

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Procedure

1.	On the board, write the word 'graffiti'. Ask students to spend 3-4 minutes brainstorming words that they associate with the word 'graffiti'
2.	<p>Tell students they are going to listen to the first part of a recording of a photographer describing a photo he has taken. While they listen, ask them to try and imagine what the photo looks like and to draw what they think is in the photograph.</p> <p>Play the recording as far as "it's like part of the United States Pledge of Allegiance" (2 minutes 16 seconds)</p> <p>Compare ideas as a class.</p>
3.	<p>Play the recording again from the beginning until the end. Ask students to listen to the complete recording and to take notes answering the following questions:</p> <p>Where was the photographer?</p> <p>Why was he there?</p> <p>Why does the photographer like the piece of street art?</p> <p>Play the complete recording from the beginning.</p> <p>Discuss as a class.</p>
4.	<p>Put students in groups and tell them to discuss what is in the photo. Ask them to think about the answers to the following questions to help them focus on the details:</p> <p>How many people are in the photograph?</p> <p>What are they doing?</p> <p>Where are they?</p> <p>What else is in the picture?</p> <p>Why is it funny or ironic?</p> <p>Play the recording again for students to check their answers.</p>
5.	Show students the photograph and ask them to compare the original with their own, encouraging them to use words and expressions to compare and contrast. Give students a copy of the transcript if you wish.
6.	<p>Follow-up: Ask students to find out about another street or modern artist (eg David Hockney, Damian Hirst, Lucien Freud, Tracey Emin) and to prepare a presentation, working individually or in groups.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Ask students to design a funny or ironic piece of graffiti, in pairs or groups. They then show the class their design and tell their classmates about it.</p>

Contributors

Activity by: Fiona Mauchline
Photograph by: Diarmuid Fogarty

Transcript

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Diarmuid: OK. The photo is of some graffiti by a British graffiti artist called Banksy, and you can find more graffiti by Banksy on his website, which is www.banksy.co.uk. Um, Banksy is unusual as a graffiti artist... because he's made a lot of money from his graffiti!

I took this photograph two or three years ago in London. The children had a holiday from school, so my wife and I took them to London and, um, yeah, we were in London and we were walking along the street when I saw this picture, this graffiti on a wall. It's quite famous, so, um, and, um, I had seen it before, in books or, um, magazines, so I think I took the photograph as a souvenir of our holiday in London. You know, like a lot of people take photographs of, oh, for example, the Mona Lisa, when they go to, to an art gallery, um, to the Louvre art gallery in France, in, er, Paris.

I like this photograph because, um, I liked the, you know, the graffiti. I think it's quite good, you know?, quite clever; well, Banky's graffiti are usually quite clever.

We can see a child, a graffitied child, and the child is painting some graffiti, and the child's graffiti says One nation under CCTV. CCTV, you know, it means these security cameras in the street everywhere. And, um, that's, um, One nation under CCTV, that phrase is a play on words, it's like part of the United States Pledge of Allegiance...

Interviewer: What's a Pledge of Allegiance?

Diarmuid: OK, yeah. It's when you promise to be loyal to a country, to the flag and the president ... you know, like if you change nationality or become a soldier or something. American children say it in school every morning before their classes.

Interviewer: Ah, yeah, yeah, I remember. OK, thanks.

Diarmuid: Um, yeah, so the American Pledge of Allegiance says One nation under under God, and of course God is like an eye ... or a camera that can see everything we do. It watches us and it can see if we are good, you know, or when we do "bad things". And and cameras in the street – CCTV - are very very similar.

Of course this graffiti is ironic. Graffiti is a crime, is a "bad thing", BUT this child is here, painting the graffiti, and, ah, and the child is painting the graffiti right under the CCTV camera that you can see, top right.

What you can't see in the photo but you can see, um, in the original graffiti, is that Banksy also painted two more people watching the child. They're not in the photo, but they're to the left. They're a policeman and a, and a passer-by who have stopped to watch the child painting the graffiti.

Eh, so, yes, I took the photo to have a souvenir of our holiday in London, I quite like it, I think it's funny, I think a lot of Banksy's pictures are quite funny, but if you stop and think about them for a moment, then, you know, they give a criticism, or a critical interpretation of many of the things that we just accept as normal in our daily lives.