

26 The Best Art Critics

I am an art student and I paint a lot of pictures. Many people pretend that they understand modern art. They always tell you what a picture is 'about'. Of course, many pictures are not 'about' anything. They are just pretty patterns. We like them in the same way that we like pretty curtain material. I think that young children often appreciate modern pictures better than anyone else. They notice more. My sister is only seven, but she always tells me whether my pictures are good or not. She came into my room yesterday.

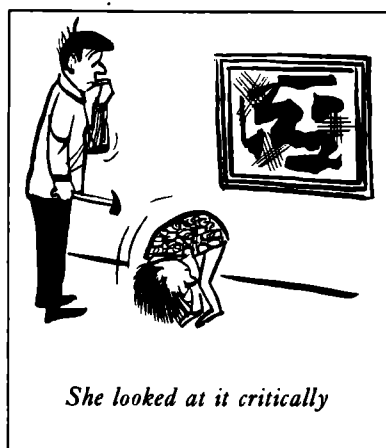
15 'What are you doing?' she asked.

'I'm hanging this picture on the wall,'

I answered. 'It's a new one. Do you like it?'

She looked at it critically for a moment. 'It's all right,' she said, 'but isn't it upside-down?'

I looked at it again. She was right! It was!



Comprehension and Précis

Answer these questions *in not more than 70 words*.

1. Does the writer study art, or does he study music? Does he paint a lot of pictures or not? (*and*)
2. Do many people really understand modern art or not?
3. Do paintings always have a meaning or not?
4. Are they sometimes pretty patterns or not?
5. Do young children appreciate modern paintings better than others or not? Do they notice more or not? (*not only . . . but*)
6. When did the writer's young sister go into his room? Did she examine his new picture or not? (*and*)
7. Had he hung it upside-down, or had he hung it the right way up? Did she notice this immediately or not? (*and*)

Composition

Rewrite these sentences using the correct verbs and joining words:

I (looked at) (watched) the picture (but) (and) I could not (understand) (realize) it. It was in black and white and was (called) (named) 'Trees and Snow'. I could see (neither) (not only) trees (or) (nor) snow.

Letter-writing

Which of the following addresses is correct?

John Madgewick,
14 Grafton St.,
Croydon,
Surrey,
England.

Grafton St., 14,
Croydon,
Surrey,
England.
24th April, 19—

14 Grafton St.,
Croydon,
Surrey,
England.
24th April,

Key Structures

These things always happen.

a I am having breakfast. Do you always get up so late? (Now and Always KS 15)

b These things always happen:

The earth *goes* round the sun.

The sun *rises* in the east and *sets* in the west.

c We rarely put *-ing* at the end of these verbs: appear, appreciate, believe, feel, forget, hear, know, like, look like, notice, remember, resemble, see, think (that), understand.

These verbs tell us what *always* happens:

I *hear* that you *like* classical music.

I *remember* Tom very well. *Do you know* him?

Exercises

A. Underline the verbs in the passage that tell us what *always* happens and those which tell us what is happening *now*.

B. What is happening? What always happens?

Give the correct form of the verbs in brackets:

'Some people still (believe) the world is flat,' he said.

'You (joke),' I replied. 'I (not know) anyone who does.'

'Well, you (know) me,' he replied. 'I (believe) that the earth is flat. I met a man the other day. I (forget) his name now. He said that the earth (look) like a flat dish.'

'... you (try) to tell me that you (believe) him?' I asked.

'I certainly do,' he answered. 'I (think) that he is right.'

'And which side of the dish ... you (live) on?'

'Oh, I (not know). He didn't tell me that!'

Special Difficulties

Speech Marks

In written conversation, we put speech marks ('...') or ("...") round the words that are actually spoken. Read this carefully:

'What are you doing?' she asked.

'I'm hanging this picture on the wall,' I answered. 'It's a new one. Do you like it?'

She looked at it critically for a moment. 'It's all right,' she said, 'but isn't it upside-down?' (ll. 14-18)

Some things to notice:

a The speech marks are above the line. They go outside all other marks like commas (,) full stops (.) and question marks (?).

b The speaker's first word begins with a capital letter.

c Words like 'said' and 'asked' are followed by a comma. We put a full stop after them only when they come at the end of a sentence.

d When words like 'said' or 'asked' interrupt the speaker, the second half of the sentence begins with a small letter.

e We begin a new paragraph each time a new speaker is introduced.

Exercise

Write this piece of conversation again using speech marks:

Look! she said, isn't that man drunk? I think we should cross the road, answered her husband. It's too late now, she replied. Eh, you two. Look where you're going, called the drunk. Can't you walk in a straight line?