

**Pearson Edexcel International GCSE**

**Tuesday 14 January 2020**

Morning (Time: 3 hours)

Paper Reference **4EB1/01**

**English Language B**

**Paper 1**

**Extracts Booklet**

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## Text One

### A Personal Journey in Art Education

adapted from an essay by Dr Peter Gregory

*In this passage, the writer describes his experiences of studying and teaching art.*

In today's educational landscape it is sometimes easy to forget that the richness of human experience is made up of more than the ability to attain particular grades in English and maths. I'm writing as someone fully convinced of the importance of art and design but I'd like to explain my personal story and how it has shaped and affected my whole career – now spanning over four decades.

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For me personally I enjoyed drawing, painting and making things from a very young age – but it wasn't until an enthusiastic young student teacher came to my school when I was eight years old that I really began to see the value of art for myself. Many decades later I can still vividly recall the images that I encountered at a local art exhibition when that student teacher took us on an outing. It was the very first time that I had visited an exhibition and it was like walking into another dimension! I had never imagined such simple and stylistic designs as I then encountered – especially of birds and fish. The impact of the visit has never left me – and it still has a major influence on my career.

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By the time I left primary school I had experienced a range of art-making materials thanks to the willingness of my teachers. One in particular developed a new interest in creating models and objects from papier-mâché (a mixture of torn paper and glue which can be moulded into different shapes). This was a messy, slow, time-consuming process but I absolutely embraced it and continued to make, mould and create new objects at home and at school, **because** an adult had inspired, encouraged and supported me.

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*Modelling with papier-mâché*

My secondary school experiences continued to build on those I'd already had. Art had value and its contribution to learning was prized in the boys' school I attended. My art teacher was most interested in painting but I recognise how many other materials he was prepared to allow us with which to experiment, adapt and explore. I also learnt a great deal about art history from him. Bearing in mind my earlier experiences in visiting a single exhibition, you might begin to imagine my delight in discovering works of art in other galleries on many visits during this time.

At college I studied ceramics. You may have noticed I have not mentioned clay so far, so quite understandably may be puzzled how this entered my experience. It also began when I was eight, soon after I'd been to the first exhibition I mentioned and I had to spend some time in hospital. During my stay I encountered a well-meaning teacher who tried to 'teach' me how to reproduce line drawings of fish and birds using incredibly simple devices. I was not impressed and felt cheated by her approach. I was already spoiled in that I'd seen, experienced and delighted in a dimension of making art which was way beyond this. In desperation, the teacher allowed me to play with some clay instead. The endless possibilities now flowed from my imagination, including animals, human figures and even superheroes. Even at that age I sensed the anxiety flowing from the teacher – although I clearly enjoyed the activities, was I really learning anything which she could mark? It wasn't until secondary school that I was actually taught the basics of clay work beginning with shapes and forms, processes and then the 'magic' science of firing and decorating. It was this springboard which took me into my study of ceramics at college.

I then became a teacher... I found myself applying my interests, enthusiasm and guidance in a range of schools – primary, secondary and special schools. Through art I observed the transformation of reluctant students into willing risk-takers, those who grew in confidence and embraced new possibilities and those who excelled beyond my own skill level.

I entered higher education. Today I work in a university, teaching the subject which has shaped, influenced and defined my being. I train student teachers. More and more student teachers arrive at the start of their studies having been denied the kinds of rich experiences of art I still draw on from my youth. Some are very unsure what the value or purpose of art is: some who have natural talents may have been trained only to gain academic results in narrow ways. I often have to challenge their previous learning and experience of art before trying to rebuild and widen their understanding in a comparatively short period of time. My hope is that they too will ignite the interest of their own pupils.

I would like to end with a simple challenge for each of us to consider, whether parents, teachers, artists or young people. In our own time, how many opportunities will we have to aid artistic development? What can we do to support and encourage (rather than limit) human development in others?

## Text Two

### Teen opinion: why art is so important

#### adapted from an article by Safah

*In this passage, the writer explains her passion for art.*

As creative subjects are being sidelined in secondary schools, teen site member Safah argues that art is crucial for young people, as a medium for expression, passion and emotion, and a means of challenging ourselves and the world around us.

Anyone who's been within ten feet of me will know about my love of art. What's equally predictable is that anyone above the age of 30 with a maths degree tends to turn up their nose at it and shove me down the 'study what's useful' pit (no stereotyping intended). Art is such a massive part of my life and I can say the same for so many other young people: it's a popular choice at GCSE and a great introduction to the creative industries that are booming in the 21st century. It baffles me that it's being sidelined, especially in secondary schools, where there's this obsession with so-called 'academic' subjects. 5 10

In my first ever art class my teacher talked about how using different mediums could create different effects. I would argue that art is a medium in itself. It's a medium for expression, passion and emotion, and the result? Well, it's infinite. Art has been used to present opinions and challenge authority. It's been used to record iconic moments in history and it has captured the imagination of some of the most outspoken individuals. And, just as miraculously, art has been a way for ordinary people to pour out their hearts without the weight of words. So long as we stay true to that, art is as close to immortality as we'll ever get. 15

Which moves me onto my next point. What is art actually supposed to be? What is it supposed to do, exactly? If you were to ask me what kind of art I appreciate most, I'd say it's the art that really says something. I'm quite firmly against the old-fashioned idea that art should simply replicate nature and, sadly, that's the idea underpinning most of the art exam syllabuses. 'See how well you can capture that reflection, how best to reproduce that shadow' – it's all about accuracy, about mindless repetition. It was only when we branched out to some of the more unusual and inventive artists that I came to truly love the subject, and to understand that fundamentally it is about freedom of expression. 20 25

My favourite artist was, and still is with no doubt, Picasso. He is one of the most famous and important artists of the twentieth century. When I was younger all I saw in his work were a load of odd shapes and lines. Now, however, I've come to admire him. Not because of his style itself, but the courage behind it. Rather than painting pretty pictures of lakes and shores, he came up with a new, strange and occasionally mad art style that involved cubes, spheres, other geometric shapes and bold, abstract outlines, called Cubism. Out of all his work, my favourites are his portraits. It's fascinating the way he breaks down and changes the human body until it is only just recognisable. Picasso once said, 'The world does not make sense, so why should I paint pictures that do?' After hearing that, I fell in love with art again. Picasso's 1941 portrait 'Dora Maar with Cat' sold for an outstanding \$95 million at Sotheby's on May 4, 2006, becoming the second most expensive painting in auction history. 30 35



*A portrait of Dora Maar by Picasso*

Of course, everyone reading this will be a passionate reader (or at least I hope you are) but while writers are fairly common, what about artists in literature? Well let's just say if there was a book with an artist for a main character it would be on my shelf within a week. Because books about artists are two stories folded in one: the story where you discover characters through their actions, their speech and their thoughts; and the second story, where you learn about what's deepest inside them, what even they might not be aware of, hidden in the cracks of their art.

Art is a beautiful part of the world we live in, whether we read about it, create it ourselves or simply appreciate it. And don't be fooled into thinking art is something you'd only find in a gallery or exhibition; it's everywhere, so long as you remember what art really is.

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