

Capturing Light: The Art of Claude Monet

Learning objective: To understand the Impressionist style of Claude Monet and explore how he used color and light to depict natural scenes.

Read each question carefully. Use your knowledge of Impressionism and Zara's tips on observing patterns and light to answer the questions below.

Claude Monet was a famous French artist who helped start a movement called Impressionism. He loved to paint outside, which is known as 'en plein air'. Instead of using smooth, blended lines, he used short, quick brushstrokes to capture how light changed the appearance of a scene. He often painted the same subject, like water lilies or haystacks, at different times of the day to show how the colors changed as the sun moved.

Word bank: Impressionism · Brushstrokes · Light · Landscape · Reflections · Palette · Atmosphere

1. What does the term 'en plein air' mean in the context of Monet's work, and why did he choose to work this way? (2 marks)

2. Describe the difference between the brushstrokes used by an Impressionist painter like Monet and the style of a traditional portrait painter. (2 marks)

3. Monet often painted the same scene many times at different times of the day. Based on your knowledge of light, why would the colors change? (2 marks)

4. Zara is looking at a painting of a pond. Explain how Monet might use color to show the reflection of the sky on the water. (2 marks)

5. If you were to paint your school playground in the style of Monet, would you focus on fine detail or the 'impression' of the scene? Explain your choice. (2 marks)

Draw: Zara the zebra wants you to paint a garden scene in the style of Monet. Focus on using short, dabbing brushstrokes. Do not outline your shapes with black pens; instead, let the colors sit next to each other to show the light on the leaves and flowers.



Extension challenge: Research Monet's garden at Giverny. Write a short paragraph describing how his real-life garden influenced his famous 'Water Lilies' series of paintings.