

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXAM SAMPLE FOR ARTS AND GRAPHIC DESIGN

Date: 18/09/2023

First name:

Signature:

Surname:

.....

1. Reading comprehension

Photography – science or art

[...] [In its early days], photography seemed to be more of a scientific tool than a form of artistic expression. Many of the earliest photographers didn't even call themselves artists: they were scientists and engineers – chemists, astronomers, botanists and inventors. While the new form attracted individuals with a background in painting or drawing, even early practitioners like Louis Daguerre or Nadar could be seen more as entrepreneurial inventors than as traditional artists.

Before Daguerre invented the daguerreotype (an early form of photography on a silver-coated plate), he had invented the diorama, a form of entertainment that used scene painting and lighting to create moving theatrical illusions of monuments and landscapes. [...]

One reason early photographs were not considered works of art was because, quite simply, they didn't *look* like art: no other form possessed the level of detail that they rendered. [...] A photograph of a haystack, with its thousands of stalks, looked visually staggering to a painter who contemplated drawing each one so precisely. The textures of shells and the roughness of a wall of brick or stone suddenly appeared vividly in photographs of the 1840s and 1850s.

For this reason, it's no surprise that some of the earliest applications of photography came in archaeology and botany. The medium seemed well suited to document specimens that were complex [...], like plants, or archaeological finds that needed to be studied by [...] specialists, such as a tablet of hieroglyphics. In 1843, Anna Atkins produced *Photographs of British Algae: Cyanotype Impressions* – considered the first book illustrated with photographs.

Finally, the genesis of a painting, drawing or sculpture was a human hand, guided by a human eye and mind. Photographers, by contrast, had managed to fix an image on a metal, paper, or glass support, but the image itself was formed by light, and because it seemed to come from a machine – not from a human hand – viewers doubted its artistic merit. Even the word “photograph” means “light writing.” [...]

Before the photograph, painted portraits had almost always flattered the client and conformed to the fashions of the day; meanwhile, the earliest photographic portraits didn't. [...]

The debate over photography's status as art reached its apogee with the Pictorialist movement at the end of the 19th century. Pictorialist photographers manipulated the negative by hand; they used multiple negatives and masking to create a single print (much like compositing in Photoshop today); they applied soft focus and new forms of toning to create blurry and painterly effects; and they rejected the mechanical look of the standard photograph. Essentially, they sought to push the boundaries of the form to make photographs appear as “painting-like” as possible – perhaps as a way to have them taken seriously as art.

Pictorialist photographers found success in gallery exhibitions and high-end publications. By the early 20th century, however, a photographer like Alfred Stieglitz, who had started out as a Pictorialist, was pioneering the “straight” photograph: the printing of a negative from edge to edge with no cropping or manipulation. Stieglitz also experimented with purely abstract photographs of clouds. Modernist and documentary photographers began to accept the medium’s inherent precision instead of trying to make images that looked like paintings.

Photography is the most transparent of the art mediums devised or discovered by man,” wrote critic Clement Greenberg in 1946. “It is probably for this reason that it proves so difficult to make the photograph transcend its almost inevitable function as document and act as work of art as well.”

Still, well into the 20th century, many critics and artists continued to view photography as operating in a realm that was not quite fine art – a debate that even continues today. [...]

1. Many of the earliest photographers had a scientific background:
 - a. true
 - b. false
 - c. not mentioned
 - d. the author is not sure

2. Daguerre is the inventor of the diorama.
 - a. true
 - b. false
 - c. not mentioned
 - d. the author is not sure

3. What is the reason (provided in the article) why photography was not considered art?
 - a. because the level of detail in it bothered people
 - b. because of its texture
 - c. because it is so easy to take photographs
 - d. because it did not look like art

4. Which scientific fields first used photography?
 - a. geoscience and marine science
 - b. geology and oceanography
 - c. archaeology and botany
 - d. geography and microbiology

5. When did the first book illustrated with photographs appear?
 - a. not mentioned
 - b. in 1846
 - c. in 1843
 - d. in 1943

6. What does the word photograph mean?
 - a. drawing
 - b. light writing
 - c. light
 - d. to engrave

7. When did the Pictorialist movement appear?

- a. at the beginning of the 19th century
- b. at the end of the 19th century
- c. at the beginning of the 20th century
- d. at the end of the 20th century

2. Vocabulary task

8. The antonym of the verb *to invent* is:

- a. to manufacture
- b. to imagine
- c. to copy
- d. to produce

9. The meaning of the noun *lighting* is:

- a. a small device that provides a flame
- b. the type/arrangement of lights used
- c. a flash of bright light in the sky
- d. a box that shines with a bright artificial light

10. The meaning of the noun *texture* is:

- a. fabric
- b. something rough
- c. something that is difficult to reach
- d. the way something looks/feels when touched

11. The meaning of the adverb *vividly* is:

- a. in a way that is clear and detailed
- b. in a way that is unclear
- c. vaguely
- d. faintly

12. The synonym of the noun *genesis* is:

- a. extinction
- b. origin
- c. music
- d. art

13. The antonym of the verb *to flatter* is:

- a. to complement
- b. to compliment
- c. to be nice
- d. to offend

14. The antonym of the adjective *blurry* is:

- a. hazy
- b. cloudy
- c. clear
- d. foggy

15. The meaning of the adjective *painting-like* is:

- a. resembling a painting
- b. being worth as much as a painting
- c. painted by an artist
- d. made by hand

3. Grammar Task:

16. If there (...) good weather next weekend, we (...) a barbecue.

- a. is / will have
- b. will be / have
- c. will be / will have
- d. is / have

17. Students regularly (...) snacks from vending machines during the breaks.

- a. buys
- b. buy
- c. is buying
- d. are buying

18. I stepped out of the building, and my car was nowhere. I found out that it (...) by the authorities.

- a. has removed
- b. had been removed
- c. has been removed
- d. was removing

19. We (...) a labour union, but they (...) to do much for us.

- a. were having / didn't seem
- b. had / didn't seem
- c. had / wasn't seeming
- d. were having / didn't seemed

20. I (...) in touch with him a few weeks ago.

- a. had
- b. took
- c. got
- d. made

21. I (...) up my mind. You can't change my opinion.
- 've already made up
 - 've already make up
 - has already made up
 - already made up
22. 'Sorry, Lena, I (...) the glass if I (...) so nervous now about our guest.'
'Stop worrying about him! Go wash your hands, and I'll pick up the shards.'
- wouldn't have dropped / weren't
 - wouldn't drop / hadn't been
 - won't drop / wasn't
 - didn't drop / hadn't been
23. 'How long (...) him?' / 'Since high school. We're old friends. So can I speak to him?'
- did you know
 - do you know
 - have you known
 - has you known
24. 'Well, he's bought an engagement ring to her. What more proof do you want? I'm telling you, they (...) married.'
- 're going to get
 - 'll going to get
 - will get
 - get
25. By the time they found him, he (...) in the woods for 16 hours.
- was
 - had been
 - has been
 - were
26. Not so fast! I just need to stop (...) my breath for a second.
- catching
 - to catching
 - catch
 - to catch
27. If I (...) savings in the bank, we (...) able to prepare for our wedding. But I do, and I'm glad for that.
- don't have / won't be
 - didn't have / wouldn't be
 - hadn't had / wouldn't been
 - wouldn't have / couldn't be

28. Pick the question that fits the answer:

'Simone's team. They are the best.'

- a. Which team did the competition win?
- b. Which competition did the team win?
- c. Which did the team win the competition?
- d. Which team won the competition?

29. You'd better (...) as she says. Don't rock the boat!

- a. to do
- b. doing
- c. to doing
- d. do

30. I had my phone turned off. I (...) when you called. It went pretty well, I think.

- a. was interviewed
- b. was being interviewed
- c. have been interviewed
- d. am being interviewed

4. Speaking – the candidate randomly picks a set of questions from the following 10 topics:

Careers in Fine Art

Associations and Meanings of Colour

Tattoo as Art

The Psychology of Design – There's a Special Part of the Brain Just for Recognizing Faces

Elements of Iconic Design

Animated Films

AI and Art

Graffiti – Art or Vandalism

Ephemeral Art

Photography

Example of a set of questions:

Photography:

- 1. Do you enjoy taking photographs?
- 2. What type/genre of photography do you like best?
- 3. What makes a good photograph, in your opinion?
- 4. Does good photography gear make a better photographer?
- 5. Which artist photographers inspire you?

Assessment:

- **Part 1:**

30 multiple choice questions (Reading comprehension / Vocabulary / Grammar) → 30 points

- 0-14 overall correct answers: FAIL
- 15-30 overall correct answers: PASS

- **Part 2: (Only available if Part 1 results in PASS)**

5 questions (Speaking)

→ 30 points (5 points for Fluency / 5 points for Pronunciation / 5 points for Vocabulary / 5 points for Accuracy (grammar) / 5 points for Style / 5 points for Communicative Effectiveness)

Source material to prepare for the exam:

Pop Antonia, Izsák Hajnalka, Szabó Roland-Attila. *Partium Language Exams – English Language – 10 topics for students with specialisation in Fine Arts and Graphics*. Partium kiadó, 2023

(The book is available at the Partium Language Center)