

Autumnal Aesthetics: A Study of Seasonal Patterns and Media

Learning objective: To evaluate the use of colour, texture, and natural forms in autumnal art, applying knowledge of composition and artistic techniques.

Read each question carefully. Use the word bank to support your answers where appropriate. Ensure your responses are descriptive and demonstrate your understanding of artistic elements.

Zara the zebra has been exploring the woodland, observing how the forest floor transforms as the seasons shift. She notes that the canopy changes from a uniform green to a vibrant mosaic of ochre, crimson, and burnt orange. Zara believes that the beauty of autumn lies not just in the colours, but in the way light filters through the thinning leaves, creating intricate shadows and highlighting the rugged textures of bark and decaying foliage. She challenges you to analyse these natural elements through an artistic lens.

Word bank: complementary · texture · warm palette · composition · translucent · contrast · organic · hue · saturation

1. Zara observes a 'warm palette' in the autumn leaves. List three specific colours that belong to this palette and explain why an artist might choose these to represent the season. (2 marks)

2. Define the term 'organic' in the context of art. How does an autumn leaf exemplify this concept compared to a man-made object like a plastic ruler? (2 marks)

3. Explain why an artist might use a 'complementary' colour scheme when painting a portrait of an autumn forest. Refer to the colour wheel in your justification. (3 marks)

4. Compare and contrast the texture of a smooth conker shell versus the rough, craggy texture of an oak tree trunk. How would you adjust your pencil pressure or brushwork to represent these two different surfaces? (3 marks)

5. What might happen to the 'mood' of a landscape painting if the artist chose to desaturate the colours of the autumn leaves? Justify your answer using the impact of colour on the viewer's emotions. (3 marks)

6. Identify one way you could use 'negative space' to draw attention to the shape of an autumn leaf in a minimalist composition. (2 marks)

7. Extended Writing: Zara wants to create a mixed-media piece representing 'The Cycle of Decay'. Describe a plan for this artwork, explaining which materials you would use to represent different textures and how you would arrange them to create a balanced composition. (5 marks) (5 marks)

Draw: In the space provided, create a study of an autumn leaf using cross-hatching to show the veins and stippling to represent the texture of the leaf surface. Focus on light and shadow.



Extension challenge: Critical Thinking Task: Research the work of a landscape artist who focuses on seasonal change. Write a short paragraph comparing their style to your own. If you were commissioned to design an autumn-themed exhibition for a gallery, how would you use lighting to change the way visitors perceive the 'warm palette' of your work? Justify your design choices. Total: /25