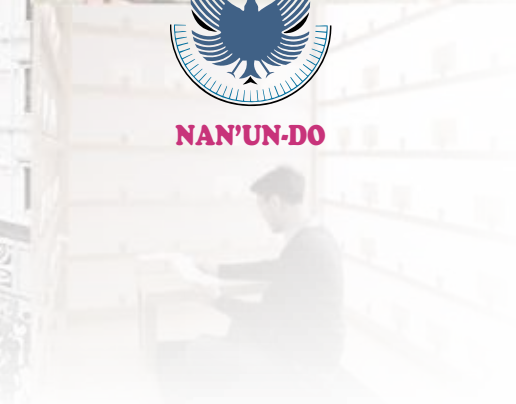
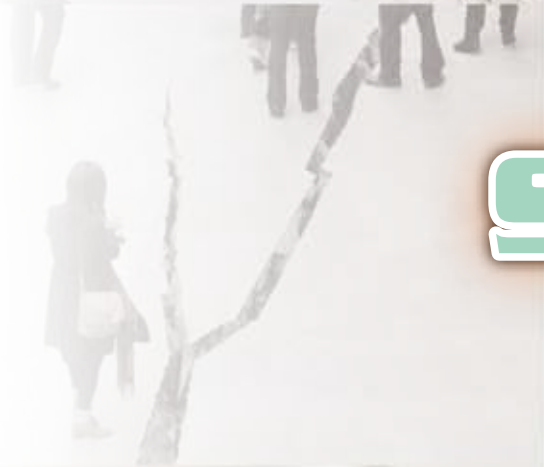


Emily Wakeling



NAN'UN-DO

Art and Society

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TO THE STUDENTS

Art and Society introduce you to some exciting contemporary artworks and examines the important social messages they contain. Knowing about these works of art and their themes can help us to better understand our modern, increasingly complex and globalized world. These artworks offer us a fresh and often eye-opening and controversial look at some of today's most pressing issues, including: the continuing struggle for gender equality; the effect new technology has on our humanity; the problems of living with violence and conflict; the blurred line between childhood and adulthood, and many others.

This textbook has twelve main lessons and two review lessons. Each main lesson centers around a one-page essay on an artwork and its related social issue(s) and message(s). There are five pre- and post-reading activities to help you get the most out of the essay, as well as various follow-up activities that will sharpen your writing skills, particularly those related to description and self-expression. The final activity of each lesson gives you an opportunity to describe and explain a work of art in your own words.

Working your way through this textbook will increase your understanding of contemporary society and culture. It will make you a better English speaker and writer. But the art-appreciation skills you learn along the way will also make you a more astute critic and observer. It will make your next trip to an art gallery or museum that much more enjoyable—that much more rewarding. *Art and Society* may even change the way you see the world.



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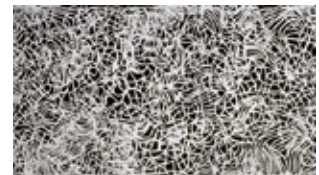


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Lesson 1

Tradition Vs. Modernity



Ai Weiwei, *Sunflower Seeds* (2010), ceramics

Pre-reading 1:

For Thought and Discussion

1. Guess how many pieces make up this very large artwork.
2. In pairs, discuss some Japanese traditions and beliefs that still exist today. To begin, you might consider clothing, food, and holidays.

Notes:

Pre-reading 2: Art Terms and Concepts

The paragraph below introduces some important terms and concepts that you should know about this lesson's subject. As you listen to the tape, fill in each blank with one of these words. Some words are used more than once.

ceramic

china

kiln

pottery

ceramics

clay

porcelain

_____ is an adjective describing any object made from _____ or other non-metal materials that have been heated and then cooled. _____, with an "s," is a noun meaning _____ things _____, or the art of making such things. The word _____ has to do specifically with _____ that are only made of _____. The heating process usually involves a _____, which is an extremely hot oven designed to make soft materials like _____ become hard. _____ is a very fine and delicate type of _____ that originally came from China. Another word for _____ is _____, with a lower-case "c."

Pre-reading 3: Key Vocabulary

Scan through the essay on the next page and find the word or phrase in bold that matches each definition or synonym below. Then compare your answers with a partner's.

1. _____ things that are not really copies
2. _____ people living today who make new art
3. _____ having the same meaning as another word
4. _____ to live at the same time or in the same place
5. _____ people with the skill to create handmade objects such as ceramics
6. _____ making goods by manual labor or machinery, especially on a large scale
7. _____ full of noise, disorder, and disturbance
8. _____ went against; did not agree
9. _____ lasting forever
10. _____ paid someone to work on a particular project

Pre-reading 4: Thinking Ahead

Read the questions below and think about them as you read the essay. Then, when you have finished reading, come back and write a brief answer to each question.

1. Who is the artist profiled in the essay? _____
2. What is the title of the artist's artwork? _____
3. When was it made? _____
4. What is the artwork about? CLUE: Look at the title of this lesson.
"This artwork is about ..."

5. What did you find most interesting about the artwork?
"I found it interesting that ..."

Reading: Read this essay carefully.

An Ancient Art on a Massive Scale

Tradition and modernity: these two terms are usually at odds. While they may seem like opposites, in most countries tradition and modernity **co-exist**. Most societies keep some traditions among all the many changes that take place over time. Take, for example, the way Japan’s highly modern cities contain skyscrapers as well as centuries-old temples. In English-speaking countries, most people say, “Bless you” when somebody sneezes simply because it has been done for centuries, even though the phrase has lost much of its meaning and most people don’t know why they say it.

China, often called the “sleeping giant,” is a rapidly modernizing country with an ancient past. During a **tumultuous** late-twentieth-century period known as the Cultural Revolution, China lost many of its traditions. Old ways of life—affecting education, religion, family life, farming, economics, and art—were stopped because of their “imperialist” qualities, which **contradicted** the new, modern Communist rules. Those broken links with its thousand-year-old past have changed China’s society **permanently**.

This “broken link” is a theme in the works of many of today’s Chinese artists. Ai Weiwei, one of China’s most famous **contemporary artists** and the designer of Beijing’s “bird’s nest” Olympic Stadium, often makes artworks that highlight the differences between the old and new China. One of Ai’s most ambitious works to date, created for London’s Tate Modern, is called *Sunflower Seeds* (2010). Ai **commissioned** hundreds of local people in Jindezhen, a town in southern China famous for its traditional porcelain, to create small, seed-like shapes from clay, heat them in a kiln, and then paint them. By the end of production, Ai was able to bring approximately 100,000,000 of these handmade pieces of porcelain from China to London. The seeds covered most of the Tate’s floor (over 100 meters in total length) and weighed in at about 100 tons.

In the past, porcelain was a highly valued Chinese export because Chinese **craftspeople** knew how to make it especially fine and delicate. During the 18th and 19th centuries, many European traders would sail to China to buy these artists’ beautiful porcelain plates and vases. In many Westerners’ minds, porcelain was **synonymous** with China. In Ai’s work, the sunflower seeds were made using the same technique as in traditional ceramics. The work’s incredible scale is meant to reflect the large changes that have taken place in China’s export industry: from selling exquisite objects of great value in the 18th and 19th centuries to offering mass-produced, cheap **imitations** in the late 20th century and today. Each sunflower seed was carefully handmade using an age-old process. But China’s current status as a **manufacturing** power and the artwork’s sheer volume of pieces overwhelm the value of each seed.

Reading Comprehension: True or False?

Read the sentences below and decide if they are true (T) or false (F).

- 1. In most societies, tradition and modernity cannot exist together. (T / F)
- 2. China lost many traditions during the twentieth century. (T / F)
- 3. Ai created millions and millions of sunflower seeds by himself. (T / F)
- 4. *Sunflower Seeds* was displayed in London. (T / F)
- 5. In the past, most of China’s exported goods were cheap and mass-produced. (T / F)
- 6. *Sunflower Seeds* in a way shows how China’s exports have changed from precious ceramics in the old days to cheap items today. (T / F)

Composition: Vocabulary for Better Writing

Read the explanation and follow the instructions below.

“The work’s incredible scale is meant to reflect the large changes that have taken place in China’s export industry ...”

This use of *reflect* explains how the artwork can display (like a mirror’s image) something very similar to the changes in China’s export industry. First, rewrite the sentences below by substituting the correct form of *reflect* for the underlined parts. Then use *reflect* in a sentence of your own.

- 1. Everything she writes displays her personality.

- 2. Her personality is displayed in everything she writes.

- 3.

Lesson 1

Describing Works of Art

Why is description important?

Too often writers assume the reader will know exactly what they, the writers, are describing, but this can mislead or confuse readers, most of whom read to learn something new. If a writer writes, "The table looked like a regular table," each reader will have a different idea of what a "regular table" looks like. Therefore, to avoid misunderstanding, writers should be as precise and give as much detail as possible.

Description Activity 1: Skills for Better Description

The best way to create precise descriptions is to imagine that you are describing something that your reader has no idea of what it looks like. Here are some useful sentence patterns and common adjectives that will help you describe things more precisely.

The size is (minute / tiny / small / medium-sized / large / big / tall / huge / giant).

The shape is (round / wide / flat / circular / square / angular / pointy / rectangular / triangular / irregular / long / thin / deep / shallow / slim).

The color is (dark / light / grey / black / white / red / brown / aqua / brown / pink / multi-colored).

The surface is (patterned / shiny / sparkly / dull / rough / spiky / fluffy / wet / slick / cracked / dry / plain).

Now choose an object in the classroom and try describing it to a listener who cannot see it. Use the sentence patterns above and the appropriate adjectives. Your listener should try to guess which object you are describing.

Description Activity 2: Listen and Write

Listen carefully to the tape while the speaker describes this ceramic artwork, and then answer these questions.



Vessel, Middle Jomon period
(3000 – 2000 BC)

1. What did the speaker say the vase was made of?
2. How did the speaker describe the vase's shape?
3. How did the speaker describe the color?
4. How did the speaker describe the outside surface of the vase?

Notes:



Thukral & Tagra, *Morpheus (Two Pigeons)* (2009), acrylic and oil on canvas

Pre-reading 1:

For Thought and Discussion

1. If you could live overseas, where would you live? Why?
2. Around the world, more and more people are migrating to new countries. In pairs, discuss some of the reasons why this is happening.

Notes:

Pre-reading 2: Art Terms and Concepts

The paragraph below introduces some important terms and concepts that you should know about this lesson's subject. As you listen to the tape, fill in each blank with one of these words. Some words are used more than once.

figurative portrait drawing realistic 2D abstract

_____ artworks, or flat images, which are made from paint or some other kind of wet substance, are generally called paintings. When the artwork has been created using dry substances like pencil or charcoal, it is called a _____. Paintings can be _____ (like real life) or _____. _____ paintings can be understood as simply paint on a flat surface—just colors and shapes with no recognizable “real” objects. On the other hand, _____ paintings have recognizable people, animals, things, and places. Paintings with figures of people are called _____. If the painting is a close-up image of a particular person, it is called a _____. Strictly speaking, a _____ takes a particular person's face as its subject. Some artworks, however, stretch the definition of what a _____ can be.

Pre-reading 3: Key Vocabulary

Scan through the essay on the next page and find the word or phrase in bold that matches each definition or synonym below. Then compare your answers with a partner's.

1. _____ people who are forced to leave home and move to another country because of war, famine, or other danger
2. _____ having to do with money
3. _____ to give up something in order to gain something else
4. _____ people who move from one country to live in another
5. _____ people born and living about the same time, considered as a group
6. _____ a country that has a strong economy and high standard of living
7. _____ the ability to move to a higher social status (i.e. from poor to rich)
8. _____ earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, forest fires, floods, etc.
9. _____ away; not present

Pre-reading 4: Thinking Ahead

Read the questions below and think about them as you read the essay. Then, when you have finished reading, come back and write a brief answer to each question.

1. Who is the artist profiled in the essay? _____
2. What is the title of the artist's artwork? _____
3. When was it made? _____
4. What is the artwork about? CLUE: Look at the title of this lesson.
"This artwork is about ..."

5. What did you find most interesting about the artwork?
"I found it interesting that ..."

Reading: Read this essay carefully.

A New Generation Looks Skyward

Migration—moving from one country to another— is becoming an increasingly common condition. **Migrants** are crossing borders in growing numbers. The International Organization for Migration’s World Migration Report of 2010 estimates the number of international migrants at 214 million. Human migration can be separated into two categories: “push” and “pull.” People
5 who move because of a “push” belong in the category of forced migration. **Natural disasters** or wars mean that they no longer have a safe home and must leave. These migrants are also known as **refugees**. Migrants in the “pull” category, on the other hand, move from their home country to a **developed country** such as the United Kingdom or United States to improve their job prospects and seek better lives.

10 One country with a great number of people who feel this pull factor is India. More and more young Indians, especially in the Punjab region, are getting an education that enables them to move to developed countries and work as doctors, scientists, technicians, or other well-paid professionals. The **financial** benefits don’t just stop with the migrants themselves, however; many “pull” migrants also send money back home on a regular basis, helping their families gain **social**
15 **mobility**. A young Punjabi migrant’s success is also his or her family’s success.

The Punjabi artist duo Thukral and Tagra are very aware of this growing trend among their **generation**. Their colorful installations, including paintings, wallpaper, and sculpture, are often inspired by this particular culture’s desire to achieve higher social status by decorating their homes with ornate, Western-style furniture. For the “6th Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary
20 Art” held in 2009, Thukral and Tagra created an entire living space inside the art museum. In the artists’ words, the work was about a “broken family” in which all the children have left the family home and moved overseas. While the house appears rich thanks to its many possessions, there are many reminders of the **absent** children in the details. In one room, a very long dining table is raised off the ground at one end, as if it were about to take off like an airplane. In
25 another, a sideboard displays many photos of children now living overseas.

One painting included in the installation, *Morpheus (Two Pigeons)* (2009), depicts a young man walking toward the sun and turning back to wave goodbye. The pigeons refer to a Punjabi-language phrase about those who aim to migrate, while the title, *Morpheus*, refers to the ancient Greek god of dreams. In other words, this young man is realizing his dream of moving overseas.
30 While the man in the painting appears cheerful, there is a touch of sadness to the artwork: this image is possibly the last his family will see of him before he boards the plane and flies away. All in all, the installation provides a colorful and thought-provoking picture of modern migration and the **sacrifices** of the families left behind.

Reading Comprehension: True or False?

Read the sentences below and decide if they are true (T) or false (F).

1. Migration is not so common these days as it used to be. (T / F)
2. Refugees are “pushed” to other countries to find better jobs. (T / F)
3. People who migrate are generally called migrants. (T / F)
4. Many Punjabi “pull” migrants send money home to their parents. (T / F)
5. Thukral and Tagra often create artworks that show the effects of migration on today’s generation. (T / F)
6. The title, *Morpheus*, refers to the ancient Punjabi god of migration. (T / F)

Composition: Vocabulary for Better Writing

Read the explanation and follow the instructions below.

“... are often inspired by this particular culture’s desire ...”

The phrase *inspired by* describes an artwork created because of some outside influence. First, rewrite the sentences below by substituting *inspired by* for the underlined parts. Make other changes where needed. Then use *inspired by* in a sentence of your own.

1. Pablo Picasso’s painting *Guernica* was painted when the artist heard the story of fire bombings in a city in Spain.

2. The Japanese film *Nobody Knows* is based on a true story.

3. _____

Lesson 2

Description Activity 1: Skills for Better Description

Here are some sentence patterns and adjectives you can use to describe people's appearance.

His/her body shape is ...

(round, fat, thin, slim, bony, tall, broad-shouldered, buxom, soft, etc.)

Her/his hair is ...

(short, long, thick, fine, spiky, curly, wavy, straight, brunette, blonde, red, brown, black, etc.)

Her/his skin is ...

(brown, dark, freckled, pale, tanned, wrinkled, smooth, rough, red, rosy-cheeked, glowing, etc.)

His/her expression is ...

(unhappy, angry, calm, kind, friendly, warm, happy, tired, indifferent, aloof, etc.)

Her/his gaze is ...

(deep, mysterious, curious, bored, friendly, cold, etc.)

Now try using these sentence patterns and adjectives to describe the appearance of someone you know well like a family member or friend. Work with a partner or in a small group.

Description Activity 2: Listen and Write

Listen carefully to the tape while the speaker describes this portrait, and then answer these questions.



Leonardo da Vinci, *Mona Lisa*
(c.1503) oil on wood panel

1. How did the speaker say the painting was painted?
2. How did the speaker describe the subject's shape?
3. How did the speaker describe the subject's skin?
4. How did the speaker describe the subject's expression?

Notes:

