Zara’s Garden of Colours: Exploring Claude Monet

Learning objective: To explore the work of Claude Monet, focusing on how he used colour, light, and observation of nature to create impressionist art.

Look at the paintings by Claude Monet. Think about how he used his brush to show sunlight and flowers. Answer the questions below to show what you have learned about his style.

Claude Monet was a famous artist who loved to paint outside. He did not always paint every tiny detail. Instead, he used quick strokes of bright paint to show how the light touched the flowers and the water in his beautiful garden. He wanted his paintings to show how a place felt in that moment.

Word bank: impressionism · paint · light · nature · water lilies · colourful · garden

1. Claude Monet liked to paint outside in nature. Why do you think he chose to paint in a garden instead of inside a dark room? (2 marks)

2. Monet painted many pictures of water lilies. Can you name two things he might see in a garden that he could paint? (2 marks)

3. If you were painting a sunny day, would you use dark colours like black and grey, or bright colours like yellow and blue? Why? (2 marks)

4. Monet used quick, short brushstrokes. If you were painting a flower, would you use long, straight lines or small, soft dots and dabs? (2 marks)

5. Zara the zebra loves patterns. If you look closely at Monet's paintings, do you see lots of blended colours or lots of different dots of colour? (2 marks)

Draw: Imagine you are standing in Monet’s garden. Use your pencils or paints to draw the lily pond. Remember to use bright colours and short, quick marks to show the sunlight on the water.

Extension challenge: Go outside and find a flower or a leaf. Look at it very closely. How many different shades of green or other colours can you see? Try to paint your own 'impression' of the flower using only the colours you spotted.