

Zara's Still Life Masterclass

Learning objective: To identify the key components of still life art, understand the importance of composition, and analyse the use of light and shadow.

Help Zara the Zebra create a gallery-worthy masterpiece! Read the questions carefully and use your artistic knowledge to select the best answers.

Answer Key: 1.C, 2.True, 3.A, 4.False, 5.Highlight, 6.B, 7.True, 8.Foreground, 9.C, 10.Composition.

Word bank: Composition · Foreground · Background · Texture · Highlight · Shadow · Perspective · Still life

1. 1. What is a 'still life' painting? A) A portrait of a fast animal. B) A landscape of a busy city. C) An arrangement of inanimate objects.* D) A picture of a historical event. (1 mark)

2. 2. True or False: Still life artists often use different fabrics to show texture in their work. (1 mark)

3. 3. Which of these is the best subject for a traditional still life? A) A bowl of fruit and a silver teapot.* B) A galloping racehorse. C) A rainy street scene. D) A map of the ocean. (1 mark)

4. 4. True or False: In a still life, it does not matter where you place the objects on the table. (1 mark)

5. 5. What is the term for the brightest point on an object where light hits it directly? (1 mark)

6. 6. Why might an artist include a dark shadow in their painting? A) To make the object look invisible. B) To create depth and make the object look 3D.* C) To use up all their black paint. D) To make the background look blurry. (1 mark)

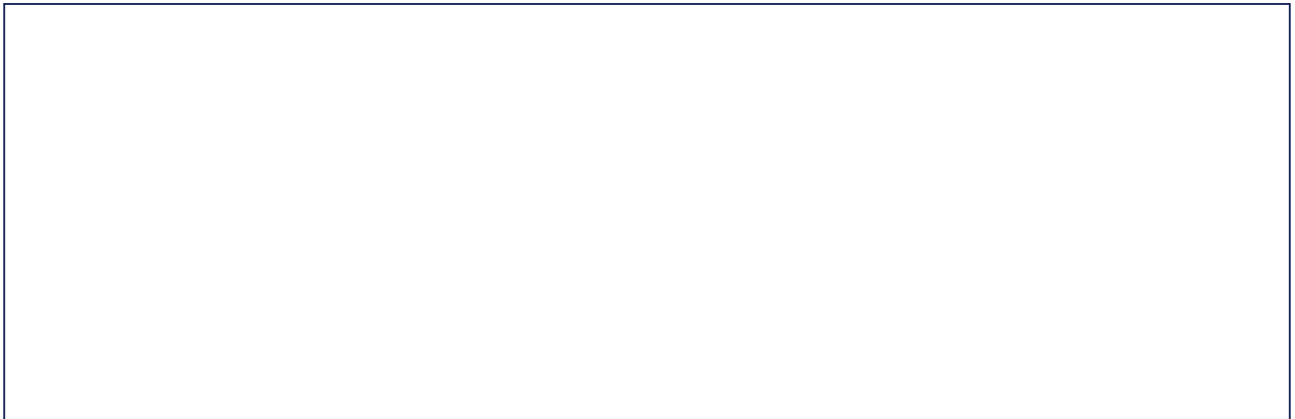
7. 7. True or False: An artist must observe their objects carefully to capture their shape and colour accurately. (1 mark)

8. 8. If an object is placed at the very front of your drawing, is it in the foreground or the background? (1 mark)

9. 9. How does overlapping objects change a drawing? A) It makes it look messy. B) It makes it look like a cartoon. C) It creates a sense of space and distance.* D) It makes the objects look broken. (1 mark)

10. 10. What do we call the arrangement of items within the frame of an artwork? (1 mark)

Draw: Set up a small collection of three items (e.g., a piece of fruit, a mug, and a toy). Spend 10 minutes observing them. Draw your still life, paying close attention to where the light hits the objects and where the shadows fall.



Extension challenge: Greater Depth Challenges: 1. Explain why an artist might choose to paint a 'memento mori' (a still life with symbolic objects like a wilting flower or an hourglass). 2. Compare and contrast a still life by a classical painter with a modern digital art still life. 3. Justify your answer: Does the background of a still life change the mood of the piece? 4. What might happen if an artist painted a still life using only cool colours? 5. If you were to add a 'hidden' object to your still life to tell a story, what would it be and why? 6. Critique your own drawing: What is one element of light or shadow you could improve to make the objects appear more solid?