Banksy

Differentiated Reading Comprehension Activity

The resources in this pack are designed to support teaching of Banksy's artistic style, background and status as a popular political activist.

Please be aware that it will not be appropriate for the children in your class to research further into Banksy's artwork due to the potentially disturbing and inappropriate nature of some of his work.

It may also be appropriate to reinforce with your class that graffiti is a crime and that it is not acceptable to imitate Banksy by drawing on surfaces, without permission, in public spaces. This is referenced in The Criminal Damage Act of 1971 and the Antisocial Behaviour Act of 2003.

Be aware of individuals in your class and any children that may have been affected by any of the issues that Banksy references in his artwork, such as poverty, war, asylum seeking and migrant refugees.

Know your class: some content may be inappropriate for some children.

Banksy

Who Is Banksy?

Banksy is a street artist and **activist** from Bristol who is famous for his **graffiti** art. He is anonymous. This means he does not let people know who he is.

Banksy's artwork will often appear without warning and he usually manages not to be seen.

Did You Know...?

Banksy has managed to keep his true identity a mystery for over 30 years.

Banksy doesn't sell his artwork and doesn't like people to make copies or sell photographs of it.

Banksy's artwork began appearing around various British seaside locations in 2021. He called this collection the 'Great British Spraycation'.

What Is Banksy Famous For?

Banksy often uses his artwork to put across important messages and to try and push for change. His art is often about **politics**, war and other important subjects.

Banksy is most famous for spraying his artwork onto the sides of buildings or other surfaces using stencils. Many people have tried to copy Banksy's style.

Banksy's Artwork

Banksy hid a shredder within the frame of one of his paintings called 'Girl With Balloon'. It began to shred itself a few moments after it was sold. The half-shredded painting is now worth more money than the original!

Banksy left a painting in a hospital in Southampton during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was called 'Game Changer' and showed a young boy playing with a superhero nurse doll. It raised over £16m for National Health Service charities.

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Different Opinions

Banksy's artwork is very valuable and is often protected for others to see.

However, graffiti is usually against the law.

Some people do not think that it is fair that Banksy's work is admired when other graffiti artists could get into trouble for doing the same thing.

Some people are worried that others may try to copy Banksy and start spray-painting in places where they are not allowed to.

Glossary

activist: A person who works hard to try and bring about change.

graffiti: Writing or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed onto a surface in a public place.

politics: The work of a government in charge of a country or state.

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Questions

1. Where is Banksy from? Tick one.

   - ◯ London
   - ◯ New York
   - ◯ Bristol
   - ◯ Manchester

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word with its correct meaning.

activist	a person who does not let people know their true identity
anonymous	writing or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed onto a surface in a public place
graffiti	the work of a government in charge of a country or state
politics	a person who works hard to try and bring about change

3. What does 'against the law' mean? Tick one.

   - ◯ difficult
   - ◯ not allowed
   - ◯ messy
   - ◯ important

4. What did Banksy hide inside one of his paintings? Tick one.

   - ◯ a shredder
   - ◯ a photograph
   - ◯ a paintbrush
   - ◯ a note

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5. Fill in the missing words.

   Banksy's artwork is very _____ and is often protected for others to _____.

6. Where did Banksy leave his 'Game Changer' painting?

   _____

7. Do you think that Banksy should carry on spraying his graffiti art on walls and other surfaces? Explain your answer.

   _____

   _____

   _____

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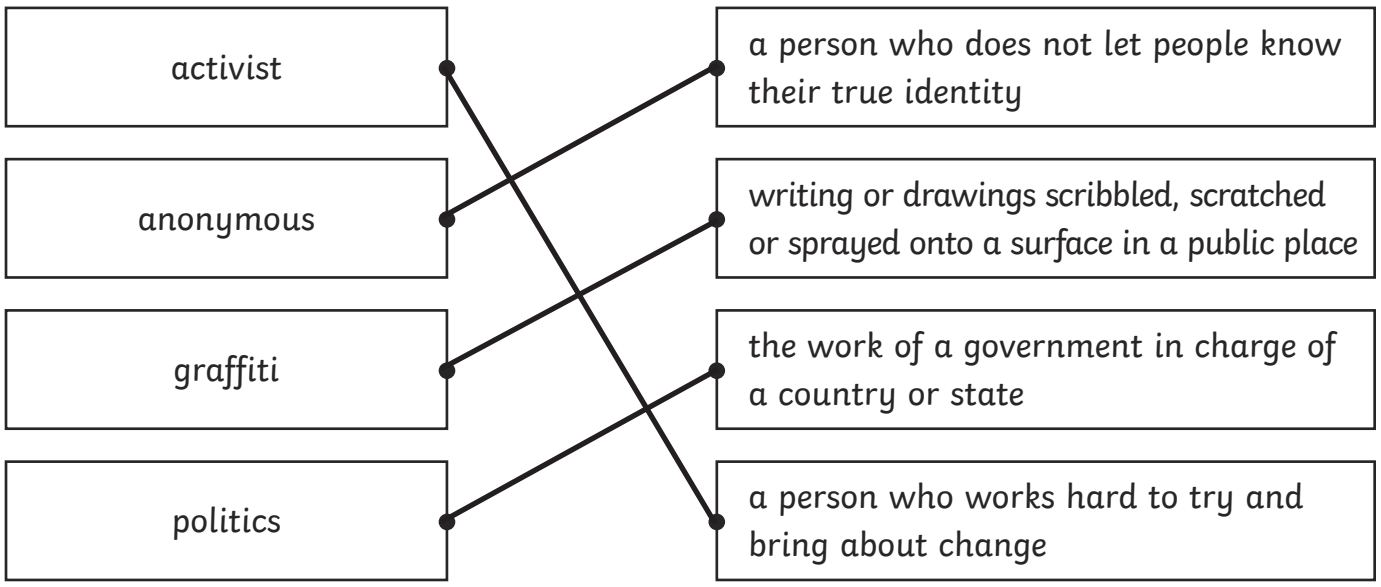
Answers

1. Where is Banksy from? Tick one.

- ◯ London
- ◯ New York
- ✓ **Bristol**
- ◯ Manchester

2. Draw **four** lines and match each word with its correct meaning.



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- ◯ a photograph
- ◯ a paintbrush
- ◯ a note

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5. Fill in the missing words.

   Banksy's artwork is very **valuable** and is often protected for others to **see**.

6. Where did Banksy leave his 'Game Changer' painting?

   Banksy left the painting in a hospital in Southampton.

7. Do you think that Banksy should carry on spraying his graffiti art on walls and other surfaces? Explain your answer.

   Pupils' own responses, such as: I think he should keep making his art because he paints about important subjects. However, I think he should always make sure that he chooses sensible places to paint.

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Banksy

Who Is Banksy?

Banksy is a street artist and **activist** from Bristol who is famous for his stencilled **graffiti** art. He is anonymous and does not let people know his true identity.

Banksy's artwork will often appear without warning and he usually manages not to be seen. He does not take part in TV or radio interviews and has never shown his face.

Making His Voice Heard

Banksy often uses his artwork to put across important messages and has shown that he isn't afraid to take risks to make his voice heard. He is considered to be a political activist because his art can be seen as a way of pushing for change. His artwork is often about politics, the government, war and other important subjects.

Banksy's Work

Banksy's artwork is usually spray-painted onto the sides of buildings or other surfaces using stencils. Banksy's style has influenced many other artists and there have been lots of attempts to sell images of his work. However, Banksy encourages people not to buy his artwork and doesn't like copies or photographs of them being sold.

In 2018, Banksy hid a shredder within the frame of one of his paintings called 'Girl With Balloon'. It began to shred itself a few moments after it was sold. The half-shredded painting is now worth more than the original!

Did You Know...?

Many people have tried to guess Banksy's true identity but he has managed to keep it a mystery for over 30 years.

In 2021, Banksy's artwork began appearing around various British seaside locations. He called this collection the 'Great British Spraycation'.

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During the COVID-19 pandemic, Banksy left a painting in a hospital in Southampton. It was called 'Game Changer' and showed a young boy playing with a superhero nurse doll. The artwork was sold and raised over £16m for National Health Service charities.

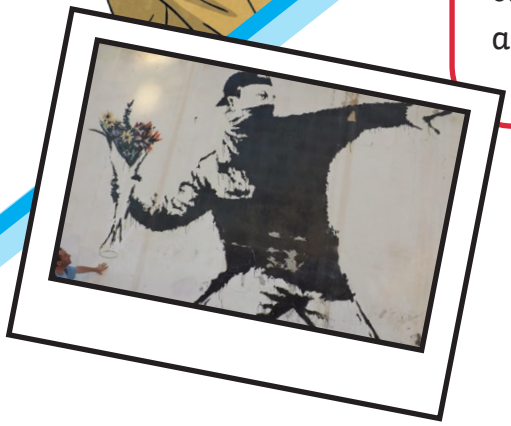
Different Opinions

Graffiti is usually thought to be **vandalism** and is against the law.

Once discovered, Banksy's artwork becomes highly valuable and is often protected for others to see.

However, there is a debate about whether this is fair when other graffiti artists could get into trouble for doing the same thing.

Some people are worried that others may try to copy Banksy and start spray-painting in areas around cities and towns where they are not allowed to.



Banksy

Glossary

activist: A person who works hard to try and bring about change.

vandalism: Damaging or destroying property on purpose.

graffiti: Writing or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed onto a surface in a public place.

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Questions

1. Banksy has managed to keep his identity a mystery for over_____ years. Tick one.

   - ◯ 10
   - ◯ 30
   - ◯ 50
   - ◯ 40

2. Draw **four** lines and match each sentence with the section of the text that it is from.

Who Is Banksy?	Banksy often uses his artwork to put across important messages...
Making His Voice Heard	The half-shredded painting is now worth more than the original!
Banksy's Work	Some people are worried that others may try to copy Banksy...
Different Opinions	Banksy is a street artist and activist from Bristol...

3. What does Banksy usually use to create his art? Tick **two**.

   - ◯ stencils
   - ◯ crayons
   - ◯ spray paint
   - ◯ chalk

4. Which word shows that Banksy does not let people know his true identity? Tick one.

   - ◯ artwork
   - ◯ famous
   - ◯ stencilled
   - ◯ anonymous

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5. Fill in the missing words.

   Graffiti is usually thought to be_____ and is against the _____.

6. How much money did Banksy's 'Game Changer' painting raise for the National Health Service?

   _____

7. What does the phrase 'against the law' mean?

   _____

   _____

   _____

8. Why do you think that Banksy keeps his identity secret?

   _____

   _____

   _____

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Answers

1. Banksy has managed to keep his identity a mystery for over_____ years. Tick one.

- ○ 10
- ✓ **30**
- ○ 50
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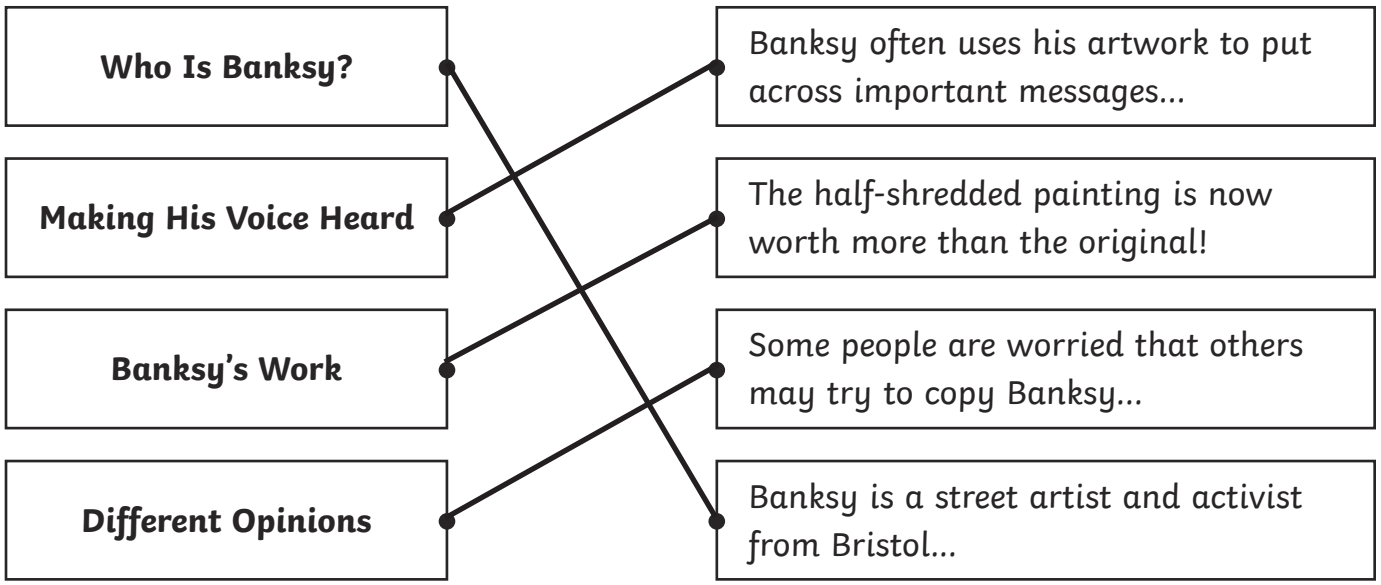
2. Draw **four** lines and match each sentence with the section of the text that it is from.



3. What does Banksy usually use to create his art? Tick **two**.

- ✓ **stencils**
- ○ crayons
- ✓ **spray paint**
- ○ chalk

4. Which word shows that Banksy does not let people know his true identity? Tick one.

- ○ artwork
- ○ famous
- ○ stencilled
- ✓ **anonymous**

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5. Fill in the missing words.

   Graffiti is usually thought to be **vandalism** and is against the **law**.

6. How much money did Banksy's 'Game Changer' painting raise for the National Health Service?

   'Game Changer' raised over £16m for National Health Service charities.

7. What does the phrase 'against the law' mean?

   Pupils' own responses, such as: The phrase 'against the law' means that you should not do it. If you do, then you could get into trouble with the police.

8. Why do you think that Banksy keeps his identity secret?

   Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Banksy keeps his identity secret because he does not want to be famous. I also think he does it because he doesn't want to get into trouble with the police for his graffiti.

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Banksy

Banksy is an **anonymous** street artist and political **activist** from Bristol who is famous for his stencilled graffiti art.

Who Is Banksy?

Banksy has managed to keep his identity secret for over 30 years.

Without warning, his artwork will appear and is left for the public to discover. Despite being famous across the globe, he does not take part in media interviews and has never shown his face. There are lots of theories about Banksy's true identity but these are yet to be proven.

Making His Voice Heard

Banksy often uses his artwork to put across important messages and has shown that he isn't afraid to take risks to make his voice heard.

He is considered to be a political activist because his art can be seen as a way of pushing for change. His artwork often refers to issues such as greed, **poverty**, the government and war.

Banksy's Work

Banksy's artwork is usually spray-painted onto the sides of buildings or other surfaces. Stencilled images are Banksy's **signature** style. Banksy has commented previously that he uses stencils because they are quicker; this means he is less likely to be caught.

Banksy has influenced many other artists and there have been lots of attempts to sell images of his work.

However, Banksy encourages people not to buy his artwork and doesn't like copies or photographs of them being sold.

In 2018, a piece of Banksy's artwork entitled 'Girl With Balloon' began to shred itself moments after it was sold in London. The artist had hidden a shredder within the frame.

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The partly-shredded artwork was then retitled as 'Love is in the Bin' and is said to be more valuable than the original piece.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Banksy left a painting in a hospital in Southampton. It showed a young boy playing with a superhero nurse doll. The artwork that was named 'Game Changer' was sold and raised over £16m for the NHS. Banksy left a note with the painting that read:

> **Thanks for all you're doing. I hope this brightens the place up a bit, even if it's only black and white.**

In the summer of 2021, Banksy's artwork began appearing around various British seaside locations in the south-east. He titled this collection the 'Great British Spraycation'.

Vandalism or Works of Art?

Graffiti is writing or drawings scribbled, scratched or sprayed secretly on a wall or other surface in a public place. It is generally considered to be vandalism and is against the law.

Once discovered, Banksy's artwork becomes highly valuable and is often preserved for others to see. However, there is a debate about whether this is fair when other graffiti artists could get into trouble for doing the same thing.

Some people are concerned that others may try to copy Banksy and start spray-painting in areas around cities and towns where they are not permitted.

Banksy

Glossary

activist: A person who works hard to try and bring about change.

anonymous: A person whose identity is not known.

signature: Something (such as a style or logo) that identifies someone.

poverty: Describes when someone is extremely poor.

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Questions

1. Draw **four** lines and match each section to its main content.

Who Is Banksy?	shows the different viewpoints about Banksy's graffiti art
Making His Voice Heard	gives information about some of the issues that Banksy's artwork covers
Banksy's Work	explains that Banksy is anonymous and has never shown his face
Vandalism or Works of Art?	gives information about some of his most famous artwork

2. **Without warning, his artwork will appear and is left for the public to discover.**
Which of the following are closest in meaning to 'without warning'? Tick **two**.

- ○ dangerously
- ○ unannounced
- ○ cleverly
- ○ unexpectedly

3. Look at the section called **Vandalism or Works of Art?**
Find and copy a phrase that shows that Banksy's artwork is worth a lot of money.

_____

4. Fill in the missing words.

Banksy often uses his artwork to put across _____ messages and has shown that he isn't afraid to take _____ to make his voice heard.

5. What is Banksy's signature style?

_____

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6. How do you think Banksy would have felt about his 'Game Changer' painting being sold? Explain your answer.

7. **Banksy has influenced many other artists...**
   What does the word 'influenced' mean?

8. Do you think that Banksy's graffiti is vandalism or art? Explain your answer.

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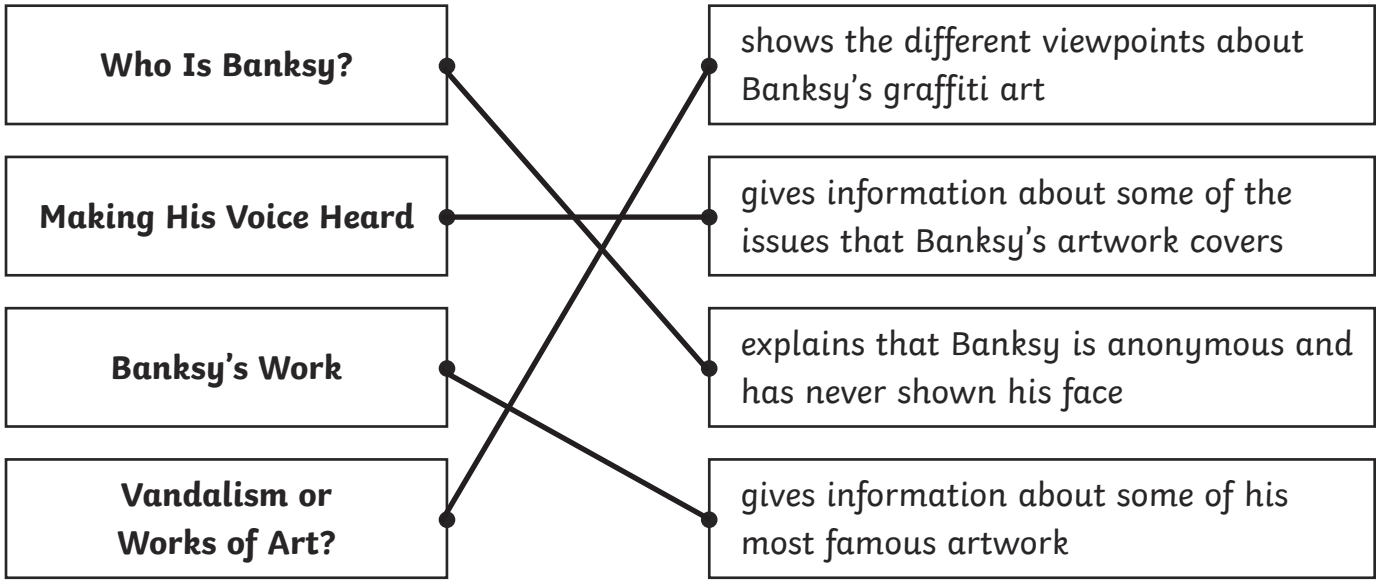
Answers

1. Draw **four** lines and match each section to its main content.



2. **Without warning, his artwork will appear and is left for the public to discover.**
   Which of the following are closest in meaning to 'without warning'? Tick **two**.

   ○ dangerously
   ✓ **unannounced**
   ○ cleverly
   ✓ **unexpectedly**

3. Look at the section called **Vandalism or Works of Art?**
   Find and copy a phrase that shows that Banksy's artwork is worth a lot of money.

   highly valuable

4. Fill in the missing words.

   Banksy often uses his artwork to put across **important** messages and has shown that he isn't afraid to take **risks** to make his voice heard.

5. What is Banksy's signature style?

   Stencilled images are Banksy's signature style.

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6. How do you think Banksy would have felt about his 'Game Changer' painting being sold? Explain your answer.
   Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Banksy would have been pleased that the painting raised so much money for NHS charities because he left it at the hospital as a gift.

7. **Banksy has influenced many other artists...**
   What does the word 'influenced' mean?
   Pupils' own responses, such as: The word 'influenced' means that his artwork caused other artists to use some of his ideas and his style.

8. Do you think that Banksy's graffiti is vandalism or art? Explain your answer.
   Pupils' own responses, such as: I think that Banksy's graffiti is art because people enjoy it and it draws attention to lots of important issues.

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