Art Glossary & Expressions

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Language Note

Use the present continuous to talk about pictures.
- The children are playing with a cart.
- People are wearing masks. The man is wearing a mask with horns.

Asking and Answer

Painting
- Can you describe what you see in a picture? It seems there are two people walking...
- What can you see? In this picture, I can see two people...
- Where are they?
- What are they doing?
- What are they thinking about?
- What can you say about this painting technically speaking?
- What feelings does the picture convey (transmit)?
- What do you think of the picture?

Approaches to a work of art

Based on the work of art:
- Content (iconic aspect): the theme, meaning, or story of a work of art communicated by its structure.
- Structure (plastic aspect): the structural way it is presented, i.e. the elements of art: line, color, shape, form, texture, value, space.

Based on the elements surrounding the work of art:
- Context: time & artist's life. Contextualism[1]: Understanding art through its relationship with the rest of the cultural life that surrounds it.
- Intertextuality: connection with other works, styles or currents.
- Viewer's feelings & opinions: Sad, happy, vitality, movement, lively, fascinating, stable, instable, stability, instability, relaxing, magnificent, etc.

Topic	Word/Expression	Pronunciation	Translation	Explanation/Context
Structure	Composition	ˌkɒmpəˈzɪʃən	Composición	The ordered grouping of line, colour, shape, or mass in the visual arts. Composition implies an effort on the part of the artist to organize the parts into a whole, whether the result appears carefully organized or free and spontaneous.
Structure	Form	fɔːm	Forma	Any defined area on a picture surface, flat or creating the illusion of solid, three-dimensional mass.
Structure	Shape	ʃeɪp	Forma	Any area defined by line, color, tones, or the edges of forms.
Structure	Picture plane	ˈpɪktʃə pleɪn	Plano	Flat picture surface of an artwork, usually associated with the foreground.
Structure	Plane	pleɪn	Plano	Any flat or level surface.
Structure	Horror vacui	ˈhɒrə ˈvækjuːiː	Horror al vacío	Fear of empty space; crowded design.
Structure	Dominating lines	ˈdɒmɪneɪtɪŋ laɪnz	Líneas dominantes	
Structure	Diagonal	daɪˈægənəl	Diagonal	
Structure	Vertical	ˈvɜːtɪkəl	Vertical	
Structure	Horizontal	hɒrɪˈzɒntəl	Horizontal	

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[1] **Contextualism**: kənˈtekstʃuəˌlɪzəm.

Structure	Brushwork	ˈbrʌʃwɜːk	Manejo del pincel / factura	The surface quality of a painting produced by the distribution of pigment with a brush.
Structure	Brushstroke	ˈbrʌʃstrəuk	Pincelada	Stroke: 1. a movement of a pen, pencil, brush, graver, or the like. 2. a mark traced by or as if by one movement of a pen, pencil, brush, or the like.
Structure	Foreground	ˈfɔːgraʊnd	Primer plano	
Structure	Background	ˈbækgraʊnd	Fondo	
Structure	Ground	graʊnd	Fondo	A coating of some substance serving as a surface for paint, ink, or other media in art: Lead white is a traditional ground for oil paintings.
Structure	Mass	mæs	Masa	The illusion of weight and bulk created on a two-dimensional surface.
Structure	Modelling	ˈmɒdlɪŋ	Modelado	The technique of rendering the illusion of volume or mass on a two-dimensional surface by shading.
Structure	Tactile experience	ˈtæktaɪl ɪkˈspɪərɪəns	Experiencia táctil	
Structure	Highlight	ˈhaɪlaɪt	Toque de luz	The lightest area of an artwork. Usually refers to the spot where the brightest light is reflected from an object or figure.
Structure	Chiaroscuro	kɪˌɑːrəˈskuərəu	Claroscuro	An Italian word meaning "light and dark". In painting and drawing, the use of gradations of light and dark areas to create the illusion of light and shade.
Structure	Grotesque	grəuˈtesk	Grotesco	1. odd or unnatural in shape, appearance, or character; fantastically ugly or absurd; bizarre. **Syn**. distorted, deformed, weird. 2. fantastic in the shaping and combination of forms, as in decorative work combining incongruous human and animal figures with scrolls, foliage, etc. 3. any grotesque object, design, person, or thing.
Color	Spectrum	ˈspektrəm	Espectro	A continuous sequence or range of colours, from the shortest (red) to the longest (violet) wavelengths.
Color	Color wheel	ˈkʌlə wiːl	Círculo cromático	An arrangement of the hues of the spectrum, usually twelve. They are placed in a circular pattern, with complementary colours, such as yellow and violet, opposite each other.
Color	Hue	hjuː	Matiz	An identifiable[2] colour on the colour wheel or spectrum. Also, the element of a particular colour that separates it from others.
Color	Value	ˈvæljuː	Valor	The measure of lightness or darkness of a colour or of tones.
Color	Intensity / saturation	ɪnˈtensəti / sætʃəˈreɪʃən	Intensidad / saturación	The degree of purity or brilliance of a hue.
Color	Primary colors	ˈpraɪməri ˈkʌləz	Colores primarios	The hues that can be mixed to produce all other hues. In painting, the primary colours are red, yellow, and blue.
Color	Secondary colors	ˈsekəndəri ˈkʌləz	Colores secundarios	Three hues on the colour wheel formed by mixing the primary colours to produce green, violet, and orange.

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[2] **Identifiable** aɪˈdentɪfaɪəbl.

Color	High key	haɪ kiː	Clave alta	Subject consisting primarily of pale or light values.
Color	Low key	ləʊ kiː	Clave baja	Subject consisting primarily of dark values, as occurs in a night scene.
Color	Earth colors	ɜːθ ˈkʌləz	Colores tierra	Paint colours derived from coloured earth. Usually browns, reds, and yellows.
Color	Raw umber	rɔː ˈʌmbə	Sombra natural	
Color	Raw sienna	rɔː siˈenə	Tierra de Siena natural	
Color	Burnt umber	bɜːnt ˈʌmbə	Sombra tostada	
Color	Burnt sienna	bɜːnt siˈenə	Tierra de Siena tostada	
Color	Ochre	ˈəʊkə	Ocre	
Color	Warm colors	wɔːm ˈkʌləz	Colores cálidos	
Color	Cool colors	kuːl ˈkʌləz	Colores fríos	
Color	Shade	ʃeɪd	Sombra	
Color	Ground color	graʊnd ˈkʌlə	Color de fondo / color de base	Also called **ground coat.** a primary coat of paint; priming; base coat. 2. the background color, as of a painting or decoration.
Color	Dominating tones	ˈdɒmɪneɪtɪŋ təʊnz	Tonos dominantes	A colour that is low on the value scale; a dark colour.
Color	Fresh colors	freʃ ˈkʌləz	Colores vivos	Not overworked.
Color	Neutral colors	njuːtrəl ˈkʌləz	Colores neutros	Greys and off-whites.
Color	Local color	ˈləʊkəl ˈkʌlə	Color local	The natural colour of the subject of an image.
Color	Analogous colors	əˈnæləgəs ˈkʌləz	Colores análogos	Hues that are close to each other on the colour wheel, such as blue-violet, blue, and blue-green.
Color	Complementary colors	ˌkɒmplɪˈmentri ˈkʌləz	Colores complementarios	The hues that appear opposite each other on the colour wheel, such as orange and blue, red and green, yellow and violet. When mixed in equal amounts, these hues form neutral greys or browns.
Color	Simultaneous contrast	ˌsɪməlˈteɪnɪəs ˈkɒntraːst	Contraste simultáneo	The contrast formed when complementary colours are placed side by side.
Color	Layers of color	leɪəz əv ˈkʌlə	Capas de color	
Color	Accents of color	ˈæksənts əv ˈkʌlə	Acentos de color	
Texture	Thick impasted brushwork	θɪk ɪmˈpeɪstɪd ˈbrʌʃwɜːk	Pincelada gruesa	Impaste: cover with or enclose in a paste.
Texture	Impasto	ɪmˈpæstəʊ	Mucha materia	1. the laying on of paint thickly. 2. the paint so laid on. Thickly applied paint.
Texture	Thin veils	θɪn veɪlz	Veladuras finas	
Texture	Glazes	ˈgleɪzɪz	Veladuras	A thin, transparent coat of pigment.
Texture	Washes	ˈwɒʃɪz	Aguadas	A thin, transparent layer of paint or ink. Wash drawings combine wash and line.
Texture	Textural scale	ˈtekstʃərəl skeɪl	Escala de textura	From impasto to watercolour.
Texture	Painterly surface	ˈpeɪntəli ˈsɜːfɪs	Superficie por manchas	Characterized by qualities of color, stroke, or texture perceived as distinctive to the art of painting, esp. the rendering of forms and images in terms of color or tonal relations rather than of contour or line.

Texture	Painterly	ˈpeɪntəli	Mancha	Painting style dependent on shapes and colour areas rather than contours, outlines, or edges.
Texture	Expressive marks	ɪkˈspresɪv mɑːks	Trazos expresivos	
Texture	Mark making	mɑːk ˈmeɪkɪŋ	Factura	
Texture	Gestural painting	ˈdʒestʃərəl ˈpeɪntɪŋ	Pintura gestual	
Material	Medium	ˈmiːdiəm	Medio / técnica	The material, method, or techniques used by an artist to create a work of art. Also, the material used to dilute paint, such as water or turpentine.
Material	Charcoal	ˈtʃɑːkəʊl	Carboncillo / carbonilla	A drawing material made from charred wood.
Material	Sinopia / sinopis	sɪˈnəʊpiə / ˈsɪnəpɪs	Sepia	Reddish-brown earth colour; also the cartoon or underpainting for a fresco.
Material	Acrylic paint	əˈkrɪlɪk peɪnt	Pintura acrílica	A synthetic resin paint or polymer[3] paint used in place of traditional oil paint. Quick-drying and durable.
Material	Oil paint	ɔɪl peɪnt	Pintura al óleo	A method of painting developed in the Renaissance in which pigment is combined with one of a number of oil mixtures. Applied to a surface, it dries to form a continuous film. Oil paint is still widely used today.
Material	Mixed media	ˈmɪkst ˈmiːdiə	Técnica mixta	The use of several different materials, methods, or techniques in one work of art.
Material	Pigment	ˈpɪgmənt	Pigmento	A dry colouring material, made from a variety of organic or chemical substances, which is mixed with some form of liquid and a binding material to form paint, ink, crayons, or pastels.
Material	Support	səˈpɔːt	Soporte	The surface on which a two-dimensional work is made, such as canvas, paper, or wood.
Material	Atelier	əˈteliɛ	Atelier	Artist's workshop or studio[4].
Material	Palette	ˈpælət	Paleta	A range of colours; the surface on which an artist mixes paint.
Material	Palette knife	ˈpælət ˌnaɪf	Espátula	Knife with a small, flexible, wedge-shaped blade, used to mix colours on the palette; sometimes used to apply paint to an art work.
Technique	Knife painting	naɪf ˈpeɪntɪŋ	Pintura a espátula	
Technique	Scumble (one colour over another)	ˈskʌmbl	Pintar en seco un color sobre otro	To soften (the color or tone of a painted area) by overlaying parts with opaque or semiopaque color applied thinly and lightly with an almost dry brush.

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[3] **Polymer** ˈpɒləmə.

[4] **Studio** ˈstuːdiəʊ.