

Forms of Art Landscape Paintings

Landscape paintings are just as they sound. They are paintings of a piece of land. The land depicted in landscapes is usually an area that is very important to the artist. It could be a painting of their childhood home. It could be a beautiful vacation spot. It could also be a significant **landmark**¹ like the Grand Canyon or the Hudson River.

Many famous landscapes were painted in the 1800's. How an artist painted a landscape depended on what he or she was trying to express. In Thomas Gainsborough's painting called *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews*, the country estate takes up more space than the human figures. By doing this, the artist expressed how important the land was to the couple. Some artists painted small people in the landscape because they wanted to send another message: nature is more powerful than people. Others painted their landscapes in a mysterious, **otherworldly**² style. They wanted to express their belief that God is most closely felt in nature.

The way an artist used color and his paintbrush was also very important. Vincent Van Gogh's landscapes were famous for their **vivid**³ color and brushstrokes. For example, in *The Starry Night*, he uses a circular motion to paint the stars and night sky. The swirling strokes make the stars look like they're shining and alive. In Van Gogh's works, nature vibrates with energy.

¹ **landmark** – a historic building, monument or site

² **otherworldly** – devoted to the world of mind or imagination

³ **vivid** – bright and strong

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Which would you most likely *not* find in a landscape painting?
 - a. A river
 - b. A field
 - c. A mountain
 - d. An apartment building

2. The second part of the passage tells you about
 - a. Gainsborough's paintings.
 - b. how some artists painted small people in their landscapes.
 - c. the way a landscape artist used color and his paintbrush.
 - d. what some landscape artists tried to express in their paintings.

3. Vincent Van Gogh was known for his
 - a. lightly colored paintings.
 - b. dark paintings.
 - c. vivid colors.
 - d. swirl paintings.

4. "In Gainsborough's painting of *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews*, the country estate takes up more space than the human figures." The word *estate* probably means a
 - a. long river, with lots of trees on both sides.
 - b. large area of land, usually with a house on it.
 - c. very small house that can only fit one person.
 - d. farm animals.

5. The passage "Landscape Paintings" is mostly about
 - a. An artist named Vincent Van Gogh
 - b. how to make paint from things in nature
 - c. a style of art that focuses on nature
 - d. why certain landscapes are better for painting

6. Why do you think most landscape artists painted areas that were important to them?

7. What did Thomas Gainsborough express in his painting Mr. and Mrs. Andrews?

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

Many painters painted landscapes, _____ Vincent Van Gogh.

- a. on the contrary
- b. including
- c. but not
- d. although

9. Answer the following questions based on the sentence below.

Bright strong, colors appear often in paintings by Vincent Van Gogh.

What? bright, strong colors

(do) What? _____

Where? _____

(by) Whom? _____

10. **Vocabulary Word:** vivid: clear and detailed.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: _____

Teacher Guide and Answers

Passage Reading Level: Lexile 790

Featured Text Structure: Descriptive – the writer explains, defines or illustrates a concept or topic

Passage Summary: Landscape paintings mainly show a piece of land. Landscapes are used to express a number of different ideas, and come in different styles.

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 - a. An artist named Vincent Van Gogh
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6. Why do you think most landscape artists painted areas that were important to them?

Suggested answer: Answers will vary but may include that artists paint things that they have a connection to and are inspired by. Artists paint pictures of areas that are important to them because they want to show these areas to other people so that they can enjoy them too.

7. What did Thomas Gainsborough express in his painting Mr. and Mrs. Andrews?

Suggested answer: In his painting Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, Thomas Gainsborough expressed how important their land was to the couple.
[paragraph 2]

8. The question below is an incomplete sentence. Choose the word that best completes the sentence.

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What? bright, strong colors

(do) What? **appear often**

Where? **in paintings**

(by) Whom? **Vincent Van Gogh**

10. **Vocabulary Word:** vivid: clear and detailed.

Use the vocabulary word in a sentence: answers may vary.