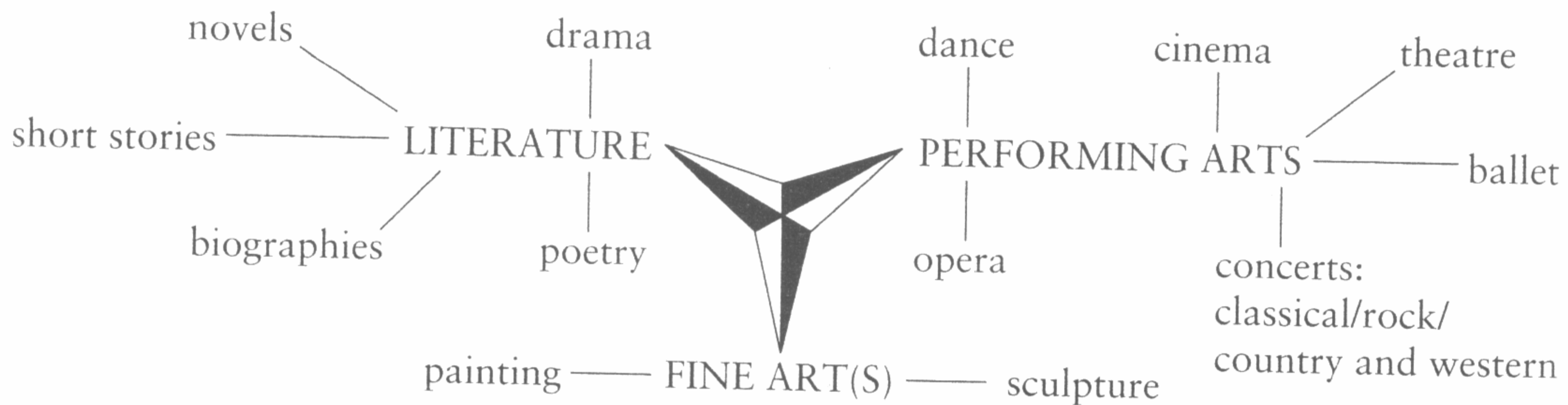


42 The arts

A Things which generally come under the heading of 'the arts'



We often also include **architecture** and **ceramics** within the arts.

The arts (plural) covers everything in the network. **Art** (singular, uncountable) usually means **fine art**, but can also refer to technique and creativity.

Have you read the **arts page** in *The Times* today? [that part of the paper that deals with all the things in the network]

She's a great **art lover**. [loves painting and sculpture]

Shakespeare was skilled in **the art of poetry**. [creative ability]

Dance usually refers to modern artistic dance forms; **ballet** usually has a more traditional feel, unless we say **modern ballet**. *Remember*: a **novel** is a long story, e.g. 200–300 pages; a short prose fiction, e.g. 10 pages, is a **short story**.

Use of the definite article

When we refer to a performing art in general, we can leave out the article.

Are you interested in (the) **cinema/ballet/opera/theatre**?

Would you like to come to **the cinema/ballet/opera/theatre** with us next week.
[particular performance]

B Describing a performance

We went to see a new production of *Hamlet* last night. The **sets** (1) were incredibly realistic and the **costumes** (2) were wonderful. It was a good **cast** (3) and I thought the **direction** (4) was excellent. Anthony O'Donnell **gave a marvellous performance** (5). It got **rave reviews** (6) in the papers today.

(1) scenery, buildings, furniture on the stage or in a studio

(2) clothes the actors wear on stage

(3) all the actors in it

(4) the way the director had organised the performance

(5) and (6) note these typical collocations; (6) means 'got very enthusiastic comments'

C Words connected with events in the arts

There's an **exhibition** (Am. Eng.: **exhibit**) of paintings by Manet on in London.

They're going to **publish** a new **edition** of the **works** of Cervantes next year.

The Opera Society are doing a **performance** of *Don Giovanni*.

Our local cinema's **showing** Bergman's *Persona* next week.

Note: What's **on** at the cinema/theatre, etc. next week?

Exercises

42.1 Which branch of the arts do you think these people are talking about?

Example: 'It was a strong cast but the play itself is weak.' *Theatre*

- 1 'It's called *Peace*. It stands in the main square.'
- 2 'Animation doesn't have to be just *Disney*, you know.'
- 3 'It was just pure movement, with very exciting rhythms.'
- 4 'It doesn't have to rhyme to be good.'
- 5 'Oils to me don't have the delicacy of water-colours.'
- 6 'Her design for the new shopping centre won an award.'
- 7 'I read them and imagine what they'd be like on stage.'
- 8 'The first chapter was boring but it got better later.'
- 9 'I was falling asleep by the second act.'

42.2 Definite article or not? Fill the gap with *the* if necessary.

- 1 The government doesn't give enough money to arts.
- 2 She's got a diploma in dance from the Performing Arts Academy.
- 3 I've got some tickets for ballet. Interested?
- 4 art of writing a short story is to interest the reader from the very first line.
- 5 I can't stand modern poetry; it's so pretentious.
- 6 I was no good at art at school. What about you?

42.3 Each one of these sentences contains a mistake of usage of words connected with the arts. Find the mistake and correct it. You may need a dictionary.

Example: The scene at this theatre projects right out into the audience.
not 'scene' but 'stage' (the place where the actors perform)

- 1 What's the name of the editorial of that book you recommended? Was it Cambridge University Press?
- 2 'I wandered lonely as a cloud' is my favourite verse of English poetry.
- 3 He's a very famous sculpture; he did that statue in the park, you know, the one with the soldiers.
- 4 Most of the novels in this collection are only five or six pages long. They're great for reading on short journeys.
- 5 There's an exposition of ceramic at the museum next week.
- 6 The sceneries are excellent in that new production of *Macbeth*, so dark and mysterious.
- 7 What's in the Opera House next week? Anything interesting?

42.4 Ask questions for which these remarks would be suitable answers.

Example: It's an oil on canvas. *What sort of painting is it?*

- 1 Yes, it got rave reviews.
- 2 No, I'm not really a concert-goer, but thanks anyway.
- 3 Oh, some beautiful old buildings and some ugly new ones.
- 4 The cast were fine, but the direction was weak.
- 5 A new Hungarian film; fancy going to see it?

Follow-up: Make sure you can name all the parts of a typical theatre in English. A picture-dictionary might help you.