



Writing a Title

Exercise 1

Read the following articles and think of a proper title for each of them.

ARTICLE 1

Many forms of music were forbidden in the Soviet Union, especially in the first years of the Cold War. Western jazz and rock-and-roll were deemed the music of the enemy; Russian-émigré pop, the music of traitors. The Soviets banned “any music with a sort of swing to it,” says Stephen Coates, a British musician who founded the X-Ray Audio Project to chronicle one effort to evade state control.

In 1946 two enterprising music lovers in Leningrad, Ruslan Bugaslovski and Boris Taigin, figured out a way to copy records. The original music was smuggled into the country, often by sailors. Because materials in the U.S.S.R. were scarce, the two men scavenged parts from tools, such as drills, and old gramophones to build a recording machine. For the records themselves, they turned to an unlikely source: discarded x-rays, which were made of plastic soft enough to be cut by the recording machine.

The pair’s creations were striking: An x-ray image of broken ribs emitted the lilt of Russian tango. A Broadway show tune quavered from a dislocated pelvis. A human skull was the morbid backdrop for American jazz. “You have these pictures of the insides of Soviet citizens, impressed with the music they secretly loved,” says Coates, who stumbled across one of these “bone records” a few years ago in St. Petersburg.

Bootleggers in other cities picked up the duo’s methods, creating an underground record culture that lasted nearly two decades. But the authorities caught on too: Bugaslovski was imprisoned three times. “That’s how much music can matter,” says Coates.

ARTICLE 2

To appreciate a painting, we're taught to look for color, composition, and light. But how can a painting be savored by someone who's blind? Through touch, the one thing gallery placards tell you not to do. John Olson, a former photographer, and his team render paintings into fully textured 3-D models.

The tactile paintings work as a way to reveal art to the blind because we don't see with just our eyes: We see with our brains. Research in the field of neuroplasticity—the brain's adaptability—shows that the visual cortex is stimulated by touch. Blind people perceive shapes with their existing senses, a process that broadly mimics that of sighted people, says Ella Striem-Amit, a Harvard neuroscientist.

Luc Gandarias, who's now 13, went blind suddenly at age seven. When he felt a 3-D rendering of Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," he says he noticed her smile right away: "I could literally feel what you see when you look at it."

For Luc this means independence. "The feeling of being able to see it and form my opinion is like breaking down another wall as a blind person."

ARTICLE 3

On Earth, clothes make the man — and woman. In space, they're the key to survival. Whether helping astronauts enter Earth orbit, walk on the moon, pilot a space shuttle, or travel to Mars, space suits must serve several vital functions: provide oxygen, control temperature, permit movement, power communications, and protect against solar radiation.

But fashion is fickle, and technology grows apace. Space historian Roger Launius says the first suits were based on what jet pilots wore. Over time they've evolved into autonomous modules that help astronauts negotiate the inky expanse, gather samples, and work on the International Space Station.

Yet in some ways they've hardly changed. Now as then, a space suit is essentially a gas-filled, human-shaped covering. (Exceptions include the form-fitting suits Dava Newman is developing at MIT and the high-mobility models Pablo de León is designing at the University of North Dakota.)

Launius says a hard-shell suit is optimal but impractical. "So you've always had suits that can be pressurized, unpressurized, and folded up. The downside is that, when inflated, they look like the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man."

The next step: a suit that's easy to get into and out of. "We also need one for both zero gravity and a surface with some gravity, like Mars," says Launius. He concedes that those goals may be mutually exclusive. But why not shoot for the moon?