

# Week 15 - English

This week we would like you to have a look at the life and work of Vincent Van Gogh. Admittedly, this information is presented in a very boring way. So it's up to you to create a fun fact file about Van Gogh's life! Feel free to present this in any way you wish. Some of the information is not needed as KEY information so it's okay to miss bits out, but try not to copy 'word-for-word'.

When you are happy with your fact file, you may send it to your class teacher or to **Mrs Sissons at [Jsissons@appleton.hull.sch.uk](mailto:Jsissons@appleton.hull.sch.uk) by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> July**

Vincent van Gogh was a major Post-Impressionist Dutch painter whose work had a huge impact and influence on 20th century art. His paintings were noted for their rough beauty, emotional honesty, and bold color. Although he was not famous in his lifetime, Vincent van Gogh is now considered to be one of the greatest artists of his time and his paintings sell for millions

## Key Facts & Information

### EARLY LIFE

Vincent van Gogh was born in Zundert, Netherlands on March 30, 1853. He had two brothers and three sisters, and although his father and grandfather were ministers, other family members did work in the art world.

He was around 27 when he finally decided to devote his life to art. Before this, he had many different jobs. He was a teacher in London, a minister, he worked in a bookstore, an art gallery, and also worked as a missionary. He learned to draw using pencils and charcoal sticks. Sometimes he would also use watercolors. Over time he came to paint using oil paints. One of his favorite subjects was to draw poor, hard working people.

His early paintings were often sad and somber. He achieved this by using a lot of dark colors like brown and dark green, and by focusing on poor people. One of his most famous early paintings was *The Potato Eaters*, which was a very dark and somber painting of a poor peasant family eating potatoes for their dinner.

Most of what we know about van Gogh comes from letters that he wrote to his brother, Theo. He was very close to his younger brother, who worked in an art gallery in Paris. Theo supported Vincent's art career by sending him money and encouraging him. Theo also tried to sell Vincent's paintings, but at the time nobody wanted to buy them.

Theo introduced Vincent to Impressionism. He wrote to let Vincent know about this new style of painting in Paris, and in 1886, Vincent van Gogh moved to Paris to learn from these new painters. As a result, his art became influenced by painters including Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, and Camille Pissarro.

During his time in Paris, van Gogh started to use brighter colors. His brushwork also changed and became more broken as he painted subjects found in the streets of Paris, as well as the countryside.

#### VAN GOGH AS AN ARTIST

He painted over 20 self portraits during his time in Paris. He became very interested in painting portraits of people and turned to self portraits when he couldn't find any subjects to paint.

Van Gogh moved to Arles, France in 1888. During this time he set up an artist's commune and invited artist Paul Gauguin to join him.

In Arles, van Gogh began to paint with even more intensity and emotion. The vibrant colors of Arles inspired him and his paintings became more vibrant and bright. He would often paint directly to the canvas from the tubes, leaving it thick with rough brush strokes that would sometimes take weeks to dry.

He became fully obsessed with art. He painted hundreds of pieces of art during his time in Arles. Sometimes he would paint masterpieces in a single day.

Vincent van Gogh cut off his own ear. After an argument with Paul Gauguin, van Gogh cut off his own ear with a razor and presented it to a woman, named Rachel, to "keep this object carefully". Doctors told his brother Theo that Vincent would live, and on January 7, 1889, van Gogh was released from hospital.

In 1889, Vincent van Gogh committed himself to Saint-Paul-de-Mausole asylum in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence. This happened because the people of

Arles signed a petition to say that he was dangerous. On May 8, 1889 he began to paint in the hospital grounds and was invited to exhibit his paintings in Brussels later that year, in November. He sent six of his paintings, including *Iris* and *Starry Night*.

On July 27, 1890, Vincent van Gogh shot himself in the chest with a pistol. The bullet didn't kill him and he was found bleeding in his room. His brother Theo came to be by his side and they spent a couple of days together talking. After Theo took him home, van Gogh died in his brother's arms on July 29, 1890.

Van Gogh's brother, Theo, died six months later. He was already suffering from syphilis and he was weakened by Vincent's death. He died in a Dutch asylum and was eventually buried in Auvers cemetery next to his brother. Today, several of van Gogh's paintings rank among the most expensive in the world. *Iris*, which was painted during his time in the asylum, sold for a record \$53.9 million, and *Portrait of Dr. Gachet*, a portrait of the doctor who cared for him during the final months of his life, was painted in June 1890 and sold for \$82.5 million in 1990.

During his lifetime, Vincent van Gogh completed over 2,100 works. These include 860 oil paintings and more than 1,300 watercolors, sketches, and drawings..

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Vincent Van Gogh

What year was he born and when did he pass away?



Where was he born?

Van Gogh was born in the Netherlands. Can you find and color it in on this map?

Did he have any family?

What can you find out his paintings? What were they called? How did he make them?

## FACT FILE

What else can you find out about Vincent Van Gogh?

What jobs did he have before he became an artist?

Can you describe what Van Gogh looked like?

How did Van Gogh's paintings change over the years?