

AE Academic **English** **UK**

Grammar in Art

Workbook

This might represent water or reflections, as the shades of blue dominate the canvas.

If the artist had used fewer colours, the effect would be less dynamic.

If you look closely, you can see how the orange contrasts with the blue to add warmth.



The painting, which is filled with shades of blue and touches of orange, creates a calm yet vibrant atmosphere.

The artist is using overlapping brushstrokes to suggest movement and depth.

The viewer could interpret this as a river flowing through a city at night.

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Grammar in Art Workbook

1. Who is it for?

This booklet is designed for international students preparing to or already studying at university or college where English is the medium of instruction. It focuses on grammar and writing skills through the theme of art, helping students develop the accuracy and flexibility needed for academic study. No prior knowledge of art history is required, but depending on their level of English, students may need additional time to process the information before completing the tasks. Each unit combines explanation, sentence-level practice, and paragraph writing, enabling learners to apply grammar in meaningful academic contexts.

2. How long will it take to complete the booklet?

The time needed will vary depending on the student's level of English and their prior subject knowledge. On average, each lesson is designed to take between 45–90 minutes to complete, including explanation, practice, and feedback activities. There are ten core lessons in total, plus one final review lesson that brings all of the grammar points together. These can be studied consecutively as a complete course or selected individually to focus on particular areas.

4. What context will be used to practice academic writing?

The theme of this booklet is art and academic English. Each grammar lesson is connected to the context of visual art, artists, and exhibitions, so that students can practise academic writing skills through meaningful subject content. The topics include describing artworks, interpreting meaning, writing about artists and movements, and imagining alternative histories. The final review lesson brings these strands together, helping students use a wide range of grammar structures in art-related academic writing.

⇒ **Note:** The art theme is used as a vehicle for grammar practice. Students are not expected to have prior knowledge of art history.

6. How to use this booklet?

Each lesson follows a clear structure: a vocabulary exercise, a short explanation of the grammar, sentence-level practice, and a paragraph writing task. Students are encouraged to complete all parts of the lesson to see how grammar moves from controlled exercises into extended academic writing. The peer feedback checklists at the end of each unit can be used for self-assessment or paired work, helping learners reflect on accuracy and cohesion.

The booklet is designed for both independent study and classroom use. In class, teachers may want to set the sentence-level tasks for pair or group work, followed by individual writing. For self-study, students should take extra time to compare their answers with the model responses and check their writing against each checklist.

7. What outcomes should students expect?

By the end of this booklet, students will have practised using a wide range of grammar structures in art-related academic writing. They will be able to:

- *write more accurately and fluently about artworks, artists, and exhibitions.*
- *use tenses, passive voice, relative clauses, modal verbs, and conditionals with confidence.*
- *develop short academic paragraphs that combine grammar, vocabulary, and critical interpretation.*
- *give and receive constructive feedback using peer checklists.*
- *transfer these grammar skills into other areas of academic writing at university.*

The final review lesson consolidates all ten grammar areas, allowing students to demonstrate progress and prepare for further study.

Workbook Contents

1.	Working with a partner.
2.	Present simple (art descriptions) FREE LESSON.
3.	Present continuous (temporary exhibitions).
4.	Past simple (art history).
5.	Past continuous (artistic processes,).
6.	Present perfect simple (influence and legacy).
7.	Future tenses (upcoming exhibitions and projects).
8.	Passive voice (focus on artworks).
9.	Relative clauses (describing artists or artworks in detail).
10.	Modals (critical opinions about art).
11.	Conditionals (alternative histories, possible futures).
12.	Mixed grammar review (integration of all).
13.	Answer key with sample paragraphs for comparison.

Working with a Partner

Decide with your partner how you want to work. You can check answers together after each task or complete the whole unit first and then compare. Both ways work well: checking as you go helps you correct mistakes early, while waiting until the end lets you see how much you can do on your own.



English for Art: Present Simple

Vocabulary Preview

This activity introduces words that connect to both art and the present simple tense. You will use them to describe artworks and explain their features.

Exercise

Match the **TEN** words from this unit with the correct definition. Compare with a partner when you have finished.

	Vocabulary		Definition
1.	Gallery	a.	A show of artworks presented to the public, usually for a limited time.
2.	Exhibition	b.	A person who reviews or analyses works of art.
3.	Symbolise	c.	A large three-dimensional artwork made of stone or metal.
4.	Critic	d.	The arrangement of shapes, colours, or objects within an artwork.
5.	Sculpture	e.	A book or digital list that describes the artworks in an exhibition.
6.	Composition	f.	A professional who organises exhibitions.
7.	Catalogue	g.	An experience that makes the audience feel deeply involved.
8.	Curator	h.	Artwork created for a particular space.
9.	Installation	i.	A place where art is displayed to the public.
10.	Immersive	j.	To represent an idea or feeling through an image, object, or action.

1.		2.		3.		4.		5.		6.		7.		8.		9.		10.	
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Grammar Focus

The present simple tense is often used in academic art writing to describe what an artwork shows, what an artist does and what a critic argues.

The Present Simple		
	Used to express...	Examples
1.	General facts and truths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Mona Lisa hangs in the Louvre Museum. Oil paint does not dry quickly.
2.	Regular actions and habits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The gallery opens at 9 a.m. Artists often sketch before they paint.
3.	Permanent situations or states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yayoi Kusama works as a contemporary artist. Does the exhibition space belong to the university?
4.	Academic writing conventions In essays, the present simple is used to describe artworks, theories, and critics' arguments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This article argues that abstraction represents a new visual language. The painting depicts a rural landscape and symbolises harmony with nature.

Task 1

Each sentence below has a missing verb form. Complete the sentences by using the correct present simple form of the verb in brackets.

	Sentence	Rewrite
1.	The painting ____ (depict) a rural landscape.	
2.	This gallery ____ (exhibit) contemporary photography.	
3.	Critics ____ (argue) that colour ____ (symbolise) emotion.	
4.	Abstract art ____ (not follow) traditional rules of perspective.	
5.	A still life often ____ (include) fruit, flowers, or everyday objects.	

Task 2

Each sentence below contains a mistake. Rewrite them correctly using the target grammar.

	Sentence	Rewrite
1.	Some artists uses acrylic paint for large canvases.	
2.	Symbolism appear frequently in modern works.	
3.	The museum display ancient sculptures in the main hall.	
4.	He do not describe the subject in realistic detail.	
5.	This article discuss how art influence society.	

Task 3

The words in each sentence are in the wrong order. Rearrange them to form correct sentences in the present simple.

	Sentence	Reorder
1.	depict / often / artists / daily life	
2.	carefully / the critic / analyses / the brushstrokes	
3.	represent / the painting / social / values	
4.	does not always/exhibit / the gallery / a new / collection / every year	
5.	shows / the portrait / clearly / the subject's emotions	

Task 4

Read each sentence carefully. Choose the correct option by highlighting or underlining it.

1.	The composition (balance / balances) light and shadow.
2.	Art critics (explains / explain) the meaning of the symbols.
3.	The gallery (does not allow / do not allow) flash photography.
4.	The artist (creates / create) installations from recycled materials.
5.	The catalogue (contain / contains) details about each painting.

Task 5

Read the paragraph and underline all the verbs in the present simple.

This article explores how Yayoi Kusama uses repetition in her installations. Her work often reflects psychological themes and symbolises infinity. The viewer experiences the artwork as an immersive environment, and the critic interprets the dots as a metaphor for both isolation and connection.

Task 6

Use the notes to write a paragraph in the present simple. Write full sentences and link them together so the paragraph flows smoothly.

- Pop Art / emphasise / consumer culture / advertising / branding
- Andy Warhol / use / repetition / soup cans / Coca-Cola bottles
- His art / transform / everyday products → cultural icons
- His work / reflect / influence / mass media
- It / question / originality / authenticity / artistic value
- Critics argue / challenge / traditional values / invite reflection / consumer society

Write your paragraph here...

Task 7

Use the information in the table to write a short comparative paragraph in the present simple. Write full sentences and link them together so the paragraph flows smoothly.

Artist A: Banksy	Artist B: Ai Weiwei
Creates street art	Creates installations
Focuses on politics	Focuses on identity
Uses satire	Uses symbolism

Write your paragraph here...

Task 8

This paragraph has **FIVE** errors with verb forms. Rewrite it correctly and improve the flow by adding appropriate linking words.

The museum displays exhibitions on digital art. It explore how technology shape creativity and challenge traditional definitions of art. The curator argues that digital tools opens new possibilities for collaboration. The exhibition also include interactive works that engage the audience.

Rewrite the paragraph here...

Task 9

Write a short paragraph about a painting, sculpture or artist you know. Use at least five verbs in the present simple

Write your paragraph here...

Task 10

Use the following checklist to give some feedback to your partner.

	Check for the following:	Yes	No
1.	Grammar		
	Do all verbs use the correct present simple form (e.g. <i>uses / does not use</i>)?		
	Is subject–verb agreement correct (e.g. <i>The artist creates</i> , not <i>The artist create</i>)?		
2.	Content & Vocabulary		
	Does the paragraph include at least five present simple verbs?		
	Are art-related words (e.g. depict, represent, symbolise) used effectively?		
3.	Clarity & Organisation		
	Do the sentences connect logically?		
	Is the meaning clear and academic in style?		
4.	Overall impression		
	One thing I liked about this paragraph:		
	One suggestion for improvement:		

English for Art: Present Simple (ANSWERS)

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3.	Permanent situations or states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yayoi Kusama works as a contemporary artist. Does the exhibition space belong to the university?
4.	Academic writing conventions In essays, the present simple is used to describe artworks, theories, and critics' arguments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This article argues that abstraction represents a new visual language. The painting depicts a rural landscape and symbolises harmony with nature.

Task 1

Each sentence below has a missing verb form. Complete the sentences by using the correct present simple form of the verb in brackets.

	Sentence	Rewrite
1.	The painting ____ (depict) a rural landscape.	The painting <u>depicts</u> a rural landscape.
2.	This gallery ____ (exhibit) contemporary photography.	This gallery <u>exhibits</u> contemporary photography.
3.	Critics ____ (argue) that colour ____ (symbolise) emotion.	Critics <u>argue</u> that colour <u>symbolises</u> emotion.
4.	Abstract art ____ (not follow) traditional rules of perspective.	Abstract art <u>does not follow</u> traditional rules of perspective.
5.	A still life often ____ (include) fruit, flowers, or everyday objects.	A still life often <u>includes</u> fruit, flowers, or everyday objects.

Task 2

Each sentence below contains a mistake. Rewrite them correctly using the target grammar.

	Sentence	Rewrite
1.	Some artists uses acrylic paint for large canvases.	Some artists <u>use</u> acrylic paint for large canvases.
2.	Symbolism appear frequently in modern works.	Symbolism <u>appears</u> frequently in modern works.
3.	The museum display ancient sculptures in the main hall.	The museum <u>displays</u> ancient sculptures in the main hall.
4.	He do not describe the subject in realistic detail.	He <u>does not describe</u> the subject in realistic detail.
5.	This article discuss how art influence society.	This article <u>discusses</u> how art influence society.

Task 3

The words in each sentence are in the wrong order. Rearrange them to form correct sentences in the present simple.

	Sentence	Reorder
1.	depict / often / artists / daily life	<i>Artists often depict daily life.</i>
2.	carefully / the critic / analyses / the brushstrokes	<i>The critic carefully analyses the brushstrokes.</i>
3.	represent / the painting / social / values	<i>The painting represents social values.</i>
4.	does not always/exhibit / the gallery / a new / collection / every year	<i>The gallery does not always exhibit a new collection every year.</i>
5.	shows / the portrait / clearly / the subject's emotions	<i>The portrait clearly shows the subject's emotions.</i>

Task 4

Read each sentence carefully. Choose the correct option by highlighting or underlining it.

1.	The composition (balance / <i>balances</i>) light and shadow.
2.	Art critics (explains / <i>explain</i>) the meaning of the symbols.
3.	The gallery (<i>does not allow</i> / do not allow) flash photography.
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Task 5

Read the paragraph and underline all the verbs in the present simple.

This article *explores* how Yayoi Kusama *uses* repetition in her installations. Her work often *reflects* psychological themes and *symbolises* infinity. The viewer *experiences* the artwork as an immersive environment, and the critic *interprets* the dots as a metaphor for both isolation and connection.

Task 6

Use the notes to write a paragraph in the present simple. Write full sentences and link them together so the paragraph flows smoothly.

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- His work / reflect / influence / mass media
- It / question / originality / authenticity/artistic value
- Critics argue / challenge / traditional values / invite reflection / consumer society

Write your paragraph here...

Pop Art emphasises consumer culture, highlighting the growing importance of advertising, branding, and mass production in modern life. Andy Warhol illustrates this through his repeated images of everyday objects, such as soup cans and soft drink bottles, which transform ordinary products into icons. His art reflects the influence of mass media, while also questioning ideas of originality, authenticity, and artistic value. Many critics argue that it not only challenges traditional values in art but also invites viewers to reflect on their own relationship with consumer society.

Task 7

Use the information in the table to write a short comparative paragraph in the present simple. Write full sentences and link them together so the paragraph flows smoothly.

Artist A: Banksy	Artist B: Ai Weiwei
Creates street art	Creates installations
Focuses on politics	Focuses on identity
Uses satire	Uses symbolism

Write your paragraph here...

Banksy creates street art, while Ai Weiwei creates large-scale installations. Banksy focuses on politics, but Ai Weiwei focuses on identity. Banksy often uses satire to criticise authority, whereas Ai Weiwei uses symbolism to express cultural and personal meaning. Both artists challenge society through their art, but they work in very different ways.

Task 8

This paragraph has **FIVE** errors with verb forms. Rewrite it correctly and improve the flow by adding appropriate linking words.

The museum displays exhibitions on digital art. It explore how technology shape creativity and challenge traditional definitions of art. The curator argues that digital tools opens new possibilities for collaboration. The exhibition also include interactive works that engage the audience.

Rewrite the paragraph here...

The museum displays exhibitions on digital art, and it explores how technology shapes creativity and challenges traditional definitions of art. In addition, the curator argues that digital tools open new possibilities for collaboration. The exhibition also includes interactive works that engage the audience.

Task 9

Write a short paragraph about a painting, sculpture, or artist you know. Use at least five verbs in the present simple

Write your paragraph here...

The painting depicts a woman reading, which suggests a focus on the theme of knowledge. The artist employs soft colours to create a calm atmosphere, and the exhibition situates this work alongside several others from the same period. Critics argue that the style is characteristic of Romantic ideals, and the gallery now presents the painting as part of its permanent collection.