

# Mastering the Impressionist Light: Zara's Art Studio

*Learning objective: To understand the techniques of Claude Monet, specifically his use of broken colour, light, and the 'en plein air' method.*

Zara the zebra is fascinated by how Claude Monet captured the fleeting effects of light. She wants you to analyse his style. Look at the key concepts of Impressionism below and match them to their definitions, then provide your own critical analysis of how these techniques change the way a landscape looks.

*Word bank: Impressionism · En plein air · Broken colour · Subjective · Brushwork · Palette*

**1. Explain why Monet preferred to paint 'en plein air' rather than inside a studio. How does this affect the artist's ability to capture natural light? (3 marks)**

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**2. Compare and contrast Monet's 'broken colour' technique with a traditional, smooth-blended painting. Why do you think he chose to leave small gaps between colours instead of blending them on the canvas? (3 marks)**

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**3. Justify your answer: Does Monet's style focus more on the literal accuracy of an object or the emotional atmosphere of a moment? Refer to his series of Haystacks or Water Lilies. (3 marks)**

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**4. What might happen if Monet had used a palette of only black and white paint? Would his work still be considered Impressionist? Explain your reasoning. (2 marks)**

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**5. If you were to paint your school playground in the style of Monet, which time of day would you choose to capture the most interesting light, and why? (2 marks)**

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6. Create a 'colour recipe' for a summer pond. List four colours you would use to represent the reflection of the sky and the water, and describe the brushstrokes you would use for each. (2 marks)

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**Draw:** Using a piece of paper, create a study of a garden scene. Do not use solid outlines. Use short, rapid, dabbing brushstrokes (or pencil marks) to build up the shapes using only colour. Focus on how the light touches the top of the leaves.



*Extension challenge: Research Monet's 'Rouen Cathedral' series. Write a short paragraph explaining how his study of the same building at different times of the day challenges the viewer to rethink what 'colour' actually is.*