Observing Industrial Life: The Art of L.S. Lowry

Learning objective: I can identify, analyse, and apply the artistic techniques of L.S. Lowry to depict urban life.

About 45 minutes. Grown-up tip: Encourage your child to look at the details in the background of images, such as chimneys or terraced houses, to spot the industrial themes.

Read each question carefully. For written answers, use full sentences. When asked to analyse an image, refer to specific colours, shapes, or figures. Example: If asked about colour, you might say, 'The artist uses a limited palette of white and grey to create a cold, industrial atmosphere.'

L.S. Lowry (1887–1976) was an English artist famous for painting life in the industrial districts of North West England. He often used a simple, light-coloured background to make his dark 'matchstick' figures stand out. His work captures the busy, rhythmic lives of factory workers, bustling streets, and the towering chimneys of the Victorian era.

Word bank: industrial · perspective · matchstick figures · monochromatic · urban · landscape · composition

1. Identify two common features found in L.S. Lowry’s paintings of industrial towns. (2 marks) (2 marks)

2. Why do you think Lowry chose to paint his human figures as simple 'matchstick' shapes rather than with realistic detail? Give a reason for your opinion. (3 marks) (3 marks)

3. Lowry often used a 'limited palette'. Explain what this means and describe how it affects the mood of his paintings. (4 marks) (4 marks)

4. Look at the composition of a typical street scene. How does Lowry use the placement of buildings to create a sense of distance? (4 marks) (4 marks)

5. Imagine you are painting your local high street in the style of Lowry. Describe your scene, including three elements you would include to show it is a busy, modern-day UK town. (7 marks) (7 marks)

6. Compare a Lowry painting of a factory to a photograph of the same location. List one similarity and one difference in how the scene is represented. (5 marks) (5 marks)

Draw: A sketch of a busy street in a town with tall chimneys in the background, featuring small, simplified figures walking in different directions.

Extension challenge: Research a different artist who painted landscapes. Write a short paragraph comparing their use of colour and brushwork to Lowry's style. Total: /25



I did it! Name: _____ Date: _____

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