

Zara's Post-Impressionist Art Challenge

Learning objective: To understand the life, techniques, and artistic legacy of Vincent van Gogh.

Join Zara the zebra as she explores the swirling skies and bold brushstrokes of Vincent van Gogh. Read the questions carefully and use your knowledge of art history to complete this quiz.

Answer Key: 1.C, 2.True, 3.Arles, 4.B, 5.False, 6.Impasto, 7.A, 8.True, 9.Portrait, 10.B. Greater Depth: Van Gogh used thick paint to create physical texture; his colours were often non-realistic to express emotion rather than reality.

Word bank: Impressionism · Brushstrokes · Perspective · Complementary · Canvas · Landscape · Palette · Vibrant

1. 1. Which artistic movement was Van Gogh influenced by before developing his own unique style? A) Renaissance B) Surrealism C) Post-Impressionism* D) Cubism (1 mark)

2. 2. True or False: Van Gogh often used 'impasto', a technique where paint is applied very thickly to the canvas. (1 mark)

3. 3. In which French town did Van Gogh paint some of his most famous sunflower series? (1 mark)

4. 4. What is a key characteristic of Van Gogh's brushwork? A) Smooth and blended B) Short, thick, and directional* C) Thin and invisible D) Geometric and rigid (1 mark)

5. 5. True or False: Van Gogh only ever painted portraits of himself. (1 mark)

6. 6. Fill in the blank: Van Gogh frequently used _____ colours, such as blue and orange, placed side-by-side to make his paintings look brighter. (1 mark)

7. 7. Which famous painting features a swirling night sky? A) The Starry Night* B) Sunflowers C) The Potato Eaters D) Cafe Terrace at Night (1 mark)

8. 8. True or False: Van Gogh's work was incredibly popular and made him very wealthy during his lifetime. (1 mark)

9. 9. What genre of painting is 'Self-Portrait with Grey Felt Hat'? (1 mark)

10. 10. Why did Van Gogh choose to paint in such a non-realistic way? A) He didn't know how to mix colours B) To express his personal emotions and feelings* C) To copy other artists exactly D) Because he only had one colour of paint (1 mark)

Draw: Using Zara's favourite technique, create a 'Starry Night' inspired landscape of your own school or local park. Focus on using short, thick, swirling lines and bold, contrasting colours.



Extension challenge: 1. Explain why Van Gogh's choice of colour was considered revolutionary for his time. 2. Compare and contrast a landscape painting by Van Gogh with a photograph of the same location; what is lost or gained in the artistic interpretation? 3. Justify your answer: Does the texture of paint matter as much as the subject matter in an artwork? 4. What might happen if Van Gogh had used only dull, muted colours for his night scenes? 5. Critically analyse: How do the 'directional brushstrokes' guide the viewer's eye across the canvas? 6. Imagine you are an art critic in the 1890s; write a short paragraph defending Van Gogh's 'strange' style to a skeptical gallery owner.