Practice
Now, try some exercises to practise talking about art.

Exercise 1
Works of art. Complete the definitions below with nouns from the opposite page.

A. A(n) ________ is a quickly made drawing without many details.
B. A(n) ________ is a picture of an arrangement of objects such as fruit or flowers.
C. A(n) ________ is a picture of the countryside.
D. A(n) ________ is a picture of a person, especially of the head and shoulders.
E. A(n) ________ is an excellent work of art by a particular artist.

Exercise 2
The best word. Choose the correct option to complete each sentence below.

A. The portrait is so ________. It could be a photograph instead of a painting.
B. He’s best known for his abstract paintings, but his early work is ________. He is a master of the brushstrokes — wonderful!
C. Look how well she has ________ the vivid reds and yellows of the evening sky.
D. Many critics consider him to be ________. I can’t afford to pay for a work of that artist.
E. I’d let you have it for only £500. That is why I can’t afford to pay for a work of his. It’s ________, so my wife often sits for me. But this means that my prices are low. What do you think of this reclining ________ ?

Exercise 3
Art for sale. Complete the paragraph with the words from the list.

canvas | charcoal | frame | made | pastels | sitter
(A) ________ is expensive, and so is the wooden (B) ________ needed to stretch it. That is why most of my works are on paper. I produce a lot of (C) ________ drawings, although I also like to work in (D) ________. I can’t afford to pay for a (E) ________, so my wife often sits for me. But this means that my prices are low. What do you think of this reclining ________?

Exercise 4
What do the idiomatic phrases below (1–3) mean? Match them to the correct explanations (A–C).

1. “It’s not my cup of tea.”
2. “There’s no accounting for taste.”
3. “It’s right up my street.”

A. If you don’t like something, you can say: If something is exactly the kind of thing you are interested in, you can say:
B. If something is exactly the kind of thing you are interested in, you can say:
C. If you don’t understand why someone likes something that you don’t like, you can say:

1. “It’s right up my street.”
2. “There’s no accounting for taste.”
3. “It’s not my cup of tea.”

Art
Do you enjoy visiting art galleries? Or do you perhaps paint in your free time? ANNA HOCHSIEDER presents language to talk about art.

At the Museum of Fine Arts
Lucy: Oh, look! I love this painting. The colours are so vivid — they seem to fly off the canvas.
Tom: Hmm, abstract art’s not my cup of tea. What does it represent anyway?
Lucy: Whatever you want it to. Anyway, most of this painter’s works are figurative. Look at this reclining nude. It’s a masterpiece!
Tom: I prefer the still life next to it. But on the whole, I think this artist is a bit overrated.
Lucy: But look at the composition! It’s perfectly balanced. And the texture and depth that he creates with his brushstrokes — wonderful!
Tom: Well, there’s no accounting for taste. I prefer pictures that are lifelike.
Lucy: Look, why don’t we go upstairs to the temporary exhibition?
Tom: What’s on display there?
Lucy: Early 19th-century watercolour landscapes. They should be right up your street!