

# - - - Graffiti - - -

Graffiti has existed since the days of ancient civilizations. The term graffiti referred to the inscriptions, figure drawings, etc., found on the walls of ancient ruins, as in the Catacombs of Rome or at Pompeii.

Graffiti today is a life-style and can be found all over the world. It all started in the 1960s. In New York teenagers began to write their names on walls in their neighbourhood. They did not use their real names, but invented new ones. They also drew pictures of famous people like Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy or James Dean.

The New York Police think graffiti writers are criminals. New York spends Million of dollars every year to stop the sprayers. They use special dogs, high fences, and special policemen try to catch them. Although there are not so many sprayers today as in the 70s, lots of kids continue to leave their signs and pictures on walls and buildings. Many of them see graffiti as a way to become famous and get out of the slum. But only a few can show their art in galleries and earn some money.

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### COMMENT

## Is graffiti art?

In my opinion graffiti isn't exactly necessary, but it makes the city more colourful. Some of the styles are simply scribbled but others are masterpieces. Some of the locations are extremely difficult to reach, part of the dare and therefore the fame.

People wonder how they got to these places (high bridges). This is great! Another positive side is that graffiti means everything to the sprayers and it helps them with their lives, like music for other people. But I hate people who spray on privately-owned surfaces and just scribble. They are no real artists. That is just vandalism!

All in all I think: graffiti is good when it looks nice and beautiful on legal places. But the others you can forget about.

Anna Smetten 9b



## TAKI 183

In the late 1960s and early 1970s graffiti writing began. TAKI 183 was by no means the first writer or even the first king. Taki was Greek born, named Demetrios. The number 183 came from his address on 183rd Street in Washington Heights. He was employed as a foot messenger, so he was on the subway frequently and took advantage of it. He tagged streets subway stations and subway cars. In addition to the subway his name appeared in business districts of Manhattan. On July 21, 1971, The New York Times ran an article about him, titled "Taki183". The article on Taki 183 brought him and graffiti fame. Many tried to copy this.

