

4 Art and creativity

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acrobat /ˈækɹəˌbæt/ Noun

an **acrobat** is someone who entertains people by doing difficult and impressive physical actions, such as jumping, balancing, or moving their body in artistic ways

a circus acrobat | he's a very good acrobat | I prefer watching the acrobats to seeing animals in a circus | he started work as an acrobat when he was 18

Adjective: *acrobatic* | Noun: *acrobatics*

she has great acrobatic skill | they performed some amazing acrobatics

busker /ˈbʌskə(r)/ Noun

a **busker** is someone who plays music in the street and gets money from some of the people who walk past

I stopped to listen to the busker outside the tube station | I usually give buskers money if I like their music | there's often a busker singing by the Town Hall | a good busker can earn over £30 an hour

Verb: *busk* | Noun: *busking*

they busked in Trafalgar Square last week | he started busking when he was just 15

gig /gɪg/ Noun

a **gig** is a performance in public, usually by a musician or band of musicians

play a gig

we played 25 gigs in 28 days on tour | the gig was cancelled after she fell ill in Denver | their first live gig was a huge success | I helped my cousin organise the gig

put on /pʊt ɒn/ Phrasal verb

if you **put on** something such as a performance or a show, you organise it by booking the venue and the performers, selling the tickets, etc

she puts on shows of circus skills most weekends | I didn't realise how much work was involved in putting on a gig | they put on a fantastic firework display for New Year

stand out /stænd aʊt/ Phrasal verb

if someone **stands out**, you notice them because they are slightly different from the other people around and often more interesting or exciting

he never really stands out in a group | as soon as I arrived, one person stood out and grabbed my attention | I don't want to stand out, I'd prefer to remain in the background

Adjective: *standout*

she was the standout candidate for the job

venue /ˈvenjuː/ Noun

a **venue** is the place where an event is happening or is going to happen

it's an amazing venue for a party | a perfect venue for weddings | a popular concert venue | the World Cup is held at various venues across the country | the venue we'd chosen for the gig was just outside the city

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arty /ˈɑː(r)ti/ Adjective

someone who is **arty** is very interested in the arts – films, poetry, music, painting, etc

the cafe was full of arty people discussing the latest exhibition at Tate Modern | my roommate was very arty and put a lot of pictures up on the wall | I've never been very arty – I prefer playing football

attention /əˈtenʃ(ə)n/ Noun uncount

attention is the thought or interest you give to something you are watching or listening to. If you draw attention to something, you make people notice it and think about it

pay attention (to something) | give your attention to something | draw someone's attention to something

we just want to draw their attention to the problem | babies cry when they want attention | you need to pay attention in class | can I have your attention, please? | he loves being the centre of attention (with everyone looking at him) | I could tell that he wasn't giving me his attention | you have my full attention (I am listening to you very carefully)

blank /blæŋk/ Adjective

a **blank** surface has no writing, pictures, or decoration on it

a blank piece of paper | the wall was blank | my laptop screen suddenly went blank | if you don't know what to put, just leave that part of the form blank

commit /kəˈmɪt/ Verb

if someone **commits** a crime or other illegal act, they do it

he hadn't committed any crime | he admitted that he committed murder | his second attempt to commit suicide | since leaving prison he has not committed any further offences

consideration /kənˌsɪdəˈreɪʃ(ə)n/ Noun

consideration for something is careful thought about it so that you can make a sensible decision about it

give consideration to something | be under consideration

they never gave any consideration to the cost | they gave serious consideration to the idea of opening a new shop in Leeds | after long consideration, the judge decided not to send him to prison | two new laws are under consideration

Verb: *consider*

you should consider your decision carefully, then ring me to let me know

demolish /dɪ'mɒlɪʃ/ Verb

to **demolish** a building means to destroy it completely, for example because it is old and no longer safe or because you are going to put a new building there. **Demolish** is a formal word; in ordinary spoken English, people usually say *knock down*

the slums were demolished to make way for a golf course | they demolished the old cinema last week | the old school is going to be demolished | most of the remaining buildings were demolished in 2010 | the farm buildings were demolished and replaced by four new houses

Noun: *demolition*

the demolition of something

the factory continued making cars until its closure and demolition in 1997 | they won the contract for the demolition and removal of the old bridge

drastic /'dræstɪk/ Adjective

something that is **drastic** is very serious and severe
the government took drastic measure to control inflation | a drastic reduction in the number of people who smoke | there have been drastic changes in the weather over the last ten years | what happened later was even more drastic

Adverb: *drastically*

you need to drastically reduce the amount of sugar you eat | things at home changed drastically after I lost my job

effort /'efə(r)t/ Noun

effort is the work involved in trying to do something. If you make an effort to do something, you try very hard to do it

make an effort (to do something) | take effort | put effort into something

they think cheating will bring success without effort | it took a lot of effort to get the piano up the stairs | he put a lot of effort into his language studies | if you don't make an effort, you'll never pass the exam

fine arts /faɪn ɑ:ts/ Noun plural

fine arts are things such as paintings and sculptures that are made to be looked at and enjoyed
he studied fine arts at university | a museum of fine arts | the fine arts section of the bookshop | Chicago is home to a lively fine arts community

Noun: *fine artist*

it's difficult to earn a living as a fine artist | many of his students became successful fine artists

mural /'mjʊərəl/ Noun

a **mural** is a picture that is painted directly onto a wall

there are two important murals in the church | the first mural was painted here in 1473 | the mural took 14 weeks to complete | the two artists created the mural in 2002

spray-paint /spreɪ peɪnt/ Verb

if you **spray-paint** something, you paint on it using a can that forces the paint out under pressure rather than with a brush

he spray-painted the car blue | take the cover off then spray-paint the inside | the wall was spray-painted with stars

Noun: *spray-paint*

a tin of spray-paint

the arts /ði ɑ:ts/ Noun plural

you use **the arts** to refer to all the activities such as painting, writing poetry, dance, etc. that involve creative imagination

government funding for the arts | her personal interests include foreign travel and the arts | we're very grateful that many local businesses support the arts

tunnel /'tʌn(ə)l/ Noun

a **tunnel** is a long passage under the ground that carries trains, cars, etc underneath hills, rivers, etc.

the tunnel is 20 metres long | the train broke down (stopped working) halfway through the tunnel | the tunnel was dark and wet | the tunnel under the English Channel

Verb: *tunnel*

ten prisoners tunnelled out of the jail

ultimately /'ʌltɪmətli/ Adverb

you use **ultimately** to emphasize that you are referring to the most important consideration in a situation

making a profit is ultimately what matters to me | all laws were ultimately based on religious beliefs

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buzzing /'bʌzɪŋ/ Adjective

something that is **buzzing** is very lively and involves lots of interesting things and people

there's a buzzing arts scene in Sydney | the place is buzzing with new ideas | London was the crazy, buzzing capital of fashion

carnival /'kɑ:(r)nɪv(ə)l/ Noun

a **carnival** is a big public event in a city when people parade in the streets, often singing and dancing, wearing special costumes

the children wore carnival masks and costumes | the city is transformed during the carnival | carnival is next weekend, the most important weekend of the year for us | there's a carnival atmosphere out there today

cosmopolitan /'kɒzmə'pɒlɪt(ə)n/ Adjective

somewhere that is **cosmopolitan** has people from lots of different countries and cultures

Vilnius is a cosmopolitan city with interesting architecture | an attractive town with a cosmopolitan atmosphere | Odessa's cosmopolitan nature was described by Pushkin who lived there for a year

| two words sum up Milan today: modern and cosmopolitan

muddy /'mʌdi/ Adjective

if something is **muddy**, it is covered in mud
the camp site was really muddy | muddy boots | my clothes had got muddy | the floor was all muddy

Noun: mud

the mud was really deep | wash the mud off your boots before you come in

non-participation /nɒn pɑːtɪsɪ'peɪʃən/ Noun uncount
non-participation is the fact of not taking part in an event

one of the main reasons for non-participation was fear of failure | he warned me that there would be consequences for non-participation

participate /pɑː(r)'tɪsɪpeɪt/ Verb

if you **participate** in an activity, you take part in it.
Participate is a slightly formal word

we try and encourage more people to participate in the arts | 12 students participated in the research programme | the defence minister participated in talks with the Russians | our school team participated in the national tournament

Noun: participant

the conference is limited to 50 participants | participants must be aged 18 or over

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conquest /'kɒŋkwest/ Noun

conquest is success in getting control or full understanding of something

a kind of intellectual conquest | the conquest of space (when humans were finally able to send people into space)

fortune /'fɔː(r)tʃən/ Noun

a **fortune** is a large amount of money

cost/spend/pay a fortune | earn/make a fortune | be worth a fortune

he spent an absolute fortune on his cars | the house must be worth a small fortune now (a surprisingly large amount of money) | your salary is a fortune compared to mine | he made a fortune on the stock market

fulfil /fʊl'fɪl/ Verb

to **fulfil** a duty, requirement, or obligation means to succeed in doing or providing what is necessary

music fulfils a deep psychological need for calm and order | on top of his research, he had to fulfil his normal teaching duties | the school made sure it fulfilled its legal obligations

Noun: fulfilment

this was the fulfilment of the promise made two years ago

goosebumps /guːsbʌmps/ Noun plural

if something gives you **goosebumps** or if you get **goosebumps**, you feel a sudden thrill of excitement or shock

hearing 70,000 Welshmen sing gave me goosebumps | I get goosebumps just thinking about it | we both got goosebumps watching the video

injustice /ɪn'dʒʌstɪs/ Noun

injustice is unfair treatment of people

she had a strong feeling of injustice | the fight against racism and injustice | she sang about the pain of social injustice

intellectual /ɪntə'lektʃuəl/ Adjective

intellectual means relating to someone's ability to think in an intelligent way and understand ideas and information clearly

everyone has different intellectual strengths and weaknesses | an intellectual conversation | the film was too intellectual for me | she had a high degree of intellectual curiosity | music operates on an intellectual as well as an emotional level

Noun: intellectual | Noun: intellect

my uncle is a well-known intellectual | she had a brilliant intellect and a sharp sense of humour

key /kiː/ Adjective

a **key** event, thing, or person is one that is very important in a particular situation

two key events had an important influence on the region | a key figure in the French Revolution | a key part of the course is the two weeks work experience on a farm | write down the three key points from chapter 1

lullaby /'lʌləbaɪ/ Noun

a **lullaby** is a song with a soft, gentle rhythm that you sing quietly to a baby to help him or her get to sleep

a calming lullaby can help babies sleep | he sang her a lullaby | he fell asleep before the lullaby had finished

pattern /'pætə(r)n/ Noun

a **pattern** is a series of repeated shapes, lines, or sounds

pop music follows different patterns to traditional Chinese music | these patterns are very strong, even though we don't notice them straight away | I love the pattern on your curtains | the vase was decorated with geometric patterns (with regular shapes like squares and triangles)

Adjective: patterned

a patterned shirt

regulate /'regjuleɪt/ Verb

if you **regulate** something, you control the intensity of it so that it does not become too strong or powerful

sad music can help us regulate negative feelings | a device that regulates the temperature in the building

soothe /suːð/ Verb

if something **soothes** you, it makes you feel calm and less stressed

just being by the water soothes many people | Dan was trying to soothe the baby | music can soothe the soul

Adjective: *soothing*

the music was soothing and relaxing

stimulate /ˈstimjʊleɪt/ Verb

if you **stimulate** someone, you make them think a lot in an enjoyable or useful way

music can stimulate us both emotionally and intellectually | toys help stimulate the child's creativity | getting a new teacher really stimulated his interest in the subject

Adjective: *stimulating*

the concert was entertaining and quite stimulating

unpredictable /ˌʌnpɪrɪˈdɪktəb(ə)l/ Adjective

something that is **unpredictable** behaves or acts in a way that you cannot guess in advance

the music moved in an unpredictable direction | his rate of recovery is unpredictable, I'm afraid | the ending of the film was totally unpredictable | the weather round here is highly unpredictable

Opposite – Adjective: *predictable*

the plot was boring and predictable

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bear /beə(r)/ Verb

if you can't **bear** something, you dislike it very much and do not want it to continue any more

I'm thinking of leaving. I just can't bear it here | he couldn't bear the pain of losing his only son | I couldn't bear the thought of waking up in prison | they couldn't bear the idea of being separated

convex /ˈkɒnveks/ Adjective

a **convex** surface curves outward

a convex mirror makes everything look upside-down | the marble floor was slightly convex | each wing has a convex upper surface and a flat lower surface

Opposite – Adjective: *concave*

concave buttons

out of place /aʊt ɒv pleɪs/ Phrase

if something is **out of place**, it does not fit in very well with its surroundings

the new office block is rather out of place next to a fifteenth century church | she felt very out of place as the only woman in the meeting | his suit was fine but the trainers were out of place

scene /si:n/ Noun

a **scene** is a part of a film or play that happens in the same place. To **set the scene** is to describe or act out something that gives the audience an idea of where the action is happening and gives them some information that will help them understand the rest of the film or play as it progresses

the opening scene of the Lion King is brilliant | the final scene was terribly sad | all the animals appeared on the stage to set the scene

spellbound /ˈspelˌbaʊnd/ Adjective

if you are **spellbound**, you are so interested in something that is happening that you cannot look at or think about anything else

keep someone **spellbound** | hold someone **spellbound**

the film kept the children spellbound for an hour and a half | everyone in the audience was spellbound | she sat in front of the TV, spellbound | the last few pages of the book held me spellbound

Adjective: *spellbinding*

the exhibition was absolutely spellbinding | a collection of spellbinding adventure stories

tint /tɪnt/ Noun

a **tint** is a small but noticeable amount of a particular colour

you can see the reflection of the sky, but with a red tint | Jan dyed her hair in a stronger red tint

Adjective: *tinted*

a car with tinted windows (having coloured glass so the driver can see out but no one can see in)

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anonymous /əˈnɒnɪməs/ Adjective

if someone is **anonymous**, they do not let anyone know their name

remain **anonymous**

she won over £1m on the lottery and chose to remain anonymous | an anonymous caller told the police where to find the body | we don't allow anonymous blog postings on our site

Adverb: *anonymously* | Noun: *anonymity*

it was published anonymously on the Web | you can call this number anonymously and get advice | the newspaper will not publish letters sent anonymously | no need to register, so anonymity is guaranteed | the witness demanded anonymity before agreeing to appear in court

auction /ˈɔːkʃ(ə)n/ Noun

an **auction** is a sale at which people offer increasing amounts of money until nobody wants to offer any more. The item is then bought by the person who made the last and highest offer

hold/conduct an auction | buy/sell something at auction

let's hold an auction to raise some money | the contents of the house were sold at public auction | the eight paintings were sold at auction | an auction house (a business which holds auctions) | an online auction site (where you can make offers over the Internet) | a charity auction raised nearly £1 million

Verb: *auction* | Noun: *auctioneer*

auction something off

the office closed down and all the contents were auctioned off | the silver will be auctioned tomorrow and the pictures on Tuesday | buyers were gathered round the auctioneer's table

campaign /kæmˈpeɪn/ Noun

a **campaign** is a set of organised activities that people do because they want to change a situation or persuade people about something

a campaign against something | a campaign for

something | an advertising/marketing campaign | an election campaign

a campaign against the new tourist development | an extensive public education campaign | the campaign was successful and management dropped the plan | the election campaign was limited to 90 days

Verb: *campaign* | Noun: *campaigner*

campaign against something | campaign for something

a protest group campaigned against the proposed reforms | campaigning for a change in the law | a campaigner for political freedom | local campaigners protested outside the factory

elusive /ɪˈluːsɪv/ Adjective

someone or something that is **elusive** is difficult to find

he's one of the world's most famous and elusive artists | the truth of the matter was highly elusive | they are shy and elusive animals | he's very elusive, and I only ever met him once

epitomize /ɪˈpɪtəmaɪz/ Verb

if one thing **epitomizes** another, it is a good and typical example or reflection of the other thing

she epitomizes the capability and independent spirit of modern women | both actors came to epitomize the Hollywood star

Noun: *epitome*

her work is an epitome of community service | he was the epitome of a great husband

expose /ɪkˈspəʊz/ Verb

if you **expose** something, you take away any covering it has so that you can see what is inside or underneath

she dug away the soil to expose the roots of the tree | they took up the carpet to expose the wooden floor underneath | he pulled up his sleeve to expose the scar

Adjective: *exposed*

it's dangerous to leave exposed electrical wires in the house | make sure you clean all exposed surfaces thoroughly

ideal /aɪˈdɪəl/ Adjective

something or someone that is **ideal** is the most suitable person or thing for a particular situation

the setting for this sort of at is ideal | swimming conditions at the beach are ideal | she was the ideal choice for the job | the hotel was in an ideal location

Adverb: *ideally*

the cafe is ideally situated between the cathedral and the museum

phone booth /fəʊn buːð/ Noun

a **phone booth** is a small building or shelter in a public place with a telephone in it that people can pay to use. **Phone booths** were used much more in the days before mobile phones

a typical red phone booth in London | do you know where the nearest phone booth is? | the last time I used a phone booth was to keep dry while it was raining

protest /ˈprəʊtest/ Noun

protest is action or behaviour that shows strong and sometimes violent disagreement with a plan or situation

a protest by students | she went on a protest march | the city saw a weekend of violent protest | peaceful protests continued for several weeks

Verb: *protest* | Noun: *protester*

protest against something | protest about something
hundreds of thousands of people protested against the war | many local people protested about the new building plans | protesters set fire to the offices | police refused to negotiate with the protesters

slave labour /sleɪv ˈleɪbə/ Noun uncount

slave labour is the use of people as workers without paying them wages but treating them as property, owned by their bosses. Slave labour was common in the South of the United States until the middle of the nineteenth century, when it became illegal to buy and sell people as slaves

the local people were used as slave labour | cotton production depended on slave labour | thousands of people were transported to America as slave labour

spy /spaɪ/ Noun

a **spy** is someone whose job is to find secret information about another country or organisation and pass this information to their own government or employer

he told us he'd been a spy but no one believed him | it's a dangerous job being a spy | three men were arrested and shot for being spies | he denied being a spy

Verb: *spy*

spy on someone or something

she had been spying on the Russians for over thirteen years

tear off /teər ɒf/ Phrasal verb

if you **tear** something **off**, you use force to remove it from the surface it is attached to

people are willing to tear the boards off to get to the pictures underneath | I tore off a strip of loose wallpaper | the roof was torn off during the storm

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launch /ˈprəʊtest/ Verb

to **launch** a major activity, a career, a big investigation, etc means to start it going in a successful way

the festival has launched the careers of several famous comedians | they launched an enquiry into the causes of the accident | his latest book was launched at a party in Oxford last Thursday | this was the film that launched her on a fifty-year career as a Hollywood star

Noun: *launch*

a book launch (a party to help promote a new book)