

Industrial Landscapes: The Art of L.S. Lowry

Learning objective: To analyse the artistic style of L.S. Lowry and apply his techniques, such as the use of a limited colour palette and perspective, to create a scene of local life.

Study the techniques of L.S. Lowry and answer the questions below. Use the word bank to help you describe his unique artistic style.

L.S. Lowry (1887–1976) was a famous English artist renowned for painting scenes of life in industrial districts in Northern England. He often used a limited palette, focusing on muted tones and a stark white background to make his figures stand out. His iconic, simplified human figures are often referred to as 'matchstick men'.

Word bank: industrial · monochromatic · perspective · matchstick men · urban · composition · atmosphere · background

1. Zara the zebra loves patterns and textures. Explain why Lowry chose to use a limited colour palette rather than bright, primary colours for his industrial paintings. (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast Lowry's 'matchstick men' with a realistic portrait. Why might an artist choose to simplify human figures in this way? (2 marks)

3. Lowry often painted tall chimneys and factories in his backgrounds. Justify why these features are important for capturing the 'atmosphere' of an industrial town. (2 marks)

4. If you were to paint your school playground in the style of Lowry, what colour would you use for the sky and why? (1 mark)

5. What might happen to the mood of a painting if the artist removed all the people from the scene? (2 marks)

6. Max the monkey is looking at a painting where the buildings get smaller as they move towards the horizon. What is this artistic technique called? (1 mark)

Draw: Using a pencil or charcoal, create a sketch of your local high street in the style of L.S. Lowry. Remember to include a stark, pale background, simplified 'matchstick' figures, and tall industrial shapes like chimneys or lamp posts.



Extension challenge: Research a specific painting by L.S. Lowry. Write a short poem from the perspective of one of his 'matchstick' figures. Describe the sounds, smells, and feelings of the environment they are walking through. Consider how the artist's choice of composition influences the story of the painting.