

Abstract Art Adventure with Zara

Learning objective: To identify key characteristics of abstract art, recognise how artists use colour and shape to express emotions, and evaluate the impact of non-representational imagery.

Join Zara the Zebra as she explores the world of abstract art! Read each question carefully and use your knowledge of colour theory, line, and composition to select or write the best answer.

Answer Key: 1.C, 2.True, 3.Organic, 4.B, 5.False, 6.A, 7.Texture, 8.D, 9.True, 10.Composition. Abstract art focuses on feelings and ideas rather than realistic depictions. Artists use colour, shape, and form to communicate.

Word bank: Abstract · Composition · Geometric · Organic · Expressionism · Non-representational · Palette · Texture

1. 1. What does it mean for a piece of artwork to be 'abstract'? A) It is a perfect photograph, B) It copies nature exactly, C) It uses shapes and colours to represent ideas rather than realistic objects*, D) It is only drawn in black and white. (1 mark)

2. 2. True or False: Abstract art always has to look like something recognisable, such as a dog or a house. (1 mark)

3. 3. If an artist uses flowing, curvy shapes that look like leaves or clouds, are they using geometric or organic shapes? (1 mark)

4. 4. Which of these best describes a 'warm' colour palette? A) Blues and greens, B) Reds, oranges, and yellows*, C) Greys and blacks, D) Only white. (1 mark)

5. 5. True or False: In abstract art, the artist is not allowed to use thick paint or visible brushstrokes. (1 mark)

6. 6. Which term describes how an artist arranges the elements of their work on the page? A) Composition*, B) Sketching, C) Shading, D) Perspective. (1 mark)

7. 7. What word do we use to describe the surface quality of a painting, such as whether it feels rough, bumpy, or smooth? (1 mark)

8. 8. Why might an abstract artist choose to use jagged, sharp lines in a painting? A) To make the viewer feel sleepy, B) To show a calm ocean, C) To suggest a gentle breeze, D) To create a sense of tension or energy*. (1 mark)

9. 9. True or False: Abstract art can be used to express emotions like joy, anger, or sadness. (1 mark)

10. 10. If an artist paints a canvas entirely in shades of blue to show 'sadness', what element of art are they primarily using? (1 mark)

Draw: Zara challenges you: Create an abstract piece titled 'The Sound of a Storm'. Use only organic shapes and a limited colour palette of cool colours to represent the feeling of heavy rain and wind without drawing any actual raindrops or trees.



Extension challenge: 1. Explain why an artist might choose to paint an abstract version of a landscape instead of a realistic one. 2. Compare and contrast a geometric abstract painting with an organic one; how does each make you feel? 3. Justify your answer: Does a painting need to look like a real object to be considered 'good' art? 4. What might happen if an artist used clashing colours in an abstract piece? 5. If you were to create an abstract self-portrait, which three colours would you choose to represent your personality and why? 6. Analyse a famous abstract work (or one of your own). How do the lines and shapes lead your eye around the canvas?