**7. Read the text “Street Art”.**

New Yorkers used to see the graffiti on the walls of poor neighbourhoods and subway trains as something menacing and an example of urban decay. The scrawled names and slogans were seen as unsightly and aggressive, the work of vandals seeking to express their identities or even make a political point. Up to the 1970s, most New Yorkers hated graffiti, considering it as an eyesore that was illegal and punishable by fines.

Since those days, graffiti has changed a lot and it is no longer found only in the subway and the poor ghetto areas of the city. Nowadays, it has the status of 'street art' and you get graffiti in places where you wouldn't expect to - in advertisements, on clothes, on toys, and even on the Wall Street Journal's official website! In the early 1980s, there was a real craze for graffiti art and the sophisticated Manhattan art world had displays of street art in its galleries. The trend was short-lived - until the arrival of hip-hop music in the late 80s.

Today companies are starting to realize the appeal of graffiti in advertising. Kel Rodriguez, who used to spray New York subway trains, was the artist chosen to design the Wall Street Journal's website and it is obviously done in graffiti-style. Many of this new wave of artists give lectures on developments in their art. Lee Quindnesis having a lot of success in Europe and feels that European galleries and museums are more open to his art form. "They want to support an artist as he develops," comments Quinones, who can get up to $10,000 for his paintings. Indeed, the Groninger Museum in Holland is one of the few museums in the world that displays and recognizes graffiti as an art form.