Zara’s Swirling Starry Night Adventure

Learning objective: I can explore how Vincent van Gogh used thick paint and bright colours to create movement in his art.

About 15 minutes. Grown-up tip: Encourage your child to use lots of different colours to make their sky look bright and energetic.

Zara the zebra is learning about the artist Vincent van Gogh. Van Gogh was famous for 'impasto'—a technique where paint is applied very thickly. He used short, swirling brushstrokes to make his paintings look like they were moving. Look at the questions below to test your knowledge of his style. For the final creative task, use a pencil to sketch a swirling sky, then imagine you are using thick, colourful paint to fill it in.

Word bank: impasto · swirls · vibrant · texture · brushstrokes

1. True or False: Vincent van Gogh often painted his brushstrokes in long, straight, smooth lines that look like glass. Explain your answer. (2 marks)

2. Which of these colours would you expect to see in a vibrant Van Gogh sky: dull grey, or bright yellow and blue? Why? (2 marks)

3. Why do you think Van Gogh used 'impasto' (thick paint)? How does it change the way the painting feels when you look at it? (2 marks)

4. Imagine you are painting an oak tree in the garden. Describe two 'swirling' brushstroke shapes you could use to show the leaves moving in the wind. (2 marks)

5. Creative Task: In the space below, draw a night sky using at least five different swirling patterns to show movement, just like Van Gogh did. (4 marks)

Draw: A frame for a child to draw a swirling night sky with stars and moons, using thick, expressive, circular lines.

Extension challenge: Find a photograph of a real landscape. Try to draw it again using only short, dashed lines to create your own 'swirling' version of the scene.

I did it! **Name:** _____ **Date:** _____

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