

Artist Study: The Vision of Vincent van Gogh

Learning objective: To analyse the artistic style, techniques, and historical context of Vincent van Gogh and evaluate his influence on Post-Impressionism.

Use your research skills to investigate the life and work of Vincent van Gogh. Read through the prompts below and provide detailed, thoughtful responses. Ensure you use specific art terminology and justify your opinions with evidence from his paintings.

Word bank: Post-Impressionism · Impasto · Vibrant · Brushstroke · Composition · Emotional intensity · Perspective · Palette

1. The Artist's Palette: Explain why van Gogh chose to use vibrant, non-naturalistic colours in his work. How did these colour choices affect the mood of his paintings? (3 marks)

2. Technique Analysis: Describe van Gogh's 'impasto' technique. Compare and contrast this style with a more traditional, smooth painting style. Why might he have chosen to apply paint so thickly? (4 marks)

3. Historical Context: Investigate the time period in which van Gogh lived. Justify why he is classified as a Post-Impressionist rather than an Impressionist. What distinguishes his work from the Impressionist focus on light? (4 marks)

4. Subjectivity and Emotion: Zara has noticed that many of van Gogh's paintings reflect his personal feelings. Choose one of his famous works and explain how the brushstrokes and composition communicate his inner state of mind. (3 marks)

5. Evaluation: What might have happened to the art world if van Gogh had not experimented with such bold, expressive styles? Discuss the legacy he left for future artists. (4 marks)

6. Critical Reflection: If you were to curate a gallery exhibition of van Gogh's work, which three paintings would you choose to display together and why? Justify your selection based on their visual similarities or contrasting themes. (4 marks)

Extension challenge: Creative Challenge: Design a new piece of artwork in the style of van Gogh, focusing on a local landscape that is familiar to you. Use 'impasto' techniques (with paint or layered collage materials) and a bold, expressive colour palette to convey a specific emotion. Write a short curator's note explaining the inspiration behind your piece and the emotions you intended to evoke.