

## Different strokes: the forgotten women of abstract expressionism

### Level 2: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

**Article summary:** The article describes a new art exhibition in London which features 80 female artists from around the world, which is expanding the body of abstract expressionist artwork.

**Time:** 60 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Speaking, Writing

**Language focus:** Relative clauses with *who*, *which* and *that*

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

#### 1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of art and get students thinking about their art preferences. Make sure learners give reasons for their ranking. If students like other types of art, encourage them to add to the list. Note that "art installations" are a kind of artwork you can walk through and experience.

#### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Note that the word *abstract* can also be used for ideas or plans that aren't real yet.

**Key:**

- |                      |                          |
|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>Abstract</i>   | 9. <i>point of view</i>  |
| 2. <i>exhibition</i> | 10. <i>attention</i>     |
| 3. <i>celebrity</i>  | 11. <i>connection</i>    |
| 4. <i>emotion</i>    | 12. <i>organized</i>     |
| 5. <i>technique</i>  | 13. <i>debate</i>        |
| 6. <i>inspired</i>   | 14. <i>understanding</i> |
| 7. <i>initials</i>   | 15. <i>unique</i>        |
| 8. <i>tradition</i>  |                          |

- b. Give the class an opportunity to personalise some of the vocabulary they have covered in the previous activity. Encourage students to choose the words they think they will use most frequently in their day-to-day lives. Monitor and assist students as you walk around the class. Allow time for feedback, so students can share some of the sentences they have written.

#### 3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers, and students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in item 2, they may say, "Abstract expressionism did not include female artists from around the world," or similar.

**Key:**

1. *True*
2. *False. Abstract expressionism was very male and mostly American.*
3. *False. The exhibition features 80 female artists from around the world.*
4. *True*
5. *False. The artists in the exhibition use their own traditions and their own points of view.*
6. *True*
7. *True*
8. *False. Many of the artists have died and they are still not well known.*
9. *False. It was very difficult to find them.*
10. *True*

#### 4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually, and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Relative clauses can be found in the text. As an extension activity, ask students to find and underline them.

## Different strokes: the forgotten women of abstract expressionism

### Level 2: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

**Key:**

1. *Janet Sobel, who was an artist, went to the US in 1908. / Janet Sobel was an artist who went to the US in 1908.*
2. *Li Fang, who was born in Taiwan, later moved to Switzerland.*
3. *Abstract expressionism, which started in the 1940s in New York, made Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, and Mark Rothko famous.*
4. *There is debate about these projects, which is between adding women to the history or creating a second, women-only history.*
5. *Griselda Pollock, who is an art historian, has a point of view about the debate. / Griselda Pollock is an art historian who has a point of view about the debate.*
6. *Wook-Kyung Choi has a unique approach to her paintings, which is to start without a plan and create order later.*

### 5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

### 6. In your own words

- a. The task could also be done as a homework task, and students can present their reports to the class.