

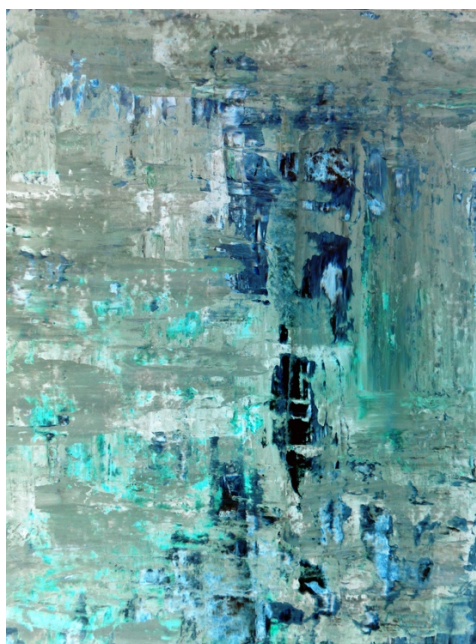
AE Academic English UK

Vocabulary in Art Workbook

*The artist uses **contrast** between light grey and deep blue to create atmosphere.*

*The **composition** highlights a central theme of mystery and depth.*

*This painting shows **symbolism** through its blurred boundaries, suggesting uncertainty.*



*The painting reflects its urban **context**, resembling walls or structures eroded by time.*

*Viewers can see a shifting **narrative** emerging from the abstract textures.*

*This work explores **identity** through fragmented and layered forms.*

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Vocabulary in Art Workbook

1. Who is it for?

This booklet is designed for international students who are preparing to, or already studying, at university or college where English is the medium of instruction. It focuses on developing academic vocabulary through the theme of art, helping students build the language needed to describe, discuss, and analyse artworks. No prior knowledge of art history is required, but depending on their level of English, students may need extra time to process the material before completing the tasks. Each unit combines definitions, practice activities, and discussion, enabling learners to use art vocabulary actively in both written and spoken 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 unit is designed to take between **60-90 minutes** to complete, including vocabulary input, practice tasks, and discussion and writing activities. There are ten core units in total, which can be studied consecutively as a complete course or selected individually to focus on particular themes.

4. What context will be used?

The theme of this booklet is art and academic English. Each vocabulary unit is connected to the context of visual art, artists, and exhibitions, so that students can practise academic English through meaningful subject content. The topics include describing artworks, discussing techniques and movements, exploring interpretation, and debating contemporary issues.

5. How to use this booklet?

Each unit follows a clear structure: a vocabulary input activity, practice tasks, and a discussion and writing task to use the new words in context. Students are encouraged to complete all parts of the unit so they can see how vocabulary moves from recognition to active use in speaking and writing.

The booklet is designed for both independent study and classroom use. In class, teachers may want to set the practice tasks for pair or group work, followed by discussion. For self-study, students should take extra time to compare their answers with the key and say the words aloud to reinforce meaning and pronunciation.

6. What outcomes should students expect?

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

- *describe artworks, techniques, and movements more accurately and fluently.*
- *use subject-specific vocabulary to discuss meaning, context, and interpretation.*
- *participate in pair or group discussions with greater confidence.*
- *build short academic responses that integrate new vocabulary naturally.*
- *transfer these vocabulary skills into other areas of academic study at university.*

Workbook Contents

0.	Working with a partner
1.	Materials & Media
2.	Techniques & Processes
3.	Styles & Movements
4.	Visual Elements
5.	Adjectives for Critique
6.	Art History & Culture
7.	Museums & Exhibitions
8.	Interpreting Art
9.	Contemporary Issues in Art
10.	Critical Analysis in Art
11.	Teacher's answer key
12.	Appendix 1: Discussion sample prompts
13.	Appendix 2: Quiz

Working with a Partner

Work through each task on your own first so you can practise using the vocabulary independently. When you have finished a task, compare your answers with a partner. This gives you the chance to check your ideas, notice differences, and learn from each other before moving on to the next activity. As you compare, say the words aloud with your partner to practise accurate pronunciation and natural use. This approach not only strengthens your vocabulary but also prepares you for assessments and real discussions about art.



English for Art: Materials and Media

Task 1

Match the **TEN** words with the correct definition.

	Vocabulary		Definition
1.	Oil paint	a.	A black drawing material made from carbon, often used for sketches.
2.	Acrylic paint	b.	Paint that uses water as a medium, creating transparent layers.
3.	Watercolour	c.	A hard stone often used for carving statues and monuments.
4.	Canvas	d.	Art created with computer technology, photography, or video.
5.	Charcoal	e.	A strong fabric surface used for painting, usually stretched on a frame.
6.	Clay	f.	A natural, soft material shaped when wet and hardened when fired.
7.	Bronze	g.	Paint made with pigments mixed in oil, slow-drying and rich in colour.
8.	Marble	h.	An artwork made using more than one material or medium.
9.	Mixed media	i.	Paint with synthetic resins, fast-drying and common in modern art.
10.	Digital media	j.	A metal alloy of copper and tin, used in casting sculptures.

1.		2.		3.		4.		5.		6.		7.		8.		9.		10.	
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Task 2

Put each word from the list into the correct category and add some more of your own.

	Painting/Drawing	Sculpture	Other Media
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			

Task 3

Complete the sentences with words from task 1.

1.	The artist created a life-sized _____ using clay and bronze.
2.	Renaissance painters often worked with oil paint on _____.
3.	This exhibition combines photography with sculpture, making it a _____ display.
4.	Many contemporary artists experiment with _____ to create digital artworks.
5.	Ancient Greek artists were skilled in carving _____ for temples.
6.	Leonardo da Vinci used _____ in many of his early drawings.
7.	The sculptor shaped the _____ on a potter's wheel before firing it.
8.	The church commissioned a _____ statue for its main altar.
9.	Warhol produced prints using _____, which dried quickly and allowed repetition.
10.	Turner created dramatic landscapes with _____, producing transparent layers of colour.

Task 4

Read the following questions carefully and plan your responses in the space provided.

Discuss each question with your group, making sure you give full explanations rather than short answers.

	Question	Space for Notes
i.	Which material or medium do you most enjoy looking at in artworks, and why?	

ii.	How does using a canvas, watercolour, or acrylic paint change the effect of a painting compared to oil paint?	
iii.	Do you think sculpture in marble, clay, or bronze expresses ideas differently from painting? Explain.	
iv.	If you were a curator, which materials or media would you select for a new exhibition, and why?	
v.	In your opinion, which medium best represents contemporary culture today: traditional painting, sculpture, or digital media ? Give reasons.	

Task 5

Write a short description (3–4 sentences) of an artwork, using at least **FIVE words** from this unit.

English for Art: Materials and Media (ANSWERS)

Task 1

Match the **TEN** words with the correct definition.

	Vocabulary		Definition
1.	Oil paint	a.	A black drawing material made from carbon, often used for sketches.
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Task 2

Put each word from the list into the correct category and add some more of your own.

	Painting/Drawing	Sculpture	Other Media
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2.	<i>Acrylic paint</i>	<i>Bronze</i>	<i>Digital media</i>
3.	<i>Watercolour</i>	<i>Marble</i>	<i>Photography</i>
4.	<i>Charcoal</i>	<i>Stone</i>	
5.	<i>Canvas</i>	<i>Wood</i>	
6.	<i>Gouache</i>	<i>Wire</i>	

Task 3

Complete the sentences with words from task 1.

	Sentences
1.	The artist created a life-sized <i>sculpture</i> using clay and bronze.
2.	Renaissance painters often worked with oil paint on <i>canvas</i> .
3.	This exhibition combines photography with sculpture, making it a <i>mixed media</i> display.
4.	Many contemporary artists experiment with <i>digital media</i> to create digital artworks.
5.	Ancient Greek artists were skilled in carving <i>marble</i> for temples.
6.	Leonardo da Vinci used <i>charcoal</i> in many of his early drawings.
7.	The sculptor shaped the <i>clay</i> on a potter's wheel before firing it.
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v.	In your opinion, which medium best represents contemporary culture today: traditional painting, sculpture, or digital media ? Give reasons.	

Task 5

Write a short description (3–4 sentences) of an artwork, using at least **FIVE** words from this unit.

*The painting was created on a large **canvas** using bright **oil paint** that gave it depth and richness. The artist combined areas of **watercolour** for softer tones with bold marks of **charcoal** to add contrast. In the same exhibition, a **bronze** sculpture stood nearby, showing how different materials can work together to create a powerful atmosphere.*