

## Art Biography

You probably do not think that you have a great deal of artistic or cultural experience and only limited knowledge of this area. This, you might say, is the very reason that you are having CKV lessons. But before you dismiss your cultural baggage as virtually non-existent, let's take a close look. In order to do this we will break things down into a few more easily to follow parts:

- **Primary school**  
What can you remember from your primary school days, plays you were in, creative lessons you had, visits you made, musical instruments that you played, etc.
- **Secondary school**  
What can you remember from your primary school days, plays you were in, creative lessons you had, visits you made, musical instruments that you played, etc.
- **Active participation**  
Which areas of art and culture are you actively involved in? Do you play or perform with a musical instrument? Do you dance? Do you make your own drawings or paintings? Do you write – poetry, a diary? Do you take photographs or sing in a choir? Are you a member of a drama club? Do you design things using creative software on your computer?
- **Passive participation**  
Do you go to concerts, the theatre, the cinema, exhibitions or any other form of art or culture as a 'passive user'? What sort of music do you listen to?
- **Parents and family influences**  
What influences have your parents and/or family had on your cultural experiences up until now? Are they the sorts of parents who drag you along to all sorts of things and pack your holidays abroad with cultural baggage, or have you grown up in a cultural vacuum?
- **Changes**  
What changes have you gone through in the last years in terms of your personal cultural taste? Presumably you do not still listen to the same music or watch the same sort of movies as six years ago, or do you?

Use these points above to guide you in writing your own cultural biography. A text of at least 400 words is expected, although depending on your experiences, it may end up being longer.

***This, like all your CKV assignments should be brought to the lessons whilst you are working on them. When a particular theme is finished, it should be added to your CKV dossier along with all work that has been completed and marked.***

When you have written your art biography text there is a short practical assignment that has to be completed and turned into a title page for your text. The instructions on the next page explain what is expected.

# Shoot me now

Everyone's at it, from pop stars to politicians: snapping self-portraits on their phones and sharing them online. But what does a selfie reveal about us? We persuaded some reluctant stars to send us their personal take

Selfie: just saying the word makes me queasy. There's something so... well, self-satisfied about it: an adoring name for yourself, as if you were your own best friend. But in a world where celebrities are managing and manipulating their own identities, self-portraits are now ubiquitous. And where celebrities go, civilians follow. Now we're all playing the selfie game. This is me on the tube, me on the loo, me getting ready to go out, me, me, me. At the time of writing, the photo-sharing social network Instagram hosted almost 91.5m selfies with the hashtag #me, plus another 34m tagged #selfie. The selfie reflects a world in which we are all our own biographer, our own agent.

Only one problem. Most selfies look the same, or fall into one of the following genres: let's call them Hot Sex, Gorgeous Me, Faux Natural, Life Is Fun and Check Out My Style. So there's Justin Bieber, six-packed, naked to the waist, pouting and preening like a porn star; Paris Hilton, camera held just above eye level for the perfect angle, mouth puckered, making love to her iPhone; doe-eyed Shane Warne waking up to an early-morning selfie; Rihanna skinning up with friends; and then all the kids imitating Bieber, Hilton, Rihanna et al.

But can a selfie transcend these clichés? Might they reveal as much as a traditional portrait? Or is the whole point that they give nothing away? We asked some famous faces - politicians and poets, broadcasters, artists and athletes - to send us their take on the selfie: not pouting, not posed and definitely not lifted from an Instagram feed. (Few of the people on these pages are known for their raging narcissism.) We wanted them queuing for the bus, walking up a mountain in Wales, doing something unexpected.



## The Assignment.....

The assignment could hardly be simpler. Use your mobile, your digital camera, your tablet or your webcam to make a 'selfie' of yourself. Just make sure that it isn't boring a cliché. Do something surprising and use it as a cover for your art biography text.



Samantha Morton, actor: I don't like watching myself on screen or hearing my own voice. This selfie thing: what's it all about?



Tom Hollander, actor: Richmond Park, Sunday lunch



Akram Khan, dancer: In a Vienna hotel with my daughter Sayuri



Gizzi Erskine, cook: At Street Feast, and I meet this pig-headed guy...



Andrew Sachs, actor: Attempt 200. I know nothing about this