

# Describe, analyse and interpret a painting

*Style:* the painting style or art movement

*Media:* the materials used to make a work of art

*Composition:* Look at how the elements in the painting are arranged, the underlying structure (shapes) and relationships between the different parts, and how your eye moves around the composition.

*Subject matter:* **the main idea that is represented in the artwork.** To determine subject matter in a particular piece of art, ask yourself: What is actually depicted in this artwork? What is the artist trying to express to the world..

*Viewpoint and pose:* it is the angle or position from which we're seeing the subject of the artwork. How has the artist decided to present it? What is the perspective?

*Colours:* The effects of colour can be purely *optical, emotional, or aesthetic.*

*Mood and atmosphere:* mood is the atmosphere in a painting, or **the feeling expressed.** Is the art tranquil, or is it dark and disturbing?

*Texture:* Texture is **the look and feel of a surface.** Painters have many ways to create different textures. They use different sized and shaped brushes. They can also use other tools—special knives, sponges, even fingers—to put paint on canvas.

*Lighting:* it is the direction the light is coming from and how it creates shadows but also its colour, its intensity, the mood it creates, whether it is natural (from the sun) or artificial (from a light, fire, or candle).

*Mark:* mark making describes the different lines, dots, marks, patterns, and textures we create in an artwork.

**Which words describe the paintings ? Put a number (1, 2 or 3) in front of the right answer.**

<b>Style:</b>	... impressionism	... romanticism	... pop art
<b>Media:</b>	... oil on canvas	... watercolour	... synthetic polymer
<b>Composition:</b>	a) ... landscape format	... portrait format	... square format
	b) ... vertical	... horizontal	... diagonal
<b>Subject matter:</b>	... a couple	... a dead man and his family	... a woman
<b>Viewpoint:</b>	a) ... front	... a close-up	... three-quarters
	b) ... standing	... sitting	... lying
<b>Colours:</b>	... vivid	... dark	... cool
<b>Mood:</b>	... depressed	... joyful	... melodramatic
<b>Form and shape:</b>	... detailed	... geometric	... exaggerated
<b>Lighting:</b>	... natural	... artificial	... cool

*More vocabulary*

<i>Style</i>	<i>Media</i>	<i>Composition</i>	<i>Subject Matter</i>
Realism, photorealism Cubism Surrealism Impressionism Modernism Expressionism Romanticism Abstractionism Classism Chinese, Japanese, or Indian style Pop Art	Paint, ink, pastel, chalk Oil, tempera Acrylics Mixed media, collage Watercolour Ink Fresco Wood panels, canvas, Glass	Arrangement, layout, structure, position  Landscape format, portrait format, square format, circular, triangular  Horizontal, vertical, diagonal, angled  Foreground, background, middle ground  Centered, asymmetrical, symmetrical, balanced, unbalanced  Overlapping, chaotic  Separate, spacious, empty	City Countryside Landscape Sea Urban environment, Industrial environment, Fantasy Imaginary Mythological Portraits Interiors Still life
<i>Viewpoint and Pose</i>	<i>Colours</i>	<i>Mood and Atmosphere</i>	<i>Texture</i>
Front, side, three-quarters profile, rear (from behind), close up  Upward, downward, sideways  Standing, sitting, lying down, bending  Gesturing, moving, resting, static	Natural, distinctive, lively, stimulating, subtle,  Artificial, clashing, depressing, violent  Bright, deep, harmonious, intense, rich, saturated, strong, vibrant, vivid  Dull, flat, insipid, pale  Cool, cold, warm, hot, light, dark	Calm, content, peaceful, relaxed, tranquil  Cheerful, happy, joyful, romantic  Depressed, gloomy, miserable, sad, somber, tearful, unhappy  Aggressive, angry, chilling, dark, distressing, frightening, violent  Energetic, exciting, stimulating, thought-provoking  Boring, dull, lifeless, insipid	Flat, polished, smooth  Rough, coarse  Cut, incised, scratched, uneven  Shiny, glossy, reflective  Semigloss, satin, silk, frosted, matte
<i>Form and Shape</i>	<i>Lighting</i>	<i>Mark</i>	
2-D, flat, abstracted, simplified  3-D, realistic  Sharp, detailed  Blurred, obscured, overlapping, indistinct  Distorted, exaggerated, geometric  Linear, long, narrow	Backlit, front lit, side lit, top lit  Having indirect light, reflected light, no directional light source  Natural, artificial  Cool, blue, gray  Warm, yellow, red  Dim, faint, gentle, gloomy, low, minimal, muted, soft  Clear, bright, glowing, harsh, intense	Visible, blended, smooth  Thick, thin  Bold, timid  Heavy, light  Splatters  Layered, flat  Precise, refined, regular, straight  Sketchy, uneven, irregular, vigorous  Regular, patterned	