Abstract Expressions: The Art of Wassily Kandinsky

Learning objective: I can explore abstract art, colour theory, and the techniques used by Wassily Kandinsky.

About 45 minutes. Grown-up tip: Discuss how your child feels when looking at different colours to help them understand Kandinsky's theories.

Read each question carefully. For short answers, be precise. For extended responses, explain your artistic reasoning clearly. Example: If asked about colour, you might say, 'The vibrant red creates a sense of energy and warmth.'

Wassily Kandinsky was a pioneer of abstract art. He believed that colours and shapes could communicate feelings, much like music does. He often used geometric forms like circles, triangles, and squares to create complex compositions. He was fascinated by the idea of 'synaesthesia', where he could 'hear' colours as sounds. His work moved away from painting realistic objects, choosing instead to focus on the emotional impact of line, colour, and space.

Word bank: Abstract · Composition · Geometric · Synaesthesia · Primary · Contrast · Form

1. Name two geometric shapes that Kandinsky frequently used in his abstract compositions. (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. What does the term 'abstract art' mean? Give a brief definition in your own words. (2 marks) (2 marks)

3. Zara is creating a Kandinsky-inspired piece using only primary colours. Which three colours should she use and why are they considered 'primary'? (4 marks) (4 marks)

4. Kandinsky believed that shapes and colours could represent musical sounds. If you were to paint a 'loud' and 'fast' piece of music, which colours and shapes would you choose? Explain your reasoning using evidence from how Kandinsky used visual elements. (5 marks) (5 marks)

5. Compare and contrast the use of a sharp, jagged line against a soft, curved line in an abstract painting. How does each line change the mood of the artwork? (7 marks) (7 marks)

6. Why might an artist choose to move away from painting realistic scenes to painting abstract ones? Provide one reason. (5 marks) (5 marks)

Draw: A modern art gallery wall displaying a vibrant, abstract composition featuring circles, intersecting lines, and bold blocks of colour.

Extension challenge: Total: /25. Challenge: Create a 10cm x 10cm sketch on your own paper using only circles and straight lines to show 'calmness'. Explain your choice of colours in two sentences.

I did it! Name: _____ Date: _____

Too easy? Try Greater Depth. Too tricky? Try Supported. More at bookflik.com/resources