

22 Vocabulary

Quality and the arts

Topic vocabulary: Quality

see page 240 for definitions

aggravate (v)	devastate (v)	optimum (n, adj)	shambles (n)
better (v)	enhance (v)	outclass (v)	shoddy (adj)
blemish (n)	evaluate (v)	prime (adj)	sound (adj)
chaos (n)	exacerbate (v)	redeeming feature (n phr)	stale (adj)
cheapen (v)	exquisite (adj)	refurbish (v)	streamline (v)
contaminate (v)	first-rate (adj)	reinforce (v)	strengthen (v)
decay (v)	flaw (n)	renovate (v)	surpass (v)
decline (v)	ideal (adj)	rotten (adj)	ultimate (adj)
defective (adj)	inadequate (adj)	rusty (adj)	worsen (v)
detrimental (adj)	invaluable (adj)	satisfactory (adj)	wreck (v, n)

Topic vocabulary: The arts

see page 241 for definitions

abstract (n, adj)	curator (n)	masterpiece (n)	retrospective (n, adj)
auction (n)	fine art (n phr)	paperback (n)	score (n)
audition (n)	installation (n)	period (n, adj)	sketch (v, n)
bestseller (n)	lines (n pl)	priceless (adj)	work of art (n phr)
collector's item (n phr)	lyrics (n pl)	recital (n)	worthless (adj)

Phrasal verbs

brighten up	start to have more colour or light; give something more colour or light; start looking or feeling happier; if the weather brightens up, it becomes sunnier	patch up	repair something, often quickly and not very well; become friends with someone again after a disagreement; give basic medical treatment to someone who is injured
brush up (on)	practise and improve your skills or knowledge of something	pick up	improve
check out	examine someone or something in order to be certain that everything is correct, true or satisfactory; if information checks out, you feel that it is true after examining it	run down	if an organisation or area is run down, its size, importance and activity is reduced <i>run-down (adj)</i>
liven up	make something more interesting or exciting, or become more interesting or exciting; give something a more interesting appearance, taste or other quality	scrape through	succeed in doing something, but not in a very impressive way
make over	change or improve the appearance of someone or something <i>makeover (n)</i>	smarten up	improve the appearance of something, for example by cleaning or painting it; if you smarten up or smarten yourself up, you make yourself look tidy and clean
mess up	make a mistake or do something badly; make something dirty or untidy; be the cause of someone's physical, emotional or mental problems	stand out	be much more impressive or important than others; be easy to see or notice because of being different <i>outstanding (adj)</i>
paper over	hide a problem or disagreement rather than finding a satisfactory solution to it	touch up	make a surface look better with small improvements
		waste away	gradually become thinner and weaker over a period of time, usually because of an illness
		write off	damage a vehicle so badly that it is not worth repairing; decide that someone or something will not succeed and stop giving them your attention and energy <i>write-off (n)</i>

Phrases, patterns and collocations

art	have/get sth down to a fine art, art of doing, art to doing, art deco, art form, art gallery, art house	best	make the best of, do your best, (all) for the best, at best, at your best, to the best of my knowledge, to the best of sb's ability, the best of both worlds, best friend
bad	go bad, go from bad to worse, feel bad (about), bad for, bad at (doing), in a bad way, (in) bad faith, bad apple, bad blood	better	get better, get the better of, had better, (all) the better for, better than nothing, better luck next time, better off, better yet, for better or (for) worse, better half

Phrases, patterns and collocations

bottom	come bottom, get to the bottom of, the bottom drops/falls out of, at the bottom (of), from the bottom of my heart, bottom line	nice	nice of sb (to do), nice for sb (to do), nice to sb, nice to meet/see sb, nice and warm/comfortable/clean, nice as pie, nice one
clean	give sth a (good) clean, make a clean break, make a clean breast of, clean and tidy, a clean bill of health, a clean slate/sheet, clean sweep	old	get/grow old, poor old, old age, old flame, old folk(s), old hand, old hat, old people's home, the Old Testament
clear	make/get sth clear, make yourself clear, (have) a clear conscience, clear in your mind (about), clear as a bell, clear as mud, clear case (of), clear evidence/indication	quality	high/good/top quality, poor/bad/low quality, personal qualities, leadership qualities, quality control, quality of life, quality time
dirty	do the dirty on, do sb's dirty work, get your hands dirty, give sb a dirty look, dirty word, dirty tricks	style	style sth/yourself as, style of, in style, out of style, with style
fine	cut it fine, fine by sb, fine details/points, fine line between, with a fine-tooth(ed) comb, fine print	top	come out on top, sth gets on top of you, at the top of, on top (of), off the top of your head, on top of the world, top prize, top priority, top secret
fresh	fresh from, fresh out of, fresh-faced, freshwater, fresh start, fresh air	worse	get worse, make matters/things worse, (take a turn) for the worse, worse for wear
new	new to, brand new, whole new, good as new, new-look, new age	worst	do your worst, fear the worst, be your own worst enemy, if (the) worst comes to (the) worst, at worst, the worst of all/both worlds

Idioms

a sight for sore eyes	someone or something that you are very pleased to see
Achilles' heel	a weak feature of someone or something that could cause failure or be attacked
add fuel to the fire	make a bad situation worse
below/under par	below the usual or expected standard
clean as a whistle	completely honest or legal; extremely clean
draw the line (at)	say that you will definitely not allow or accept something
last word in	the newest and best type of something
out of this world	extremely good or impressive
over the top	more than what is considered normal or suitable
pride of place	in the place that is most central or important
steal the show	receive a lot of attention because you give the best performance in a show or other event
the edge over	an advantage that makes someone or something more successful than other people or things

Word formation

adequate	(in)adequacy, inadequate, (in)adequately	impress	impression, (un)impressiveness, impressionism, impressionist, (un)impressed, impressionable, impressionistic, (un)impressive(ly)
admire	admiration, admirer, admirable, admirably, admiring(ly)	improve	improvement, improvable, improved
art	arts, artfulness, artificiality, artist, artiste, artistry, artlessness, artwork, artifact/artefact, artifice, arty, artistic(ally), artificial(ly), artful(ly), artless(ly)	match	matchmaker, matchmaking, matchstick, matchwood, matchbook, matchbox, matching, unmatched, matchless
awe	awfulness, awesomeness, awestruck, awful(ly), awesomely	perfect	(im)perfection, perfectionist, perfectionism, perfectible, perfectly, imperfect(ly)
class	outclass, (de)classify, classics, classifieds, classification, classlessness, classmate, classroom, classwork, classic, classy, classless, (de)classified, classical(ly)	quality	qualitative(ly)
collect	collector, collection, collectable, collected, collective(ly)	strong	strengthen, strength, stronghold, strongly
destroy	destroyer, destruction, indestructible, destructive(ly)	terror	terrorise, terrify, terrorist, terrorism, terrible, terrific, terrifying, terrified, terribly
good	goods, goodness, goodwill, goody/goodie	use	abuse, misuse, reuse, overuse, (ab)user, usefulness, usage, uselessness, (un)used, (un)usable, reusable, abused, abusive(ly), useful(ly), useless(ly)
ideal	idealise, idealism, idealisation, idealist, idealistic, idealised, ideally	value	revalue, overvalue, evaluate, (re)valuation, evaluation, overvaluation, valuer, valuables, (in)valuable, valueless
imitate	imitation, imitator, imitative, inimitable	worth	worthlessness, worthy, worthless, worthwhile

Topic vocabulary: Quality

A Circle the correct word. If both are correct, circle both.

- The procedure's good, but I think we can **better** / **streamline** it further to make it more efficient.
- The shell of the building has been completely **renovated** / **refurbished** and the interior decorators will be starting inside next week.
- The Minister's inflammatory comments are just **exacerbating** / **aggravating** an already difficult situation. He should think before he opens his mouth next time.
- The inspectors are going to be **evaluating** / **valuing** the performance of every teacher.
- In Berkshire, a lorry carrying chemicals has crashed into a river and has **decayed** / **contaminated** the local water supply.
- I set the school record for the 100m over eight years ago and it's never been **strengthened** / **bettered** to this day.
- This new browser should **enhance** / **reinforce** everyone's experience online.
- The number of school-leavers going on to university has **declined** / **devastated** since the government introduced tuition fees.
- We must never let inflation **surpass** / **outclass** the three per cent mark again.
- This accident has **wrecked** / **worsened** Dagli's chances of competing in the final.
- Pop songs have **cheapened** / **worsened** the word 'love' so that it's meaningless nowadays.
- The rock festival was fun, but it was marred by the organisation, which was a **chaos** / **shambles**.
- The face in the picture is angelic, except for that tiny **blemish** / **flaw** just below the eye – can you see it? – that seems to be some kind of scar or birthmark.

B Circle the word which best matches each statement.

- 'I've never seen a more beautiful diamond!' **exquisite** / **sound**
- 'His honesty is the only feature about him that's positive.' **redeeming** / **ultimate**
- 'These metal railings are really old and brown.' **stale** / **rusty**
- 'It's just not good enough.' **invaluable** / **inadequate**
- 'The workmanship on this cabinet isn't very good.' **detrimental** / **shoddy**
- 'This CD-ROM drive isn't working properly.' **defective** / **detrimental**
- 'This apple's completely black.' **rotten** / **stale**
- 'This was the most important reason for us.' **optimum** / **prime**
- 'The job couldn't have been done without your help.' **exquisite** / **invaluable**
- 'The price seems reasonable to me. I'll take it.' **ultimate** / **satisfactory**
- 'This bread's not very fresh.' **rotten** / **stale**
- 'I think the government's measures are going to do quite a lot of damage.' **detrimental** / **defective**
- 'It's the most exciting experience you'll ever have!' **ultimate** / **optimum**
- 'I think it was a sensible decision.' **prime** / **sound**
- 'This is exactly what I need.' **ideal** / **prime**
- 'Excellent work. Well done!' **satisfactory** / **first-rate**
- 'Four is the right number of people for this project.' **ultimate** / **optimum**

Topic vocabulary: The arts

C Write a word from the boxes in each gap.*

I haven't read Susan Bashworth's latest yet but I've heard it's very good. It became a (1) within weeks of being published. I'm actually waiting for it to come out in (2) before I get it.

bestseller • paperback

I've learnt all my (3) for the play, which was easy, but we have to sing a song at the end and I'm just no good at remembering (4)

lines • lyrics

The school orchestra's giving a (5) tonight which sounds quite interesting. They've got a guest conductor who's quite famous. Apparently, he's written the (6) for a number of movies.

recital • score

We went to that (7) of Lewis' paintings at the Granchester Museum last week. It was very good. We got chatting to the (8) who told us a very interesting story about one picture ...

curator • retrospective

He told us that someone had found it in their attic, thought it was (9) and so gave it to a neighbour. In fact, it turned out to be (10) !

priceless • worthless

One of the (11) I'd love to do is restoring damaged or faded (12) of art. It must be really satisfying seeing an old painting come to life again.

jobs • works

D Complete using the words in the box in the correct form. There is one word you will not need.

abstract • auction • audition • fine • installation • item • masterpiece • period • sketch

An alternative to galleries

When most of us think of works of art, we tend to think of pieces in galleries, whether they be famous (1) (such as da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*) hanging on the wall, or bizarre (2) (such as a pile of bricks with a red shoe on top).

Certainly, galleries are one of the main ways in which people can view art. Another way is to go to a/an (3) You don't have to be rich to attend (entrance is usually free), although if you're going to bid for a Van Gogh, you'd better take your bank details with you.

They're actually a great way to learn about art, because the catalogue gives detailed information about each piece, and there's often more variety than in a gallery. On any one day, there may be (4) in pencil (artists generally do these before painting the actual picture), (5) art (which includes sculptures and ceramics as well as paintings), collector's (6) (anything from broomsticks to postcards), (7) paintings (the catalogue will help you work out what the artist was trying to express) and even (8) furniture.

Phrasal verbs

E Write one word in each gap so the second sentence has a similar meaning to the first sentence.

- You'll have to improve your general knowledge before you go on that quiz show.
You'll have to up on your general knowledge before you go on that quiz show.
- The car was so badly damaged it had to be destroyed.
The car was so badly damaged it had to be off.
- One of the poems is particularly noteworthy due to its interesting use of imagery.
One of the poems particularly out due to its interesting use of imagery.
- If attendance doesn't improve soon, the play will probably have to close.
If attendance doesn't up soon, the play will probably have to close.
- I've heard a new gallery has opened in St Ives, so I'm going to see what it's like.
I've heard a new gallery has opened in St Ives, so I'm going to it out.
- Susan only just passed her history of art course.
Susan through her history of art course.
- The photo's got a couple of marks on it, so I'll scan it and make it look better with some software I've got.
The photo's got a couple of marks on it, so I'll scan it and it up with some software I've got.
- On the show today, we're going to completely change the look of the Simpsons' spare bedroom.
On the show today, we're going to completely over the Simpsons' spare bedroom.

F If a word is in the wrong sentence, write the correct word on the line. If it is correct, put a tick.

- The party was a bit boring to start with but everyone **livened** up when Rod got out his guitar,
- I'm not very pleased with this drawing actually as I think I've **papered** up the perspective a little.
.....
- I've only **wasted** this up for now – I won't be able to fix it properly until we get home.
- Julie and Simone have **messed** over their differences while they get their business set up, but I'm sure they'll start arguing again pretty soon.
- The Prime Minister responded that it was the previous administration which had **patched** the film industry down.
.....
- Luckily, the weather **brightened** up in the afternoon so we were able to hold the reception outside after all.
.....
- As kids, we always **ran** ourselves up when our grandparents came to visit.
- The holiday at the health farm was awful. They only gave us a few vegetables every evening – I almost **smartened** away!

Phrases, patterns and collocations

G Circle the correct word.

- I want this mess cleared up right now. Did I **make** / **do** myself clear?
- It's **nice** / **good** and warm in here.
- Off the top of my **brain** / **head**, I'd say this diamond's worth at least a million euros.
- You're cutting it **fine** / **well**. The meeting starts in about two minutes.
- To the **top** / **best** of my knowledge, there aren't any Picassos on the market at the moment.
- That Ferrari Craig's just bought is **brand** / **model** new. It must have cost him a fortune!
- Lee's his own worst **friend** / **enemy**. He complains he hasn't sold any of his paintings, but he won't show them to anyone.

- There's been bad **blood** / **mood** between them ever since Trevor accused Charlton of sabotaging his opening night.
- That's the last time I lie to a client for Mrs Richards. I'm not going to do her dirty **job** / **work** for her any more.
- My mum's got organising her Christmas card list **round** / **down** to a fine art.

H For each question, write one word which can be used in all three sentences.

- The caterers didn't turn up and the guest of honour was late so we had to make the of a rather disastrous situation.
I know you're not very keen on art, but just do your in the exam.
I didn't get the job in the end, but it's probably for the
- I'm afraid we're out of that CD.
As soon as I get out of prison, I'm determined to make a start.
And now, from their blockbuster tour of the USA, here's ... *The Goldsmiths!*
- She wants to make a break and leave the publishing industry completely.
The doctors have given me a completely bill of health.
This term, you all start again with a sheet, so I won't hold anything you did wrong last term against you.
- Is long hair back in ?
I actually don't know much about that of architecture.
If I was a rock star, I'd make sure I was treated with wherever I went.
- I bumped into an flame of mine in Woolworth's this morning.
Dave's an hand when it comes to doing the carnival disco – he's been doing it for years.
I'm afraid we're going to have to consider putting Mum in an people's home.
- They think I'm stupid but I'm not going to let them get the of me.
We could stay at a hotel near the festival or, yet, camp in the grounds.
Yes, I'm certainly all the for two weeks in the sun.

I Write one word in each gap.

Contemporary Art

There is a widely held view that artistic standards have got (1) over the last 100 years or so and that contemporary art is (2) a bad way, the clichéd response being 'my three-year-old child could have done better than that'. Yet many pieces sell for millions of dollars within the art world. How can we get to the (3) of this seeming contradiction? Those new (4) contemporary art should be forgiven for this kind of response, but it is largely a matter of their ignorance rather than the reality. What needs to be (5) clear is that contemporary art is at the cutting edge; painting a lifelike picture of a racehorse is no longer an option for an artist attempting to break new ground. Were contemporary artists to produce pictures like this, we would actually have the (6) of all worlds – a stagnant and backward-looking artistic tradition. Having said that, some contemporary art is of poor (7), but that's true of every art (8) at any point in history. We can only **decide** that novels are great, for example, by having mediocre or bad novels to compare them to. However, those (9) the top of the contemporary art world are producing innovative and challenging pieces. At (10) best, contemporary art is as exciting and productive as it's possible for art to be. There is, of course, a (11) line between quality contemporary art and pseudo-art. Abstract pictures produced by cats, for example, have no real place in the contemporary art world. They merely relieve the gullible and the ignorant of their money.

Idioms

J Complete using the words in the box.

edge • fuel • heel • line • par • pride • show • sight • top • whistle • word • world

- 1 Soccer Maestro is undoubtedly the last in online football simulation games at the moment.
- 2 The picture that takes of place on our mantelpiece, though, is the one of our granddaughter graduating.
- 3 You're a for sore eyes, Claire! Thank goodness you're here – we desperately need your input.
- 4 Jean Paul is clearly a very talented designer. His one Achilles', however, may be his lack of business sense.
- 5 The buffet at the party was out of this ! I've never tasted such exquisite strawberries.
- 6 Amis' new novel is slightly below for a writer of his stature; I was a little disappointed.
- 7 All the bands were fantastic, but *The Editors* and *Franz Ferdinand* really stole the
- 8 I'm happy to simplify things for the readers, but I draw the at telling them blatant untruths.
- 9 I think the media's response has been a little over the – it's only a TV programme, after all.
- 10 Recent allegations in the press about price-fixing at the auction house have only added to the fire regarding speculation about Dotheby's future.
- 11 I've spent the whole morning vacuuming the inside of the car. It's now clean as a
- 12 The Gordon Gallery clearly has the over other modern art galleries; they have the largest collection, and the largest budget to spend on acquiring new pieces.

Word formation

K Use the word given in capitals to form a word that fits in the space.

- 1 Well, she did study at Oxford, so it's hardly surprising she knows Latin and Ancient Greek. **CLASS**
- 2 *The Pet Shop Boys'* sound is and unique. **IMITATE**
- 3 What this painting says to me is that we live in a world of and despair. **DESTROY**
- 4 I've got enormous for Ben; he's achieved such a lot in such a short space of time. **ADMIRE**
- 5 The main reason I believe children shouldn't be exposed to violence on TV is that they're so at that age. **IMPRESS**
- 6 I'm a bit of a, so I can spend all day agonising over which choice of two words to use. **PERFECT**
- 7 Maybe I am an ; but what's wrong with wanting every human being to have access to clean drinking water? **IDEAL**
- 8 I've read that many performers suffered feelings of as children. **ADEQUATE**
- 9 I don't know how it would be to get some of these old postcards valued. **WORTH**
- 10 We'll find out how much the jewellery's worth at the next Thursday. **VALUE**
- 11 Now the government's the papers, we can find out what really happened. **CLASS**
- 12 Being director of the National Gallery is an responsibility but thankfully I have a number of highly experienced experts to help me. **AWE**
- 13 With her experience as both an actor and a director, Tabitha is a very successor to Albert Weeks as Chairperson of the National Theatre. **WORTH**
- 14 There were some very interesting clay dating from the third century BC at the museum. **ART**

- 15 Stage fright is an understatement! Performing on stage for the first time was the most experience I've ever had. **TERROR**
- 16 Don't throw away consumer packaging. Most of it's if you use a little creativity. **USE**
- 17 There's a difference between photography and still-life drawing. **QUALITY**

L Use the word given in capitals to form a word that fits in the space.

The working world of: Jacob Lawson

This week we look at the working life of Jacob Lawson, who buys and sells items on Internet auction sites. In the old days, before the Internet, I had to trawl through hundreds of (1) (**CLASS**) ads each week and go to car boot sales at the weekend. Auction sites like eBay, though, are extremely (2) (**IMPRESS**) and a great (3) (**IMPROVE**). It's just (4) (**TERROR**) what you can do at the click of a button. I love it! I generally buy and sell (5) (**COLLECT**) items. These could be anything – from carriage clocks to knives and forks to plastic (6) (**ART**) flowers. (7) (**COLLECT**) are interested in the strangest things – and there's always money to be made. The best money comes from items that are in very good condition – often because they're (8) (**USE**) and still in their packaging, but there's also a market for things like second-hand pottery or glassware that might have (9) (**PERFECT**). I'm quite successful. One of my (10) (**STRONG**) is that I've got a very good rating on most of these sites – people I've sold to have given me very good reviews, so new customers trust me. I'm also good at spotting what's (11) (**VALUE**) and what's completely (12) (**WORTH**). For example, here's a pair of (13) (**MATCH**) earrings. The description says they're diamond, but if you click on the picture, a trained eye like mine can tell immediately they're (14) (**IMITATE**). Diamond's basically (15) (**DESTROY**), you see, and these have got damage marks on them. So I won't be buying them. Ideally, it's better to actually see the (16) (**GOOD**) you're buying before you purchase them, but these auction sites have pretty good policies if you're not satisfied with your purchase, and I've never had any problems.

M The prefix *in-* can often mean 'not' or 'no'. However, in words such as *invaluable*, *in-* does not mean 'not' or 'no'. Tick the words where it means 'not' or 'no'. Put a cross next to the words where it doesn't.

- 1 The **inbound** flight from Chicago has been delayed due to bad weather.
- 2 I really do value my **independence**.
- 3 The whole family was **infamous** round here for their antisocial behaviour.
- 4 I left the organisation eventually because of all the **infighting**.
- 5 This material is **inflammable**, isn't it?
- 6 What an **ingenious** idea.
- 7 The place will soon be **inhabitable**, won't it?
- 8 The whole area feels very **inhospitable**.
- 9 The situation is **intolerable**.
- 10 She was charged with being disorderly and **intoxicated**.

deterrent (n) something that makes people decide not to do something by making them realise that something unpleasant could happen to them: *I think capital punishment serves as a deterrent.*

heritage (n) the art, buildings, traditions and beliefs that a society considers important to its history and culture: *It's important that we preserve our national heritage.*

immigration (n) the process in which people enter a country in order to live there permanently: *Is the level of immigration actually rising, or is it falling?*

industrial action (n phr) a protest in which workers show that they disagree with a policy of their employer, for example by striking: *Unless something changes, we'll be taking industrial action.*

institution (n) a large organisation such as a bank, hospital, university or prison: *It's hard spending all your life inside an institution like a children's home.*

legislation (n) a law or set of laws: *There is already legislation to prevent that.*

prejudice (n) an unreasonable opinion or feeling, especially the feeling of not liking a particular group of people: *Many women have had to deal with prejudice in the workplace.*

prison reform (n phr) changes intended to make the prison system fairer or more effective: *I'm a great believer in prison reform.*

privileged (adj) having advantages and opportunities that other people do not have, because you have a lot of money or high social status: *I suppose I come from quite a privileged background.*

prosecute (v) to officially accuse someone of a crime and ask a court of law to judge them: *The police decided not to prosecute and let him off with a warning.*

state (n) the government of a country: *The health system is the state's responsibility.*

Unit 22

Quality

aggravate (v) to make something bad become worse, especially a situation or a medical condition: *His headache was aggravated by all the noise.*

better (v) to achieve a better result than someone or something: *Bradman's average score of 96 has never been bettered.*

better (v) to improve something: *It's an important step towards bettering relations between the two countries.*

blemish (n) a mark or spot that spoils the appearance of something: *The painting was spoiled for me by a blemish on the frame.*

chaos (n) a situation in which everything is confused and in a mess: *There have been severe floods, bringing chaos to the region.*

cheapen (v) to make someone or something seem less valuable or respected: *This type of advertising cheapens the image of the brand.*

contaminate (v) to make something dirty, polluted or poisonous by adding a chemical, waste or infection: *Industrial sewage continues to contaminate our beaches.*

decay (v) to make or become gradually worse in quality, or weaker in power or influence: *Too much sugar will decay your teeth.*

decline (v) to become less or worse: *The number of people buying their own homes has declined.*

defective (adj) not made correctly or not working correctly: *The car was found to have defective brakes.*

detrimental (adj) harmful or damaging: *Overexposure to sunlight can have a detrimental effect on the skin.*

devastate (v) to seriously damage or completely destroy something: *Western India was devastated by a huge earthquake.*

devastate (v) to make someone feel very shocked and upset: *Mary's sisters were devastated by her disappearance.*

enhance (v) to improve something, or make it more attractive or more valuable: *The measures taken should considerably enhance the residents' quality of life.*

evaluate (v) to think carefully about something before making a judgment about its value, importance or quality: *The performance of each employee is evaluated once a year.*

exacerbate (v) to make a problem become worse: *Complaining will only exacerbate an already difficult situation.*

exquisite (adj) extremely beautiful and delicate: *It was an exquisite hand-painted vase from China.*

first-rate (adj) of the highest quality: *The service is first-rate.*

flaw (n) a mistake or fault in something that makes it useless, less effective or less beautiful: *There are serious flaws in the way we train our teachers.*

ideal (adj) of the best or most suitable type: *The fair provides an ideal opportunity for job seekers and employers to meet.*

ideal (adj) as good as you can imagine, and probably too good to be real: *In an ideal world there would be no poverty.*

inadequate (adj) not enough or not good enough for a particular purpose: *We are trying to provide basic education with inadequate resources.*

invaluable (adj) extremely useful: *The Internet is an invaluable resource for students.*

optimum (adj) best or most suitable within a range of possibilities: *The warm water provides the optimum conditions for breeding.*

optimum (n) the best or most suitable situation, level or amount: *The optimum we should be producing is 100 units per hour.*

outclass (v) to be much better than someone or something else: *The team was completely outclassed by the opposition.*

prime (adj) most important, most suitable or of the highest quality: *Our prime concern was the safety of our customers.*

redeeming feature (n phr) a positive quality which improves something that is not very good by including something that is good: *Smith's only redeeming feature is that he knows his job.*

refurbish (v) to improve a room or a building by cleaning and painting it, adding new furniture or equipment, etc: *They're planning to refurbish the teachers' room.*

reinforce (v) to make an idea, belief or feeling stronger: *The latest figures reinforce the view that economic growth is slowing.*

reinforce (v) to make a building, structure or object stronger: *Crews started work today to reinforce the seriously damaged bridge.*

renovate (v) to make something old look new again by repairing and improving it, especially a building: *The council's planning to renovate the old fire station.*

rotten (adj) something that is rotten has decayed: *There was a horrible smell of rotten eggs.*

rotten (adj) of a low quality, standard or ability: *She's a rotten singer.*

rusty (adj) a rusty metal object is covered in rust: *I don't know why you bought that rusty old car.*

satisfactory (adj) good enough to be accepted in a particular situation: *I have still not received a satisfactory answer to my question.*

satisfactory (adj) enjoyable and pleasing: *This new arrangement proved highly satisfactory to us all.*

shambles (n) something that is very badly organised and does not operate effectively: *Government corruption has left the economy in a shambles.*

shoddy (adj) shoddy work, services or products are of a very low standard: *The work they did on the new road was very shoddy in places.*

sound (adj) involving the use of good judgment, and therefore likely to be effective: *Administrators should make sure the programmes are legally sound.*

sound (adj) thorough: *You'll need a sound understanding of basic teaching skills before you enter the classroom.*

stale (adj) stale food such as bread is old and no longer fresh: *Wrap the bread up well or it'll go stale.*

streamline (v) to improve a business, organisation, process, etc by making it more modern or simple: *We need to streamline the whole process.*

strengthen (v) to make something stronger: *The bridge will need to be strengthened.*

surpass (v) to be better or greater than something else, or better than what was expected or hoped for: *Winning the gold medal surpassed my wildest dreams.*

ultimate (adj) happening at the end of a process or activity: *The incident affected the ultimate outcome of the war.*

ultimate (adj) as good or as bad as possible: *The house provides the ultimate luxury retreat.*

worsen (v) to become worse, or to make something worse: *The weather worsened, and temperatures fell.*

wreck (n) something that has been badly damaged: *The car was a wreck after the accident.*

wreck (v) to severely damage: *The town has been wrecked by the bombing.*

The arts

abstract (adj) abstract art expresses the artist's ideas or feelings rather than showing the exact appearance of people or things: *I'm not very keen on abstract paintings.*

abstract (n) an abstract painting or design: *You're not supposed to understand what it is; it's an abstract!*

auction (n) a public occasion when things are sold to the people who offer the most money for them: *They bought the paintings at auction in 1989.*

audition (n) a short performance in which you sing, dance or act so that someone can decide if you are good enough to perform in a particular play, concert, etc: *I've got an audition for the school play tomorrow.*

bestseller (n) a book that many people buy: *His first novel was a bestseller.*

collector's item (n phr) a rare or valuable object that collectors want to own: *Do you think this watch is a collector's item?*

curator (n) someone whose job is to look after the objects in a museum: *Ask the curator – he'll be able to tell you more about it.*

fine art (n phr) objects such as paintings that are created to be looked at because they are beautiful or interesting (note: the fine arts = activities in which people create beautiful or interesting objects, for example painting and sculpture): *I'm thinking of studying fine art at university.*

installation (n) a piece of art that consists of several different objects or pictures arranged to produce a particular effect: *There's an interesting installation at the Tate Gallery at the moment.*

lines (n pl) the words that an actor says in a performance: *He forgot his lines.*

lyrics (n pl) the words of a song: *I've written the music but haven't written any lyrics yet.*

masterpiece (n) an excellent painting, book, piece of music, etc, or the best work of art that a particular artist, writer, musician, etc has ever produced: *Vertigo is the film widely regarded as Hitchcock's masterpiece.*

paperback (n) a book with a cover made of thick paper: *His collection of poetry is now out in paperback.*

period (adj) typical of a particular historical time: *Will you be wearing period costumes in the play?*

period (n) a particular time in history: *Their collection is confined solely to the Roman period.*

priceless (adj) very valuable and impossible to replace: *These are priceless jewels.*

recital (n) a performance of music or poetry: *Are you coming to the piano recital tonight?*

retrospective (adj) relating to or considering things that happened in the past: *The show takes a retrospective look at the 1970s.*

retrospective (n) an exhibition that includes examples of a particular artist's work from their whole career: *I really want to go to the Norman Rockwell retrospective.*

score (n) the music written for a film, play, etc: *Who wrote the musical score for Star Wars?*

sketch (n) a drawing made quickly that does not have many details: *Draw a rough sketch of the dog.*

sketch (n) a short funny scene performed within a longer show: *She toured Europe with a programme of songs and sketches.*

sketch (v) to draw a picture quickly and with few details: *I'll just sketch a rough outline of the house.*

work of art (n phr) something such as a painting or sculpture that is of very high quality: *There are many priceless works of art in the Louvre.*

work of art (n phr) something that is made or done in a skilful or attractive way: *Her house is a real work of art.*

worthless (adj) not having any value or good qualities, or not useful: *The country's currency is nearly worthless.*

Unit 24

Relationships

adjacent (adj) next to or near something else: *The theatre is adjacent to the library.*

attach (v) to fasten or join one thing to another: *You need to attach these two parts.*

bond (v) to fix two things firmly together, usually with glue, or to become fixed in this way: *It's not easy to bond plastic and metal together.*

bond (n) the way that two surfaces are stuck together, usually with glue: *The bond should be strong enough to support quite a lot of weight.*

bond (n) something that gives people or groups a reason to love one another or feel they have a duty to one another: *We were at school together, so there's quite a strong bond between us.*

coexist (v) to live or exist at the same time or in the same place: *Two different species of bear coexist in this area.*

coherent (adj) a coherent statement is reasonable and sensible: *You need to rewrite your essay so that your argument is more coherent.*

compatible (adj) likely to have a good relationship because of being similar: *I suppose Lisa and I just weren't compatible.*

comprise (v) to consist of two or more things: *The country comprises a number of independent areas.*

compromise (v) to solve a problem or end an argument by accepting that you cannot have everything that you want: *Young children have to learn how to compromise.*

compromise (n) a way of solving a problem or ending an argument in which both people or groups accept that they cannot have everything they want: *You'll just have to find a compromise.*

conflict (v) if different ideas or opinions conflict, they cannot all be right or cannot all happen: *This statement conflicts with what the Prime Minister said earlier.*

conflict (n) angry disagreement between people or groups: *Many people have died in the conflict.*

confront (v) to go close to someone in a threatening way: *A man in a suit confronted me as I tried to enter the building.*

confront (v) to deal with a difficult situation: *It's best to just confront the problem head on.*

consistent (adj) not changing in behaviour, attitudes or qualities: *He might be strict, but at least he's consistent.*

contradict (v) to say that the opposite of what someone has said is true: *I wish you wouldn't contradict me all the time.*

contradict (v) if one statement, piece of evidence, story, etc contradicts another, they disagree and cannot both be true: *What the witness said contradicted the accused man's story.*