

Mastering Monet: A Study of Impressionism

Learning objective: To understand the artistic techniques, subject matter, and historical significance of Claude Monet's Impressionist style.

Use these flashcards to test your knowledge of Claude Monet. Read the front carefully, then reveal the answer to check your understanding of his methods and famous works.

What is the name of the art movement that Claude Monet helped to start?

Impressionism. A style of painting that focuses on capturing the immediate 'impression' of a scene rather than precise detail.

What does the French term 'en plein air' mean in relation to Monet's work?

En plein air: This means 'in the open air', referring to the practice of painting outdoors to capture natural light.

How did Monet's brushstrokes differ from traditional, formal paintings?

Brushstrokes: Monet used short, thick, and visible dabs of paint to create movement and capture the vibration of light, rather than smoothing them out.

Why was the quality of natural light so important to Monet?

Light. Monet believed light changed the colour and mood of a scene constantly, so he often painted the same subject at different times of the day.

What is a 'series' in the context of Monet's art?

Series: A collection of paintings of the same subject (like haystacks or water lilies) painted under different lighting and weather conditions.

Where was Monet's famous garden located, which inspired his late paintings?

Giverny: The village in France where Monet lived and built his iconic water garden with the Japanese bridge.

Why did Monet avoid using black paint in many of his shadows?

Shadows. He preferred to mix colours to create colourful, natural-looking shadows rather than using pure black, which he felt looked unnatural.

Explain why Zara, our art-loving zebra, might admire Monet's use of colour.

Colour Theory. Zara would admire how Monet placed complementary colours side-by-side to make them appear brighter and more vivid to the human eye.

What might happen if Monet had painted his 'Water Lilies' inside a studio instead of outdoors?

Atmosphere. The paintings would likely lack the 'fleeting' quality of natural light and the subtle changes in weather that defined his unique style.

Justify why Monet's work is considered a turning point in the history of art.

Justification. It shifted the focus from painting realistic, historical, or religious scenes to focusing on the artist's personal perception and the beauty of everyday life.

Compare and contrast a traditional portrait with a Monet landscape.

Comparison: A traditional portrait focuses on fine detail, smooth blending, and realism, whereas a Monet landscape focuses on loose brushwork, changing light, and the overall feeling of a scene.

If you were to paint your school playground 'en plein air', how would you capture the 'impression' of the movement?

Creative Application: By using quick, energetic marks and bright colours to represent the energy and light of the playground, rather than drawing every individual object clearly.