

UNIT

6

# COUNTERCULTURE SHOCK

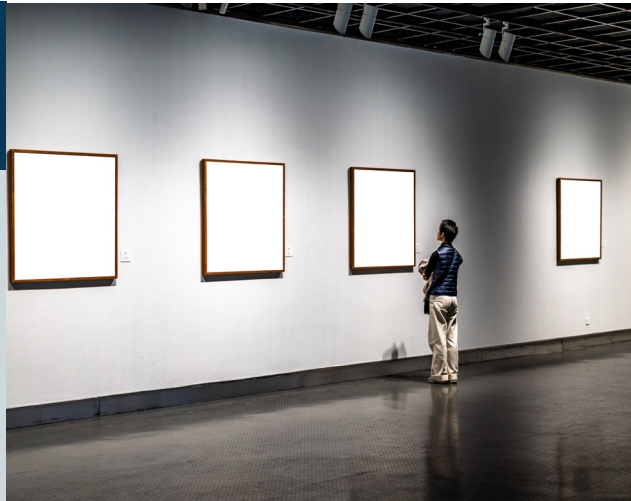
**Speaking Mastery**

**Language Builder**



## PART 1

### ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE. Modern Art. Plastics Arts



## GRAMMAR

### Use of “either”/”neither” with singular nouns

Artists are forced to look for public or private funding to subsist while they create their works; and neither way is very likely.

Either painting strikes me as something a four-year-old with a bucket of paint could do. It is crazy that someone paid millions for them.

### Use of subordinating clauses of concession with “while”/” though”

While/though I do not deny that there may be some degree of talent involved in those works of art, I simply do not get it.

### Conveying probability with adverbs + adjectives

It is extremely/highly improbable that an artist can make a living if they are not endorsed by investors or funded by governments.

## SPEAKING SKILLS

### Emphasizing: reinforcing one’s statements/opinions

I am definitely not into modern art. Not at all.

You can say what you will about contemporary artists, but it takes a lot of talent and inspiration to come up with those works; it is certainly not something anyone can do.

### Implying doubt/skepticism (“so-called”)

That so-called “avantgarde” thing is so pretentious, even as a concept. It implies that the works are so complex, intricate, and highbrow that the average art aficionado won’t get it. Like you need a degree in contemporary art to see what is so great about them.

## IDIOMS/COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS

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### To go back to the drawing board

*(To return to the planning stage of a project, to analyze what went wrong)*

When an artist fails consistently in appealing to the public, they may need to go back to the drawing board and make their art more accessible, to dumb it down, even.

### Pride of place

*(Located in a privileged position in the museum/exhibit)*

Some complained that such an eyesore- essentially a chipped toilet bowl- was given pride of place in the exhibition.

### To snub/turn one’s nose at

*(To disdain something, as it is seen as inferior)*

Many people just snub their nose at whatever work that does not fit with their conception of “beautiful”, and are not willing to open their minds, either.

### To hold a candle

*(To be- or not- as good as something it is compared to)*

The reality is that really few of these modern works could hold a candle to, say, the Sistine Chapel, for instance.

### The sky’s the limit

*(Anything is possible)*

I mean, think about Leonardo da Vinci; he was amazing at so many disciplines: painting, inventing, science... The sky was the limit for that man!

### To keep a low profile/to be or stay low key

*(To choose to avoid notoriety)*

Some artists are so invested in their own creations that they are willing to endure hardship, keep a low profile and live a simple life

## PHRASAL VERBS

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### To wise up (to something)

*(To become aware, enlightened, or sophisticated)*

People who are stuck to their forty-year-old history of art books should wise up a bit to the new trends. There is some really interesting stuff out there.

### To dress up (something as something else)

*(To embellish/disguise sth to make it resemble something else)*

Being a contemporary artist can be really easy: you grab whatever piece of dross from the garbage dump, give it a fancy name, dress it up as a sophisticated concept that only the enlightened can get and, voila! You have a work of art!

### To dumb down

*(To make something accessible to a less educated/sophisticated audience)*

Many who are essentially clueless complain about how unaesthetic modern art is. But this is nothing compared to how transgressive it used to be in the 70s, for example. Sure, it has been dumbed down since then.

### To write (something) off

*(To dismiss/to disregard/to give no importance to)*

I know what I like and what I don't like, but as I am not super educated on art or history of art, I won't write something off and say it is garbage, even if I don't get it.

### To conjure up

*(To evoke/to bring to mind)*

It was funny when the art gallery's guide was rambling about how that painting conjured up the artist's anguish, internal turmoil, and whatnot... I mean, it was an empty canvas.

### To run somebody down

*(To disparage/to denigrate someone)*

The attempts of the more conservative media to run down the painter and tarnish his reputation before the exhibit's premiere backfired; they just aroused the interest of those who did not even know him and the exhibition turned out a huge success.

## VOCABULARY

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### Nouns and noun phrases

Abstract art/expressionism

Aesthetics

Art connoisseur/aficionado

Art gallery

Art for art's sake  
 Auction house  
 Avant-garde  
 Collector/collector's item  
 Cubism/minimalism/classical realism/surrealism  
 The cutting-edge of something  
 Exhibit  
 Eyesore (incredibly unpleasant to look at)  
 Graffiti art  
 Grandeur  
 Installation art  
 Notoriety  
 Novelty factor  
 Patronage  
 Philistinism  
 Pop art  
 Postmodernism  
 Self-expression  
 Snob/snobbish (adj)  
 Work of art

### Verbs and verb phrases

To behold/contemplate/gaze at (a work of art)  
 To catch sb's eye  
 To commission (an artist to do a work of art)  
 To curate (an art exhibition)  
 To depict/portray/illustrate (a concept/a person/scene)  
 To display/exhibit/place/hang (works of art in a gallery)  
 To "get it"  
 To showcase/promote/feature (works of art in a gallery)  
 To sketch (a painting/drawing/the outline of a work)

### Adjectives, Collocations and Adverbials

An acquired taste  
 Artsy-fartsy  
 Challenging/stimulating/defiant/demanding  
 Conceptual art  
 Dazzling/mesmerizing

Exquisite/sophisticated

Flamboyant/ostentatious/flashy

Impenetrable/incomprehensible

Imposing/majestic/monumental

Low-brow/High-brow art

Nihilistic

Out of this world

(Ridiculously) Overpriced (painting/work/sculpture)

Peerless/second-to-none Pedestrian/unsophisticated

Pretentious

Run-of-the-mill/nondescript/faceless

Tongue-in-cheek/Dadaesque/sarcastic

Ubiquitous

Underwhelming/to be underwhelmed by (Sth fails to impress/disappoints us)

## SPEAKING TOPICS

1. Which would you say is the most **stunning/mesmerizing/dazzling** work of art you can think of? Can you describe it?
2. Do you agree with the saying **beauty is in the eye of the beholder**? That is, can something be deemed beautiful or hideous depending on someone's opinion?
3. If art is essentially a **vehicle for self-expression**, can then anyone be an artist? Is any work created by anyone virtually a work of art?
4. Do you instead believe there are some **objective standards of beauty** (in arts/aesthetics, architecture, etc.) that no amount of media influence/ **social engineering** can obliterate?
5. Critics of contemporary art (**Postmodernism** onwards) say it pales in comparison with art of previous eras (**Renaissance, Neoclassic**, etc.). Do you agree with them?
6. Some argue, instead, that had these modern/unconventional movements not defied the previous conventions of the artistic and aesthetic, we would still be stuck with the same type of works over and over. Do they have a point?
7. Do you "get" modern art? **Modern Art Galleries/Exhibits (ARCO, Guggenheim, MoMA...)** have been really popular in the last few years, drawing in thousands of art connoisseurs. Are you one of them?

8. Are you particularly fond of **cutting-edge/avant-garde art**? Why?
9. What do you think is more important in an artistic creation (of any kind: music, painting, sculpture, performance...)? **Skill/technical ability/mastery**? The **artist's right to self-expression**? **Novelty factor**/originality?
10. Do you think **art-for-art's-sake** is of any worth? Should it comply **with certain standards of aesthetic excellence**/ beauty? Can beauty be found in ugliness?
11. Some suspect that in these works' **patronage/auctioning/investment**, there could be some form of **tax evasion/money laundering**. Do you agree? Why?
12. What should be priority in architecture? Form or function? Why? Do you think that modern architecture pays more attention to aesthetics than functionality?
13. Should art exhibits/galleries be funded with public subsidies?
14. It is thought that artists lead hard lives and struggle to make a living out of their work. Should they persist or should they "**get a real job**"?
15. Have you grown to appreciate art that in the past you found too **impenetrable**?
16. What do you think of the works of modern art that you have seen in museums? Do you **acknowledge the talent** behind it, or do you sometimes **snub your nose at them**?
17. Do you think modern artists – painters, sculptors, etc.- can **hold a candle** to those from previous eras?
18. Is there any item/picture/photo/gift that you are very fond of and have given **pride of place** in your house?
19. Do you think you have to **wise up** to the newer trends in music, art, movies, technology, or even free time activities, or have you concluded that they are just not for you?
20. When someone openly despises modern art, how do you decide if their opinion is legitimate and genuine, or it is just a form of **philistinism**?
21. Can you think of some public figure- artist, sportsperson, businessperson, etc.- that has opted for **keeping a low profile**? Why do you think that is?
22. Have you ever seen a work (architectural, artistic, etc.) that you would describe as an **eyesore**? What makes it so hideous?

## PART 2

### ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE.

#### Art, Free Speech and Shock Value



## GRAMMAR

### Adverbs + Prepositional phrase/Adverb post-modification

Luckily for me, movies in general have never really been my thing. Let alone horror movies!

### Using “not in the least”/” the slightest”

This so-called provocative art does not interest me in the least!

I do not have the slightest inclination to sit through any form of art which is going to leave me with a bad taste in my mouth. Art is meant to be enjoyed, isn't it?

### Use of “and yet” as a connector of concession.

Honestly, all those filmmakers whose gimmick is exploiting human suffering and trying to out-shock each other are worthless!

And yet, they all have an extremely loyal fanbase!



## SPEAKING SKILLS

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### Sequencing your ideas: transitioning

To begin with, it all comes down to the impact you have. If you are some anonymous twat throwing a tantrum on Twitter, it should not be a problem.

As for/as regards the message itself, it is complicated to decide what is acceptable and unacceptable.

### Expressing no strong feelings/uncertainty

It's hard to say, really; I guess that it is wrong to curtail some person's right to self-expression, but it is also wrong to be openly offensive.

Hmm, it is complicated. I guess a limit could be when someone is actively inciting violence against another person, or a group of people.

## IDIOMS/COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS

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### To go overboard with something

*(To act without any restraint/to be excessive/over the top)*

I had been enjoying the Game of Thrones series quite a bit, but in the last seasons, the scriptwriters just went overboard with violence and I lost interest.

### To add insult to injury

*(To worsen a situation/someone's feelings, which had been already humiliating enough)*

All these parents whose children have been molested or sexually abused may never get over the trauma and, to add insult to injury, they have to withstand vile jokes and memes online banalizing rape!

### To be out for blood

*(To seek revenge/retribution)*

The members of the parents' association were really outraged when the rapper was acquitted for joking about date rapes in one of his songs. But when he made an appearance on TV wearing Nazi symbols, they would not let him get away with it, they were out for blood, and sued his ass off.

### To turn one's stomach

*(To find something revolting/sickening/nauseating)*

I just cannot stand gratuitous violence in films. It just turns my stomach.

### To be a dead loss

*(To be totally useless in a given area)*

Don't you even call that guy an artist! He's just a dead loss whose only resort is shock value to get the attention he wouldn't get otherwise!

## PHRASAL VERBS

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### To gross one out

*(To be disgusted by something/find something repugnant)*

I can even enjoy some horror movies of the 80s, but I really cannot stomach super gory stuff, like Cannibal Holocaust. It just grosses me out.

### To flinch away from

*(To recoil in disgust/look away, especially when watching something disturbing)*

That scene from Funny Games that everyone speaks about, I just could not even watch it, I had to flinch away from it.

### (To have) to answer for something.

*(To be held accountable for something)*

If our youngsters venerate those hatemongers who incite violence against anyone thinking differently, we have a lot to answer for as a society.

### To draw in

*(To be enticed/captivated/lured by something)*

I think it must come down to some morbid curiosity, our “dark side”, why all these sickening movies draw so many people in.

### To shut down (a talk/speech/conference)

*(To interrupt/cause a public event to stop)*

There was this outrage and uproar in campus when the speaker was about to give his speech on the alleged scientific superiority of some races over others. The crowd managed to shut down the talk.

## VOCABULARY

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### Nouns and noun phrases

Blasphemy

Call to violence

Calumny

Defamation

Disturbance of public meetings

Exploitation (flicks/movies)

The first amendment

Gimmick

Hate speech/hatemonger.

Heckler

Holocaust denial

Language profanity

Nudity

Obscenity (public obscenity/obscenity charges/being charged with obscenity...)

Propaganda

Shock for shock's sake

Slasher flicks

Smear campaign

### Verbs and verb phrases

To advocate (ethnic hatred/terrorism/violence)

To defame/libel/slander (someone)

To degrade/demean/debase (someone's dignity/a collective)

To fuel (tensions/conflict between collectives/groups)

To incite (violence against a collective/individual)

To outrage/infuriate/enrage (the public/the masses)

To shock/horrify/appall (someone)

To spark (off)/stir controversy/outrage.

To stomach/ withstand/endure (the horror/violence/criticism/insults)

To worship/glorify/praise (Nazism/Satan/communism)

### Adjectives, Collocations and Adverbials

No artistic value whatsoever

Blasphemous/sacrilegious

Childish (humor/approach)

Crude/vulgar

Disruptive

Divisive/ Polarizing

Edgy/daring/provocative.

Foul-mouthed

Gratuitous (violence)

Gruesome (scene/death/violence/crime)

Hateful/ Mean-spirited (comments/words/criticism)

Infamous (speech/reputation/criminal)

Impervious to (criticism/pain/horror/attempts to destroy one's reputation, etc.)

Irreparable damage

Irreverent/iconoclastic

No redeeming value

Repugnant/repulsive/revolting/sickening (sight/scene/flick)

Ultra-violent/gory

Unapologetic/remorseless

Vile

Vitriolic/venomous (words/speech/rant/comments)



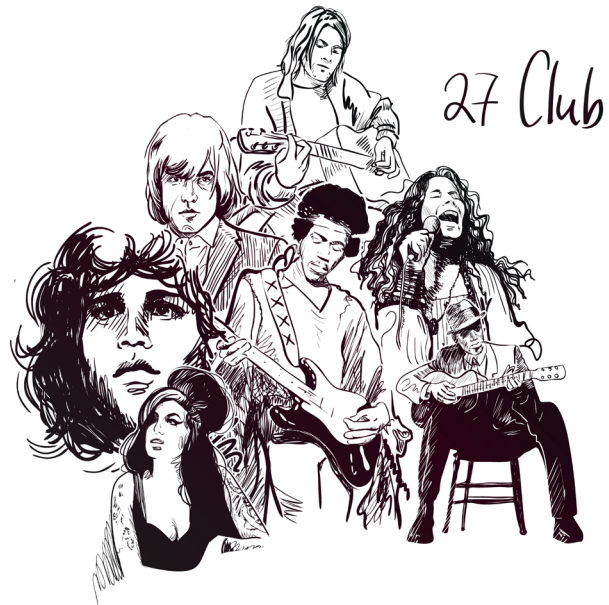
## SPEAKING TOPICS

1. Is free speech an **unalienable right**? Should there be any limits to what a person can freely express?
2. If not, what kinds of messages/contents are inadmissible? What constitutes, in your opinion, “**hate speech**”? What separates offensive, yet admissible words/comments/remarks, from **intolerable words of hatred**?
3. Can ideas be censored? If so, which ones? If some ideas should be **eradicated from public platforms** (online forums, social media, YouTube), who should decide which messages are deemed unacceptable?
4. Is it ok for people to **shut down/cancel** somebody else’s speech/lecture/vehicle for self-expression in public spaces if they deem it unacceptable? Should this person be allowed to express themselves and later on, debate on whatever the topic is with opposing arguments? Would it be worthless?
5. Should **mocking of religious icons/blasphemous/sacrilegious works** be punished/censored? Or even avoided?
6. Should works of art EVER be censored? If so, which topics/images should never be depicted/portrayed?
7. When dealing with talented artists with a troubled personal life (Picasso, Marlon Brando, etc.), are you able to separate their art from the artist? Is there any artist that you dislike at a personal level, but whose works you can appreciate? Is there any **dividing line** where your dislike of a person/artist would prevent you from even acknowledging their talent?
8. Do you think many artists/filmmakers/musicians indulge in **shock for shock’s sake**? Can you think of what separates the line between being **edgy/daring/provocative/irreverent** and being **tasteless/crude/vulgar**?
9. Do you appreciate some works of art (movies, paintings, music) that would be considered **obscene/rude/crude** by the majority of the people?
10. How can “**hate speech**” be regulated? What do you think would objectively qualify as “**hate speech**”? Who do you think should be in charge of labeling someone a **hater**?
11. In which circumstances do you think it is ok to cancel someone on social media/shut down their accounts, or to **deplatform** some public figure?
12. Should people with a huge following online repress themselves in case they can **incite bad behavior**? Do they have to answer for the actions that their words ensue, or should the blame be put exclusively on the **perpetrators**?

13. Is there any food that **grosses you out**?
14. Do you remember any scene in a film that you had to **flinch away from**?
15. Have you heard of anyone that has been **slandered/defamed online** lately? What have they done about it?
16. When you are on holiday (Christmas, summer...), do you usually **go overboard with** spending, eating, drinking, or do you manage to do those in moderation?
17. What kind of smell/images/news **turn your stomach**?
18. With some artists/public figures that only **seek notoriety** by relying on **shock for shock's sake**, do you think the media should not publicize them, as people are sometimes **drawn in** by that controversy? Should the right to information prevail?
19. Some movies/recorded music which are openly disturbing seem to be really popular among a number of people. From underground films (**exploitation, video nasties, sadistic horror**), to widely acclaimed filmmakers (**Lars Von Triers, Haneke, Stergioglou...**), these works indulge quite a bit on unsettling/disturbing stories and images, yet they are regarded as "**cult favorites**". Can you think of any reasons why?

## PART 3

### ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE. Popular Music.



## GRAMMAR

### Not only... but also (with grammatical inversions)

Not only do all these modern retro bands lack any originality, but also seem incapable of writing a good, catchy song!

### Imperatives to express emphatic meanings

Don't you dare call that style music! Beethoven must be rolling in his grave!

### Use of the “zero conditional”

See one of those hip bands that swarm the summer festivals, and you have seen them all.

## SPEAKING SKILLS

### Expression of emphasis: superlatives with advanced expressions

This one is by far, the greatest record they have put out yet.

Flamenco Pop fusion is hands down one of the worst atrocities ever created by humans. I can tolerate Flamenco and Pop separately, but when combined, yuck!

## Intensifying the meaning of our ideas with advanced adverbials

Even if they said they wanted to try out Electronic sounds in their new album, it is still a Rock record through and through.

It is funny that all the money and mainstream attention goes to those reality show singers when most of them are utter garbage!

When music downloads and websites like Napster came into play, many big artists and record labels took the hit. Now that it is impossible to go on tour, it is the smaller/underground bands which are flat out/downright broke! A shame, really.

## IDIOMS/COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS

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### To be a sucker for

*(To be partial to sb/sth. /extremely fond of sth/sb)*

I know Coldplay's new record is likely to be a bit samey and I do not really expect anything great, but I am a sucker for Chris Martin's voice, what can I do?

### To take the world by storm

*(To achieve an enormous success, often in a short period of time)*

The record label thought that with their really slick style, commercial sound and their good looks, The Nancy Boys, their signature boy band, would take the world by storm, but they turned out to be a huge disappointment and they were dropped right after the album came out.

### Few and far between

*(Seldom seen/rare and widely scattered)*

If you are asking me about really good, solid Rock bands from the 2000s on, I guess you should ask elsewhere. If you ask me, good artists in that particular genre are few and far between nowadays.

### I cannot get enough of...

*(So interested in sth that one's appetite for it is never satisfied)*

My girlfriend complains that half of my record collection sounds the same, but what can I say, I can't get enough of that old Blues Rock sound!

### To get one's kicks (from someone/something)

*(To indulge/get great pleasure from doing something)*

I have never really got my kicks from Heavy Metal, but my girlfriend certainly does.

### To grow to like something.

*(To gradually appreciate something)*

That band did little for me at the beginning, but I gave them a chance and sure they grew on me/I grew to like them!

**To steal the show**

*(To become the main attraction, often unexpectedly)*

The opening band kicked so much ass, and totally stole the show that night, to the extent of making the headliners come across as mellow and trite.

**To play second fiddle to/To dance to sb else's tune.**

*(To be submissive to sb/to have a subordinate/secondary role)*

It seems like Andy got tired of playing second fiddle to the lead singer, and just quit the band, and pursued a solo career.

## PHRASAL VERBS

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**To let sb down/to be a letdown**

*(To be a disappointment, especially when compared to sth else)*

Their debut album was so great that their sophomore record feels like a bit of a letdown, honestly.

**To sell out**

*(To betray/to go against one's principles/To try to become more commercially appealing/To compromise one's original style)*

Many felt Metallica sold out in their 1991 album, but I do not agree at all. I think they were evolving, maturing as a band.

**To mellow out**

*(To become more relaxed/calmed, also applied to one's style/sound)*

By their fourth album, Black Sabbath had already mellowed out quite a bit. They no longer had their original dark, eerie sound.

**To hold up**

*(To stand the test of time)*

If you ask me, all that 80s Synth Pop still holds up. I mean, all these modern bands which are so hip now are just playing that same style!

**To let up**

*(To ease off/to decrease in intensity)*

That Sex Pistols record is AMAZING. It starts with a superb song and it never lets up! It's like one hit after another.

**To fire/amp one up**

*(To get one extremely enthused/excited/energized)*

Have you heard the new song by OFF? Man, it just gets me so fired/amped up! It makes me want to jump and tear down stuff!



## VOCABULARY

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### Nouns and noun phrases

Airplay (radio broadcasting)  
Album/single/ EP/demo/compilation  
Background music  
Backing band  
Bassline/guitar riff/drum roll/drum beat  
Best-of-the-year list  
Chorus/verse/intro/outro/coda (of a song)  
Debut (album/single/gig)  
Earworm  
Headliner  
Lineup (bands/artists billed for a gig/show/festival)  
Music genre  
Gig vs. tour  
Music chart.  
Music (or “record”) label/company  
Music streaming services/media player  
Musicianship (musical skill/proficiency/talent).  
One-hit wonder vs. One-trick pony  
Opening act/supporting act  
A record deal  
Rendition (= performance) of a song/music piece  
Scalper/ticket tout.  
Venue

### Verbs and verb phrases

To be dropped by/from a record label  
To be signed by a record label.  
To burn/rip a CD.  
To cover (somebody else’s song/work)  
To download a track  
To go/get straight to the charts/hit the charts.  
To headline (a show/gig/festival)  
To hit/strike the wrong note  
To hum a melody

To listen (to a song) on repeat/on a loop  
To listen to a record front to back/back to front  
To play/do/perform (music/a concert/gig)  
To put on music/play music  
To release/put out (a record/CD/single...)  
To sing along a song/ the lyrics of a song  
To sing out of tune  
To stream (content/music) live  
To tour/go on tour  
To write a song vs. to compose a piece of music

### Adjectives, Collocations and Adverbials

An acquired taste/ a “grower”  
Corny/sentimental/romantic (song)  
Dissonant (rhythm/style/genre)  
Far-out/eccentric/experimental (artist/musician)  
Follow-up/sophomore (record/album/single)  
Generic/by-the-numbers/nondescript/faceless (song/songwriting/style/album)  
Groovy/dancey (beat/music/rhythm/bassline)  
Hard-to-get-into (style/artist/genre)  
Loud/heavy vs. Poppy/catchy (music)  
Major vs. independent (aka “indie”) label  
Massive (hit) vs. Overplayed (song)  
Over the top (lyrics/performance)  
Samey/formulaic/derivative (song/singer/artist/band/style)  
Tone-deaf (singer/musician)

## SPEAKING TOPICS

1. What do you enjoy more? Seeing an artist perform live music or listening to their records? Why?
2. **Talent/reality shows** such as Star Academy, Britain's Got Talent or Operación Triunfo became incredibly popular back in the day among the general public. Can you guess why?
3. Can you think of...?
  - Can you think of an artist/band who is/ was a **one-hit wonder**?
  - A band/song/record you grew out of, but you still have a **soft spot** for
  - A musical "guilty pleasure".
  - A **riff** you can hum/ you think is memorable.
  - Your favorite artist/band/album ever/ your **desert island** record/records.
  - Music somebody (a relative/friend/the media) turned you into.
  - A genre you cannot stand/ a band you have tried but can't **get into**.
4. Some say that **contemporary/modern popular music** has got increasingly more **samey/shallow/unsubstantial/trite**? Are modern artists less willing to take risks/try out new approaches/sounds than in the past?
5. Do you agree that, when compared to the past, talented, creative people (musicians, writers, artists, entertainers...) are **few and far between**?
6. In today's era of **online media players/radio stations/music streaming services** (iTunes, Spotify, last FM, etc.), are physical records/CDs/vinyl/tapes relevant at all?
7. After so much music has been written and performed along the last years, decades and centuries, is there any room left for new, original, **inventive, and creative music**?
8. How do different styles of music affect you/your behavior? Do you tend to vary the style/genre you listen to depending on your mood?
9. Do you think the **golden era** of popular music is gone? Do you still have hope in new artists/styles?
10. Do you **get your kicks** from listening to any particular style of music? If that is not your main choice, what do you get your kicks from?
11. Can you think of an artist whose music you liked at the beginning, but whose subsequent records were a **letdown**?
12. What is the last song that you know has **hit the charts** recently? Do you like it?

Why/ why not?

13. Can you think of a song which you like and whose melody you can **hum**, but do not know the lyrics? Is it sung in your mother tongue or in a foreign language?
14. Have you ever bought tickets for a gig from a **ticket scalper/tout**? If so, did everything go well?
15. What is the highest price you would pay to see an artist you really like?
16. If a band that used to play non-commercial music (**Hard Rock, Heavy Metal, Noise Rock, or Experimental** music) or used to write really challenging/irreverent lyrics, all of the sudden turns to a more commercial style or **mellow out**, do you think they are **sellouts**?
17. If you are into live music and festivals, can you remember one whose **lineup** was particularly good? Who were the **headliners**? And the **opening acts/supporters**?
18. **Retro revivals** of the sounds/styles of the 60s/70s/80s, etc., seems to be all the rage now. Is that a symptom of a lack of creativity or do these artists add their **own flair/touch** to it? Can you think of any examples?
19. Each generation has their own soundtrack, and it rarely **strikes a chord/resonates with** those of a different generation. Agree?
20. What is the last piece of music/song/artist/band/album that has **blown you away/ knocked your socks off**?

## PART 4

### ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURE.

#### The Film Industry & Modern Day Hollywood



## GRAMMAR

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### Inverted statements to convey emphasis (informal)

I used to like those teen movies quite a bit but, man, does the trick get repetitive in the end.

We did not have high expectations about the sequel to “Trainspotting”, but boy, was the movie a blast!

### Using “whatever”/“wherever”/“however”/ “whoever” as a subordinating conjunction

However different the context may have been back then, it is still wrong to ask for sexual favors in exchange for a role in a movie, no matter how you look at it.

Whoever came up with this idea of the Marvel superhero movies ruined the true spirit of cinema as I understand it!

## SPEAKING SKILLS

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### Expression of emphasis: exaggerating

The plot is so hackneyed. It is the trillionth time that they are making a movie about the Spanish civil war. Try something new, for God’s sake!

I am a true anime freak. I could watch all those Japanese movies for one hundred days in a row, non-stop.

**Expression of emphasis: using extreme adverbs/adjectives.**

Have you seen that last movie of the Bourne saga? Gosh, it is atrocious!

The budget of that movie was obscenely large and yet, it did not raise one tenth of that in box-office sales. A textbook flop, for sure.

## **IDIOMS/COLLOQUIAL EXPRESSIONS**

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### **To have a flair for**

*(To show a special gift/talent/finesse)*

I am not a huge fan of her movies, but she has a flair for capturing the essence of the actors at their best.

### **To vote with one's feet**

*(To express one's dissatisfaction with sth through being absent or leaving/walking away from a place)*

Many in the film industry have spent decades being too preachy and alienating half their potential spectators, and they basically responded by voting with their feet. Hence the poor box-office numbers of the last few years.

### **To take a stand (for someone/something)**

*(To state one's opinion about an often-controversial topic)*

One of the filmmakers who worked with Weinstein took a stand for him and made some provocative remarks, and the majority of her colleagues lashed back at her.

### **To wear thin**

*(To gradually become less effective)*

I do not get what people see in films like American Pie. The whole masturbation shtick wears thin very quickly, right?

### **To be the odd one out**

*(To be ostracized/excluded from a collective/group)*

Due to his political views, he knows he will never get an Academy Award or any recognition whatsoever; he's happy to be the odd one out, apparently.

### **To get/to give the credit one deserves/to give credit where it/credit is due.**

*(To acknowledge someone's work/contribution/talent)*

Well, while it is true that in his last couple of films, Tarantino just repeats himself and they are really not that good, the man rejuvenated the whole neo-noir genre in the 90s. You have to give credit where it is due.

## PHRASAL VERBS

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**To drag on**

*(To be unnecessarily long)*

One thing I do not like about modern movies is that they have to be so long! I would have enjoyed *The Revenant* if it did not drag on for so long!

**To suck up to**

*(To flatter/to be subservient to someone in exchange for personal favors)*

That actress has paid a price for not compromising to that tyrannical director; she just refused to suck up to him and submit to all of his bizarre ideas, and he has promised to never give her a role again.

**To rely on/to resort to**

*(To depend on/to use a trick/resource)*

Many of the newer films usually rely on gratuitous violence because they know that sells among the younger viewers.

**To hit back at**

*(To retaliate/to respond vehemently to some previous affront)*

When the accusations of pedophilia were proven wrong, the director hit back at all who had unfairly pointed the finger at him. His new film explores the dark side of Hollywood and takes no prisoners!

## VOCABULARY

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### Nouns and noun phrases

B-movies

Blockbuster

Box-office

Carbon copy

Ceremony (Golden Globes, Academy Awards, Goya)

Cliffhanger

Climax

Close-up/angle/shot (related to photography in a movie)

Computer animation/ CGI (Computer Generated Images)

Cult movie/cult status

Flick

Flop (a sales flop)/to flop (in sales/revenue)

Footage

Franchise (“another one in a row of the Marvel franchise”)

Nerd/geek/freak (a “Tolkien/Star Wars/Anime freak/geek/nerd”)  
 One-trick pony (actor/director who exploits the same trick/gimmick over and over)  
 Pyrotechnics  
 A remake  
 Saga  
 Sequel/prequel  
 Standing ovation  
 Storyline  
 Stunt  
 Twist (unexpected event in a film)  
 Woke culture

### Verbs and verb phrases

To edit/to cut out (scenes/sequences/images in a film)  
 To get a role/the lead role (in a movie)  
 To miscast (an actor/actress as a wrong role)  
 To pay homage/tribute to (a director/film/a classic)  
 To plagiarize (another film/director/story)  
 To plummet (sales plummet/plummet in popularity)  
 To remind one of (another film/director/genre)  
 To shoot/to film (a movie/sequence/scene)

### Adjectives, Collocations and Adverbials

Arthouse/indie/independent cinema vs. big-budget movie  
 Avant-garde/experimental/auteur cinéma  
 Bland/unsubstantial  
 Devoid of (originality/talent/uniqueness)  
 Dystopian/cyberpunk/post-apocalyptic  
 Epic/iconic/seminal (role/performance/movie)  
 Hackneyed/clichéd (plot/story/genre)  
 Hailed/lauded/revered/acclaimed (filmmaker/actor/movie)  
 Hyped-up/overrated (movie/director/actor)  
 Memorable (film/scene/performance)  
 Mind-bending/mind-blowing (thriller/action film)  
 Palatable (made more acceptable for mass consumption)  
 Scathing/vehement/vitriolic (review/critic)  
 Sentimental/sappy  
 Suitable (for the Asian/American market/audience)  
 Typecast/pigeonholed (actor/actress)  
 Up-and-coming actor



## SPEAKING TOPICS

1. Do you think that due to **Netflix/streaming media services** and other modern amenities, the days of traditional cinema **are numbered**?
2. Has the attitude of **cinemagoers** changed in recent years? Do you tend to **go to the movies** as often as in the past? Why (not)?
3. How do you decide if a movie is worth seeing? (Reading reviews on the Internet, on social media, by **word of mouth**...)?
4. What makes you want to see a movie? (The director's reputation? The cast? Reviews? Spending time out with family/friends?)
5. Are you a **film buff** or a casual **moviegoer**?
6. Would you rather go and see a **big-budget blockbuster** or an **indie film**?
7. Have modern movies decreased in quality? And in diversity? Are they more and more varied or homogenous? Do you agree that the quality of Hollywood movies (cinema in general) has declined over the years?
8. Some believe that the **golden era of Hollywood is long gone**, that really great movies are not made anymore. Some say that Academy Award winning films of today **cannot hold a candle to** those of the past. Do you agree? If so, do you think it will ever return?
9. Do you believe the topics/themes of modern films are getting **lamer/more boring**?
10. Should governments fund the film industry? Should movies be subsidized with public funding?
11. Do you think actors/stars should **refrain from** using their position as a **platform for making political speeches/social commentary**?
12. Would you describe yourself or anyone you know as a **nerd/geek/freak** in relation to any movie saga/genre/music band?
13. Is there any recurrent theme/topic in contemporary cinema which you think is a bit **hackneyed**? Why?
14. Can you think of any filmmaker who **has a flair for** interesting/beautiful photography?
15. When was the last time that you heard that an artist had received a **standing ovation** from the public? What happened?
16. Can you think of a director whose films **whose film betray the influence of** other, older films/genres? Is that a good thing, in your view?
17. When was the last time that you heard of **accusations of plagiarism** between musicians/directors/artists?

18. Have you seen a film lately that you thought was too long and could have improved provided that it had been edited/some scenes **had been cut out**?
19. Can you think of an actor/actress who tends to be **typecast** as a given role?
20. Can you think of one who was **miscast** in a specific movie?
21. Do you think that the abundance of superhero movies (Marvel franchise et al) **betray/reveal** a lack of ideas/ the **infantilization** of modern culture?
22. When comparing your favorite series of the 80s/90s/00s with today's Netflix/HBOs... megahits, do you think the former still **hold up/stand the test of time**?

## GRAMMAR ACTIVATION

# 6

### Use of “neither”/“either” with singular and plural nouns

Look at the following example, from the Speaking section “**The Wealth of the People. Frugality vs. Lavishness**”.

#### NEITHER

Look at the following example from the Speaking Worksheet “**Modern Art**”:

Artists are forced to look for public or private funding to subsist while they create their works; and neither option is very likely.

As an adjective/determiner

We use neither (as an adjective), to make negative statements about two entities (people, things, places...), meaning “none of the two options”. We use it before singular countable nouns. The verb that follows has to be singular.

This is a word that tends to be mispronounced as / **neɪðə(r)**/, when in fact the right sound would be / **naɪðə(r)**/ (more common in British English) or / **ni:ðə(r)**/ (American English).

Look at the following example:

Two bass players attended the audition yesterday, but neither bassist was chosen.

“Neither” works here as an adjective, that is, pre-modifying the noun “bassist”.

#### Now do it yourself:

**Rewrite the following sentences using “neither”.**

My sister wants to buy a new car; she spoke to a car dealer, and he showed her a petrol-driven model and a diesel car. She does not think she is going to buy any of those two.

My sister was shown two cars, but... (Convinced). \* Make sure you include the word in parentheses.

That filmmaker has made two movies this year. Because of his peculiar style, he knows that they won't be commercially successful.

Two films by that director have been released recently. Because of his particular style, he is aware... (Be a box office success). \* Make sure you include the phrase in parentheses.

### As a pronoun

We can also use the phrase “**neither of**” followed by a countable plural noun or a pronoun, as in the following example:

Two young poets made it to the qualifying round, which isn't to say much, as neither of them/ neither of the two poets is expected to revolutionize contemporary literature and poetry, unfortunately.

And, finally, it can be used as a pronoun, but not followed by the preposition “of”, or a noun, as in this example:

*Their latest album includes two power ballads. **Neither** is very good, if you ask me.*

**Now rewrite the sentences from the previous examples, but using “neither” as a pronoun.**

Two bass players attended the audition...

My sister was shown two cars but...

Because of his peculiar style, the filmmaker takes for granted that...

There aren't high expectations for the work of those two poets, as...

### EITHER

The word “**either**” follows the same pattern as “**neither**” (i.e.: used to talk about two things, people, places, etc.--), in this occasion meaning “any of the two/one or the other of the two”. Remember that the verb which follows “either” needs to be singular.

*Either of the paintings strikes me as something a four-year-old with a bucket of paint could do. It is crazy that someone paid millions for them.*

Question: how can we use “either” in the former example as a determiner?

Rewrite the previous sentence.

**Rewrite the following sentences using “either” (as an adjective or determiner, and as a pronoun with and without “of”):**

My girlfriend says that her favorite Madonna records are “*American Life*” and “*Music*”, but I don't like any of those two records.

The artist is considering venturing into the Latin American market, but China also seems like a promising option. The record label believes that the Latin American and the Chinese market on their own are going to be profitable investments.

The barbell squat and the deadlift are two exercises frequently used by sprinters, as both of these exercises carries over to the explosiveness and power required to sprint.

## Use of “neither”/“either” with singular and plural nouns

### SPICE UP YOUR WRITING AND SPEAKING

“Although” and “Even though” are conjunctions that introduce a contrast between two ideas. These ones (along with but, however...) are conjunctions that we should already be familiar with, but they are by no means the only conjunctions/linking words of contrast we should be using at this level. Some other advanced connectors of contrast include the following:

#### While/Whilst

*While and its more literary equivalent “Whilst” can be used in the same way as “although”.*

*While his work is now admired by millions and included in history of art books, that painter lived and died poor.*

(Finite concessive clause).

*While/whilst acknowledging the impact of the Dadaist movement, he insisted that it did nothing for him.*

(Non-finite concessive clause).

#### Though

Speaking of finite vs. non-finite concessive clauses, look at these two sentences:

***Though he is not a particularly skilled sculptor,** Frazer has been able to create pieces of urban art that never fail to surprise passersby.*

***Though not a particularly skilled sculptor,** Frazer has been able to create pieces of urban art that never fail to surprise passersby.*

Which one strikes you as being more sophisticated/advanced?

The first one includes a finite concessive clause (i.e.: it includes a verb which shows a tense), whereas the second contains a non-finite concessive clause (i.e.: not indicating tense).

### Now, do it yourself

**Rewrite the sentences below, using while/whilst and though. Try to rewrite each sentence as a finite and non-finite concessive clause.**

I haven't had formal training in art, but I can appreciate whether a work moves me or not.

She is not exactly beautiful in the classical sense of the word, but she appeared on the cover of Time magazine as one of the 100 most attractive celebrities of the present decade.

I agree that freedom of speech is a fundamental right, although I think it should be exercised responsibly and with regard to other people's feelings.

You can make sentences with “though” even more sophisticated/intricate/bookish (and, let’s face, more impressive in a writing when used sparingly) by bringing forward the adjective complement to the beginning of the concessive clause:

Though the deal offered by the record label was tantalizing, the rapper was not willing to compromise his style and turned it down.

*Tantalizing though it was, the rapper refused to compromise his style and turned down the deal offered by the label.*

You can use “as” instead of “though” (this is common, slightly more colloquial and certainly, less erudite).

*Tantalizing as it was, the rapper refused to compromise his style and turned down the deal offered by the label.*

**Now, do it yourself: rewrite the sentences below, using though/as, but bringing the adjective forward to the beginning of the concessive clause, as in the last example:**

The actress was certainly nervous, but she managed to keep her cool and give a really inspiring speech as she collected her award.

They were a really talented band, but they remained a cult favorite and never hit stardom.

The record label resolved to sign the experimental artist, although it was risky.

Although it seems strange, I had never heard that song by Mariah Carey until last Christmas.

It may sound crazy, but she decided to quit a really lucrative career with her former Pop band and went solo to play experimental music.

### (As) much as

You can also use “much as/as much as” in a similar way (being again synonymous with “although”) as the previous examples to imply a contrast between two ideas.

*(As) much as I am fed up with the guy’s holier-than-thou attitude, I cannot deny that he’s an outstanding actor.*

### Rewrite the following sentences using “(as) much as”:

I hate the idea of selling out, but I need to make a living as a singer, so I’m willing to make commercial music, as the label suggests.

I really like Mario as a friend, but there is no way that I would partner with him.

I love the genre and I am biased towards it, but this is just a nondescript, uninspired album.

### Not that

You can use “not that” to imply contrast, in a similar way to “although/even though”. When using this, however, one may be implying that something is unimportant or that you are definitely NOT suggesting something:

*Mariah Carey and Luis Miguel ended a rather troubled relationship in 2001, not that I care that much about their romance or their music, really.*

*They announced on the PA system that the headliners had to cancel their show due to one of their members catching Covid19. Not that I minded, as I was way more interested in the opening band.*

As you can see, it often goes with verbs like “mind”, “matter” or “care”, to insinuate that one does not find the preceding information very relevant or noteworthy (rather the opposite).



She is not exactly beautiful in the classical sense of the word, but she appeared on the cover of Time magazine as one of the 100 most attractive celebrities of the present decade.

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*They announced on the PA system that the headliners had to cancel their show due to one of their members catching Covid19. Not that I minded, as I was way more interested in the opening band.*

As you can see, it often goes with verbs like “mind”, “matter” or “care”, to insinuate that one does not find the preceding information very relevant or noteworthy (rather the opposite).

### Even if

We use “even if” to state that something is certain to happen (or not to happen) regardless of some circumstances that may prevent it:

*The singer has vowed to keep her original band, even if she is offered to replace them with studio musicians.*

You can also use “even if” at the beginning of the sentence:

*Even if a more skilled guitarist is willing to join the band, she is adamant that she is going to stick with her longtime friend as the guitar player.*

### Rewrite the following sentences using “even if”.

That member of the jury is going to give you hell. And it is irrelevant whether you sing like an angel.

It doesn't matter that the painting is a piece of dross. Someone is going to pay an enormous amount of money for it in the auction. It is about money laundering in the end.

It is useless to cover the genitalia on the promotional poster. It is going to fuel the backlash of the more conservative members of the community, anyway.

### Yet/and Yet

“Yet” can be used as a conjunction to replace “but/though/still”.

Check Unit 2 Grammar Activation Worksheet to find some examples to practice this.

You can use “and yet” as an alternative to “yet” in a separate sentence:

*Those filmmakers exploit human suffering and just try to be more disturbing than anyone else, yet they have an extremely loyal fan base.*

*Those filmmakers exploit human suffering and just try to be more disturbing than anyone else. And yet, they have an extremely loyal fan base.*

## Intensifying Expressions: Using “not in the least”/“not in the slightest”

Look at the following examples from the Speaking section “Art, Free Speech and Shock Value”:

*This so-called provocative art does not interest me in the least!*

*I do not have the slightest inclination to sit through any form of art which is going to leave me a bad aftertaste. Art is meant to be enjoyed, isn't it?*

We use “**not in the least**” or “**not in the slightest**” to emphasize that something is by no means an option, or that we strongly believe the opposite of what is being said. It essentially has the same meaning as “not at all”, but it somehow sounds more intense, more uncompromising and implacable. You can use these expressions within the sentence, or just as a short answer to something we disagree with.

- Are you into bungee jumping?
- Not in the least/slightest.

**Write a sentence/brief answer using “(not) in the least”/“ (not) in the slightest”/“slightest + noun” to firmly deny these ideas.**

Do you mind if I make a suggestion about the prologue?

Do you find mainstream comedians funny?

Are you a big fan of talent shows?

Are you concerned about gaining weight during the holiday season?

Do you lose sleep over celebrities' breakups?

Are you amused by horror movies?

Have you got any background in contemporary art?

Do today's political speeches inspire you?

## Using “not only... but also” with grammatical inversion

Look at the following example from the Speaking Worksheet “**Popular Music**”.

*Not only do all these modern retro bands lack any originality, but also seem incapable of writing a good, catchy song!*

There are two ideas or propositions in the sentence above:

1. Modern retro bands have zero originality
2. On top of that, they cannot write catchy songs.

Using the structure “**not only... but also**” with grammatical inversion helps add some extra emphasis to our writing or speaking, especially in rather formal registers.

**Rewrite these sentences by combining them into one which contains the “not only... but also” + grammatical inversion pattern.**

1. She is a terrible manager.
2. She has zero empathy for her employees.

1. It is not going to stop raining today.
2. The weather forecast says it will be like that for the entire week.

1. She wants to be the lead vocalist in the band.
2. She is thinking of kicking out the bass player.

1. They will start their own record label
2. They are going to release music by new, up-and-coming bands.

## Using imperatives to express emphatic meanings: use of “dare”

Look at the following example from the Speaking section “Popular Music”:

***Don't you dare call that style music!*** Beethoven must be rolling in his grave!

“Dare” (like “need”) is categorized as a **semi-modal verb**. That is, it can be used as a modal verb (like say, “must”, “can” or “should”), or it can be used on its own, as a main verb. In the example above, we use “don't you dare” to express anger or disagreement with someone's words or behavior.

As a **semi-modal verb**, we use dare like in the following examples:

*Dare I suggest some changes that I believe would be really useful?*

*She daren't tell the truth about her goings-on.*

*He dared not trust his own suspicions.*

*Dare anyone seduce my wife when I am away?*

As you can see, when used as a modal, **we do not use “To”** before the lexical/main verb.

As a **main verb**, “dare” is used like in the following examples:

*I dare you to ask her out. (Asking someone to do some bold/daring action)*

*I dare anyone (to) tell me that this is a mediocre song (Being brave or courageous enough to do something)*

*Don't you dare (to) speak to me like that! (Same as above)*

*I didn't dare (to) ask my boss for a raise. (Same as above, being bold/daring enough to do something)*

*I am extremely confident about myself, and nobody dares (to) challenge me. (Ditto)*

As you can see, in all the examples, the meaning implied is “being courageous/audacious enough to do something”. When used as an ordinary verb (meaning= challenge/defy), you can decide whether to use “to” or not, even though using “to” is much more common. Therefore:

*I dare anyone to tell me that this is a mediocre song*

Is way more common than

*I dare anyone tell me that this is a mediocre song*

However, when using the ubiquitous “how dare you”, we need to remember **not to use TO infinitive**; instead we use the bare infinitive (i.e.: infinitive without to):

*How dare you to speak to me in that tone? (Wrong)*

*How dare you speak to me in that tone? (Right)*

## Using inverted statements to express emphasis (informal)

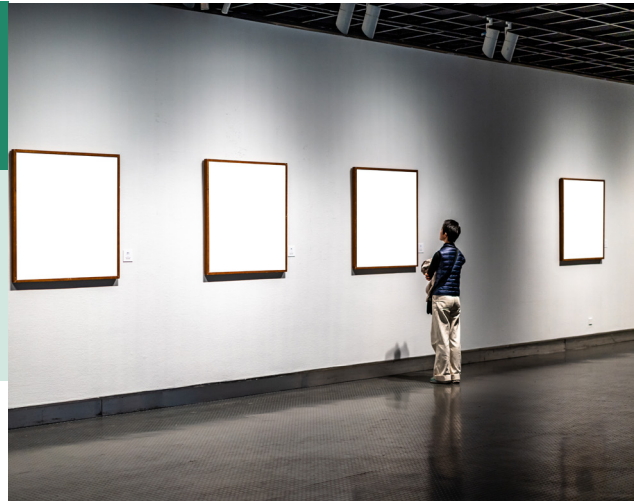
Look at the following examples from the Speaking section “The Film Industry & Modern Day-Hollywood”:

I used to like those teen movies quite a bit, but man does the trick get repetitive in the end.

We did not have high expectations about the sequel to Trainspotting but boy, was the movie a blast!

In informal, colloquial spoken or written English, we can use these kinds of grammatical inversions (i.e.: the normal Subject-verb order of a sentence being reversed/putting the auxiliary in front of the subject for emphatic purposes), accompanied by “boy” (more common) or “man”, even if our interlocutor is female, to make sentences which work like exclamative clauses. You may or may not use exclamation marks at the end of the sentence. “Boy” or “man” work as interjections here (like “wow”, “gosh”, “darn” or “goddammit”).

## PART 1

MODERN  
ART

## Grammar and Vocabulary Activation

## State of the Art in the 2020s

## Lexical Cloze

Read the following article on contemporary art, and decide which option (a, b, c, or d) in the box below fits better in each gap (1-10).

I spoke to a friend a couple of days ago. She had been in Bilbao, so apart from indulging in the region's phenomenal cuisine, she had, of course, to pay the de rigueur visit to the Guggenheim Museum. Food and the landscape were still the main incentives of her Basque getaway, but returning home without the 1. \_\_\_\_\_ cultural stopover wouldn't have sat well among her more sophisticated, artsy friends. When I asked her if she had enjoyed it, she 2. \_\_\_\_\_, shrugged and said, "I think I didn't get it". "Well, did you like it or not?" I insisted, and from her explanation, I concluded that she had not been exactly awe-struck by what she beheld, and that she linked said lack of 3. \_\_\_\_\_ with not being educated enough in the artistic department. We are not talking about an illiterate, Junk TV addict here, but your average person in their 30s who went to college, studied art history in high school and 4. \_\_\_\_\_ a more than a passing interest in culture, history and art, so her reasoning struck me as being a bit 5. \_\_\_\_\_. Since when does one need a master's degree to decide if they, personally, find something beautiful or hideous? Intriguing or repulsive? Something they could themselves do 6. \_\_\_\_\_ they have the right tools at hand, or something totally out of their reach? Or just something that leaves them underwhelmed? She, wittily, answered that there are people who not only study degrees on contemporary art, but also are ardent art lovers, and 7. \_\_\_\_\_ museum visitors and that, yes, their appraisal of the talent and toil deployed in a work of art matters more than your judgment, which inevitably is going to feel a bit audacious, but also 8. \_\_\_\_\_ next to theirs.

I still stuck to my guns and went on ranting on how elitist modern art had become, if it had devolved into a sort of snobbish, pseudo-intellectual 9. \_\_\_\_\_, to which the majority of people could not relate. She had made her point and stood by her argument, and in the end, she got me thinking. However genuine or feigned this humility was, admitting ignorance of whatever field is a/an 10. \_\_\_\_\_ behavior in today's era of digital know-it-all.



1	a	Customary	b	Forcibly	c	Inevitable	d	Obliged
2	a	Cringed	b	Grimaced	c	Mumbled	d	Winced
3	a	Absorption	b	Amazement	c	Concern	d	Significance
4	a	Acknowledges	b	Bears	c	Belies	d	Betrays
5	a	Arbitrary	b	Asinine	c	Unfounded	d	Vacuous
6	a	As	b	Provided	c	Though	d	When
7	a	Expert	b	Pretentious	c	Seasoned	d	Ubiquitous
8	a	Bizarre	b	Deviant	c	Idiosyncratic	d	Pedestrian
9	a	End	b	Scheme	c	Tactic	d	Undertaking
10	a	Anomalous	b	Deceptive	c	Earnest	d	Sly

### Keyword Transformation

In the following statements, complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first one, using the word given, which cannot be changed. You must use between three and eight words, including the KEY word.

The only reason why she presented her controversial work in front of a church was to assert her freedom of expression.

#### SAKE

She premiered her polemic works in front of a church \_\_\_\_\_ right to self-expression.

What annoys me about that artist is the contempt he shows for classical art, which he deems too "conservative".

#### NOSE

That guy keeps calling classical art conservative, and \_\_\_\_\_, something which I find annoying.

The artist's attempts to conceal the low quality of the sculpture and make it seem something provocative collapsed when he was accused of plagiarism.

#### UP

Accusations of plagiarism rendered the artist's efforts \_\_\_\_\_ as something provocative futile.

Don't get me wrong, this exhibit is not bad, but last month's was infinitely superior.

#### CANDLE

This exhibit \_\_\_\_\_ last month's, while not being bad per se.

He was subject to ruthless criticism by his peers for his sympathy for ultraorthodox Judaism.

### RAN

Because of his sympathy for orthodox Judaism, other fellow painters \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ mercy.

After realizing that acrylic paint was already being used by hundreds of painters and she was not that good at it she decided to start all over.

### BOARD

She decided \_\_\_\_\_ when she saw everyone was using acrylic paint and she was not that good at it, to begin with.

He confessed in an interview that the only reason to make his music more accessible was to sell more records, as his experimental style had only gained him a loyal, but minuscule fanbase.

### DOWN

Even though he had some loyal followers, they were few and said that he would have \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ get a decent number of sales.

## Inverse Translation

### Translate the following sentences into English

- No me gusta ninguno de los dos.
- Me da igual cualquiera de las dos.
- Se le encargó que hiciera un mural en recuerdo de las víctimas del cáncer, y a los vecinos les encantó.
- Al principio no entendía qué había de genial en Picasso, pero luego empezó a gustarme.
- Antes de ir al MOMA y decir que todo es una porquería, convendría que te pusieras un poco las pilas con el arte moderno.
- Una de las características más destacables de su estilo es cómo todas sus pinturas traen a la memoria la vida en el mar.
- El llamado “arte experimental” no me dice nada.
- En mi humilde opinión, Degas no le llega a la suela de los zapatos a Monet.

## PART 2

CREATIVITY,  
FREEDOM OF  
EXPRESSION AND  
SHOCK VALUE

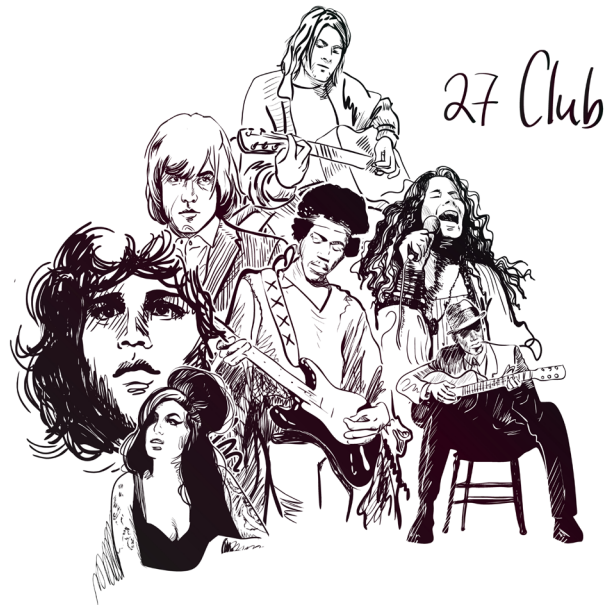
## Grammar and Vocabulary Activation

## Inverse Translation

## Translate the following sentences into English

- Todos esos políticos que no hacen más que dividir a la sociedad tendrían que rendir cuentas por todo ello.
- Acabaron con su carrera en unos meses y, para más inri, se reían de él sin piedad cada noche en ese programa satírico.
- El presentador de ese programa me da muchísimo asco. No lo puedo evitar.
- Su filmografía me parece una auténtica bazofia. No se salva nada.
- A pesar de lo popular que es, para mí, ese chico no tiene ningún talento en absoluto.
- Siempre había utilizado efectos especiales en sus películas, pero en la última se pasó de la raya, hasta el punto de que no te la puedes tomar en serio.
- Le cerraron la cuenta porque un político se quejó de que lo estaba calumniando.
- No sé por qué se pasan todo el día hablando de ese tipo. En lo musical es un cero a la izquierda, así que sólo le queda la polémica.
- Lo que más me gusta de ese cantautor es que va a lo suyo y es totalmente impasible a las críticas más despiadadas.

## PART 3

POPULAR  
CULTURE, THE  
MUSIC BUSINESS.  
CULTURAL  
APPROPRIATION

## Grammar and Vocabulary Activation

## Keyword Transformation

For statements 1-7 complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first one, using the word given, which cannot be changed. You must use between three and eight words, including the KEY word.

I liked their first single, but the newer one leaves me a bit cold.

**DOWN**

The band's last \_\_\_\_\_ after hearing their first one, which I liked.

In the awards ceremony everyone had great expectations on "Bookends", but it was the Korean movie "Denial" which caused a sensation and was hailed by the media.

**STOLE**

Unexpectedly, it was the Korean film "Denial" \_\_\_\_\_ got the media's approval, despite the expectations generated by "Bookends".

Jonah may come across as a cold guy, but he is an utterly kind and wholesome person.

**THROUGH**

However cold he seems, Jonah \_\_\_\_\_ through.

On top of her ineptitude, Martha is super mean with the rest of her bandmates. I do not know why they haven't looked for another drummer yet.

**ONLY**

\_\_\_\_\_ drummer, but she is also really mean to the girls. They should replace her.

Man, I love this song so much, I could listen to it on loop for hours. What a riff!

**ENOUGH**

Man, I cannot \_\_\_\_\_ and that riff.

All this excessive planning has made our working environment a bit stiff; we should improvise a bit more, and make things easier for ourselves.

**EAR**

It's time we \_\_\_\_\_ more, as planning in excess has made our working environment worse.

She got tired of all the attention being paid to her sister, when in fact it was her who wrote all the hits.

**FIDDLE**

She had it \_\_\_\_\_ her sister, as she was the main songwriter.

## Inverse Translation

### Translate the following sentences into English

- Los echaron de la discográfica porque después de tres álbumes, apenas habían vendido 20.000 copias.
- Mandaron la maqueta a la discográfica y en menos de un mes, consiguieron un contrato para cinco discos.
- He intentado que me guste el Jazz, pero me parece un estilo súper difícil.
- El otro día oí los discos de Springsteen de los 80, y me parece que aguantan bien el paso del tiempo.
- Cuando alguien acusa a un músico de haberse vendido, me dan ganas de preguntarle si hace su trabajo gratis.
- No hay nada de Jazz fusión ni nada de eso en lo último de Michael Bublé. Es un disco de Pop de principio a fin.
- Se fueron de gira en el 2016 con U2, que los eligieron como teloneros.
- Escucho una playlist de Heavy Metal en Spotify todas las mañanas porque me pone las pilas.
- El cartel de esa gira era increíble. Led Zeppelin eran cabeza de cartel, y el resto de las bandas eran casi tan buenas como ellos.

## PART 4

### THE FILM INDUSTRY. HOLLYWOOD IN THE POST- WEISNTEIN ERA



#### Grammar and Vocabulary Activation

##### Keyword Transformation

For statements 1-6 complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first one, using the word given, which cannot be changed. You must use between three and eight words, including the KEY word.

I do not mind if the latest film by Christopher Nolan is boring, you cannot deny that he is an extremely talented director.

**HOWEVER**

\_\_\_\_\_ by Christopher Nolan is, he remains an extremely talented filmmaker.

While some bands from the local scene wrote a couple of catchy hits, most of them had terrible singers.

**WERE**

Some of those local bands wrote some fun, catchy songs, but man \_\_\_\_\_ terrible.

I soon grew tired of her dumb sense of humor.

**WORE**

Her dumb \_\_\_\_\_ very quickly.

Apart from that independent channel, no one else opposed the decision of the mainstream media.

**TOOK**

That independent channel was the only one which \_\_\_\_\_ the decision of the mainstream media.

I agree that the romantic ballads that Aerosmith plays now are nothing short of cringeworthy, though you cannot deny that they rocked super hard in the 70s!

**DID**

The romantic ballads they play now makes one cringe, but boy \_\_\_\_\_ the 70s!

She walked into the audition, and, against all odds, she was chosen as the main actress of the movie.

**GOT**

It was a surprise to many when she \_\_\_\_\_ after her brief audition.

## Inverse Translation

### Translate the following sentences into English

- Personalmente, me parece un tipo detestable, pero es innegable que es un gran actor. Eso hay que reconocerlo.
- Ni siquiera sé como algo tan empalagoso como "Twilight" pasa por película de terror.
- Da igual lo estúpido que sea, le invitan a todos los programas de televisión.
- El tema de los superhéroes en las películas modernas se hace pesado, sinceramente.
- No sé si es por su físico, pero esa mujer está encasillada en papeles de drogadicta que supera su adicción.
- A Kevin Lear no le pega ese papel en absoluto. No te lo puedes tomar en serio.
- Las ventas de DVDs se desplomaron en los últimos diez años con la llegada de las plataformas como Netflix y HBO.

## UNIT 6

## UNIT REVIEW TEST

## Vocabulary and Grammar Review

Which of the following options fits best?

1. I don't agree with that critic at all; it is far from being their best album, but I wouldn't \_\_\_\_\_ as trash. It's got some good songs.

- a) Draw it in
- b) Dress it up
- c) Run it down
- d) Write it off

2. It is shameful that they gave that pile of rusty cans \_\_\_\_\_ in the museum. Many other works were way better.

- a) A low profile
- b) Grandeur
- c) Notoriety
- d) Pride of place

3. The critics praised the painting and said its minimalistic style \_\_\_\_\_ the concept of depression. I don't think I get it, though.

- a) Beholds
- b) Conjures up
- c) Dumbs down
- d) Wises up

4. What makes that single a hit is the \_\_\_\_\_, but it isn't even a catchy song, so I doubt anyone will remember it two months from now.

- a) Aesthetic
- b) Language profanity
- c) Notoriety
- d) Novelty factor

5. She defended herself and said that all this animosity towards her was \_\_\_\_\_ the media.

- a) Advocated by
- b) Fueled by
- c) Heckled by
- d) Worshiped by

6. He is a terrible singer, writes cringe-worthy lyrics, and \_\_\_\_\_, everyone loves him and gets mad at me for not getting it!

- a) Grosses me out
- b) Is out of this world
- c) The sky is his limit
- d) To add insult to injury

7. In spite of the inaccessible nature of their music, they got plenty of \_\_\_\_\_ during those years and that album went # 1 in the charts. Amazing!

- a) Airplay
- b) Pride of place
- c) Propaganda
- d) Spotlight

8. I don't really dislike Rap, but I have a hard time trying to relate to that guy and those \_\_\_\_\_ lyrics. Too much sex and violence in them. Not for me, I guess.

- a) Disruptive
- b) Gratuitous
- c) Over the top
- d) Vitriolic

9. Why do I think they are ludicrously overrated? Well, \_\_\_\_\_, they are terrible musicians.

- a) As for their musical skills
- b) To add insult to injury
- c) To begin with
- d) To make matters worse

10. I used to love all those so-called provocative lyrics: pseudo-poetry with lots of references to drugs and pissing off your parents. Luckily for me, I \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) Am impervious to that
- b) Grew out of that
- c) Turn my nose at that
- d) Write that off



11. They dropped two albums in the same year, but \_\_\_\_\_ is too good, in my opinion.

- a) Any
- b) Either
- c) Neither
- d) None

12. I personally find some messages that people publish on Twitter or other social networks repugnant, but it's their right to say it. It is difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ between what's acceptable and what's not.

- a) Draw the line
- b) Flinch away
- c) Strike a balance
- d) Shut down

13. They flirted with electronic music in their last record, but this single that has come out on Spotify is \_\_\_\_\_ heavy metal, like in their previous albums.

- a) Far out
- b) Hands down
- c) One-trick pony
- d) Straight up

14. As a child, I didn't enjoy rap at all, but my older cousin \_\_\_\_\_ the more commercial stuff, and now I am a huge fan of the genre.

- a) Acquired my taste to
- b) Got me into
- c) Grew me to like
- d) Played by ear

15. He recently published an article where he \_\_\_\_\_ many musicians who had preferred to keep a low profile and not stand up for that rapper.

- a) Called out
- b) Defamed
- c) Slandered
- d) Wrote off

16. He is actually a phenomenal actor, as you can see if you check his early performances in independent films, but because of his facial features, he's always \_\_\_\_\_ as the villain in superhero movies.

- a) Filed under
- b) Miscast
- c) Misunderstood
- d) Typecast

17. The filmmaker \_\_\_\_\_ her fans when she announced on Twitter that she would retire from making movies.

- a) Blew away
- b) Let down
- c) Took for granted
- d) Turned down

18. People keep saying that when they watch The Goonies again after so many years, it strikes them as rather corny, but I think it really \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) Deserves credit
- b) Has a flair
- c) Holds up
- d) Stands out

19. They were expecting the new album to be a massive hit, so everyone in the band was devastated when the sales \_\_\_\_\_. The label decided to drop them right away.

- a) Fell flat
- b) Flopped
- c) Fluked
- d) Plummeted

20. That guy seems to have won over all the specialized press; no matter how boring and repetitive his new films are, the critics cannot stop \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) Giving him the credit he deserves
- b) Paying homage to him
- c) Putting him on a pedestal
- d) Sucking up to him