

Key Knowledge:

Banksy is a famous – but anonymous – graffiti artist. He keeps his identity a secret. He is well-known for producing pieces of artwork which pop up in public places, such as on the walls of buildings. A lot of his work is done in a particular style, which people can recognise. As graffiti is considered to be an act of vandalism, it is thought that originally Banksy stayed anonymous so that he did not get into trouble.

Banksy began spray-painting trains and walls in his home town of Bristol in the early 1990s. Often, his artwork is rebellious and often includes political statements. Rats are also a common theme in his work. There have been rumours about who Banksy really is, but his true identity has never been revealed.

Banksy was heavily influenced, in his early days by a French graffiti artist called Blek Le Raf. He used stencils to create artwork and Banksy was inspired to do the same. This allows him to create his artwork quickly and helps him to remain anonymous.

His work is famous and many people are prepared to pay a lot of money for a piece of artwork. However, others view it as vandalism. When his work appears, there are arguments about who owns the work and whether it should be looked after to be enjoyed or destroyed.

Media and techniques:

- Stencilling
- Graffiti-style lettering
- Use of personal identity, political statements and rats as themes.
- Brightly-coloured pens and paints

Vocabulary:

Anonymous – a person who is not identified by name.

Vandalism – act involving deliberate destruction or damage to public or private property.

Graffiti – writings or drawings sprayed deliberately on a wall or other surface in a public place.

Political statement – any act of verbal or non-verbal communication which intends to influence a decision to be made regarding politics.

Stencil – a thin sheet of card with a pattern cut out of it, used to produce the cut design on the surface below by the application of ink or paint through the holes.

Example Artwork:

