

Zara's Art Masterpiece Study: The World of Vincent van Gogh

Learning objective: To analyse the artistic style, brushwork, and emotional expression of Vincent van Gogh.

Follow Zara the Zebra as she explores the gallery. Use this fact-file to research and record your observations about one of Van Gogh's famous paintings. Look closely at his use of colour and texture to help you complete each section.

Word bank: Impressionism · Post-Impressionism · vibrant · impasto · brushwork · contrast · emotion · landscape · composition · pigment

1. Painting Title and Subject: Which painting have you chosen? Describe the scene in detail, noting the main objects or landscape features visible. (2 marks)

2. Colour Palette Analysis: Identify the primary colours used. Explain why the artist might have chosen these specific colours to create a mood. (3 marks)

3. Technique and Texture: Describe the artist's brushwork. How does the 'impasto' technique (thick paint) change the way the light hits the canvas? (3 marks)

4. Comparing Styles: Compare this painting to a more realistic portrait. Justify your answer: why does this style make the viewer feel an emotion rather than just seeing a photograph? (4 marks)

5. Creative Interpretation: If you were to step inside this painting, what sounds or smells might you encounter? Describe the atmosphere. (3 marks)

6. Critical Thinking: What might happen to the overall mood of the painting if the artist had used dull, muted colours instead of vibrant ones? Explain your reasoning. (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Imagine you are an art critic in the 1890s. Write a short paragraph justifying why you believe Van Gogh's unique style of painting will influence future generations of artists. How does his 'movement' of paint across the canvas change the way we perceive reality?