

Vincent Van Gogh "What colour is in a picture, enthusiasm is in life"

School	o Primary o Middle		• Hig	h		
Year / Class	0 1	0 2	0 3	0 4	• 5	
Subject-Content :				an Gogh related to the l 20, analysis of his style		
CLIL language	The school is a High school of languages (level B2-C1). Our High school of languages is focused especially on the study of the English language. Our students have the possibility to attend the 4 th year in England to improve their skills in the English language, following some disciplines in our partner-school. For this reason, after this year abroad, our studen will reach level B2-C1 in English.				ve the possibility guage, following	
Teacher / Teaching team	Teacher's role:	o Co-te	n Teacher eacher r:	Subject Art hist	taught:	
profile	Teacher's role:	o Co-te	Teacher eacher r:	Subject	taught:	
	CEFR Level:	o A1 o B1	o •	A2 • B2 •	C1 C2	
Student group profile (general)	Experiences oEnglish motheOther mother	er tongue	0	Migrant background Special Educational Other:	Needs:	
Timetable fit	Module	Previous lesso	ons: Post-Impre	essionism (Seurat, Cèza	nne)	
Timetable iit	o Lesson	Future lessons: Symbolism and Avant-garde art				
Resources & tools	Resources: blog created by the teacher concerning art history (with articles and picture-galleries): artblobs.com (see specific file dedicated to the materials and activities)					
Students' prior knowledge, skills, competencies	Subject Impressionism Post-Impressionism			Language Past tenses Used to		





Content: to be able to decode the figurative languages, to analyse and interpret an artwork, to be able to contextualize the style of the artist in the general European artistic culture, to be able to identify symbolical elements typical of the artistic production of the artist, to be able to write a report to describing and interpreting a work of art. Learning outcomes for the learning skills: to be able to organise the work systematically, to be able to use a monolingual dictionary independently. Learning outcomes to develop learners' attitude towards learning: to be able to comment critically on a partner's work, listen attentively to others' contributions during the class discussions. Language: to comprehend specific texts concerning art history, to be able to write a report to describe and interpret a work of art, to be able to explain my ideas in public Cognitive skills: to understand and memorize (the specific glossary, the main theoretical concepts), to describe and interpret an artwork, to produce mind maps, to be able to select materials using different kinds of technologies, to evaluate and comment on his own work (self-assessment) and the work of the group (peer-assessment) Lower order thinking skills (LOTS): remembering, recall, recognise, relate and tell: to know the **Learning Outcomes** main features of the style of the artist. Defining (define, explain, show): to be able to describe the main artworks of Van Gogh expected for this module Higher order thinking skills (HOTS): comparing and contrasting (compare, contrast, distinguish, investigate the similarities and differences): to be able to compare the different artworks of Van Gogh, to be able to create some relationship between his letters and his artworks. Reasoning (conclude, explain, justify): to be able to contextualize the artworks. Evaluating (assess, comment on, give an opinion, judge): to be able to evaluate his own work and the work of the group (self and peer-assessment) Language skills (communication): reading, writing, listening, speaking. The aim of the CLIL module is to develop especially the speaking skills through the exchange of opinions and reflections among the students (cooperative learning) Culture: to share ideas about a Dutch artist, Van Gogh, together with a group of Dutch students to understand something more about the culture of the artist. See lesson plan Methodology

Activity	Activity aims	Activity Procedure	Language	Interaction	Materials (please cite all sources)	Timing	Assessment
1	To check previous knowledge about the topic, to introduce the topic using pictures and visual organizers	Warming activity: the teacher shows on the smartboard the most famous Van Gogh artworks (Starry night, Room of the Artist and Sunflowers of the National Gallery). Brainstorming: the teacher creates on the smartboard a mind map with bubble.us and asks the students to insert all their prior knowledge related with the biography of the artist and his artworks using key words. During the activity the teacher creates with the students the glossary to help the students to express what they already know about the artist. Frontal lesson: The teacher introduces the importance of the letters written by Van Gogh to his brother Theo to understand his feelings, his style, his relationship with his brother, his belief and mission.	The English teacher will repeat some grammatical structures such as the past tenses, used to and if closes.	 Whole class Group work Pair work Individual work 	Web site: vangoghletters.org artblobs.com (the teacher wrote an article concerning the biography of the artist taking into consideration the English level of her students)	1 hour	Homework that will be evaluated: the students have to study the glossary created together during the brainstorming. At home the students should read three letters in English from the site: vangoghletters.org, then they have to study the biography of the artist from the blog created by the teacher: artblobs.com. and do the exercises. The teacher wrote the biography taking into consideration the level of English of her students.

2	To check their homework through a role-play activity to encourage the involvement of the students.	"Hot seat" activity: a student will personify Van Gogh. The other students will prepare some questions for the artist. The student who personifies the artist should have studied the biography to be able to answer the different questions. In the meanwhile another student will write a scheme or mind map on the smartboard with his answers. The mind map will be shared with the rest of the class so that in this way we will have a scheme of the main elements to understand the artworks of Van Gogh.	to consolidate the use of the past tenses and the use of "used to"	• 0 0 0	Whole class Group work Pair work Individual work	See materials	1 hour	Formative assessment the teacher will evaluate the involvement of the class in the hot-seat activity and the personal reflections of the students
3	To develop thinking skills, to help the students to think about the most famous quotations of Van Gogh written in his letters.	The quotation poster The class will be divided into groups. Each member of the group will choose his best quotation, explaining in English why he chose that specific quotation, what kind of message the quotation expresses and why it is important for the student. The group will select some quotations and will write them on the poster decorating it with pictures related with the artist. At the end of the activity each group will choose a speaker who will explain to the class why they chose that quotation and the meaning of the quotation for the group.		0 • 0 0	Whole class Group work Pair work Individual work	See materials	1 hour	Formative assessment the teacher will evaluate the personal reflections of the students together with the creativity expressed in the decoration of the poster

4	To develop the listening skills To consolidate the knowledge related to the biography of the artist and his belief (art as a mission in life).	"Listening test" The teacher will show a video on You-Tube: "The great artists-Post-Impressionism-Van Gogh". Before the listening test the students will receive a test with some empty spaces. They have to fill these in while listening.	 Whole clas Group wor Pair work Individual 	k Van Gogh" work	45 minutes	At the end of the listening the teacher will check the comprehension of the video through some questions to the class.
5		"E-twinning project" The teacher will present the e-twinning project with the partner school in Amsterdam. The students will have a week to get in touch with the group of students in Amsterdam, writing them e-mails using an informal English. The focus of the project is to create a debate related to an art-exhibition: the Italian students will ask their Dutch friends about some Van Gogh artworks to create an art exhibition about the artist. They have to exchange information about the artist. Both classes studied Van Gogh. The Dutch students will imagine themselves to be the visitors of the art exhibition and will ask questions related to the organization of the event. The teacher will divide the class into groups: each group will have different roles to prepare the event and the debate.	 Whole clas Group wor Pair work Individual 	role (see file dedicated to the materials)	45 minutes	

6	To test the event before the real debate helping the students to improve their work	The teacher will ask each group to show their work. The curators will explain to the class their choices while the other students will take notes about them and the explanation of the artworks (analysis of the style and meaning). The teacher says that the class will be evaluated on the knowledge of the analysis of the paintings. The moderator will present the event and explain the order of the different speeches. The graphic designers will explain and show their ideas concerning the logo, the poster and the advertisement related. The curators of the catalogue will show the layout of the catalogue. Everyone should be prepared to answer every kind of question related to the exhibition.	To develop thinking skills: I think, I agree, I don't agree, In my opinion)	• Whole class	Materials created by the students	2 hours	The teacher will give some feedback on the work of the students to help them improve their work.
7	To develop thinking skills and creativity. To help the students to express ideas in public respecting their turns and the general rules of the moderator. To create an event independently	Event –Debate	To develop thinking skills: I think, I agree, I don't agree, In my opinion)	Whole class	Materials created by the students	2 hours	The teacher will take into consideration the involvement of the students, the quality of the speeches and the proposals, the ability in problem-solving, the respect in waiting their speech turns and the rules of the debate.
8	To test the knowledge of content and language through a summative assessment.	Final test (see materials) and peer assessment (see materials)	Glossary	Whole class		1 hour	Evaluation of the knowledge of the content and the language (specific glossary)

MATERIALS

1. Read the passage and answer the questions.

"Well, what can I say, what one has inside shines on the outside...

One has a big fire in his heart, and no one ever comes close to warm up, and passers-by only see a little smoke on top of the chimney, and then they leave, continuing on their way"...

(Vincent Van Gogh to his brother Theo, Letter 133, July 1880).

This is one of the many letters that the artist wrote to his brother Theo, who, besides being the financier of his artworks, was confident that the letters would become a literary work in its own right on the artist's meaning behind his **canvases**.

Behind this constant correspondence lies the tremendous need that Van Gogh had to be understood, at least once, by another soul. Through his words the first paradox is revealed: the artist, who transmits energy and vitality through his paintings, instead shows himself to be living in complete solitude.

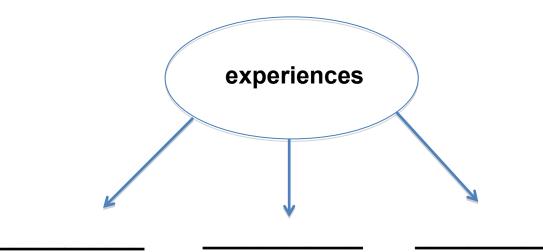
Vincent will directly experience the lack of understanding of the world while engaging in activities such as being an **art dealer** at Goupil, the profession to which the family has been devoted for a long time, and for which the artist does not feel any interest.

Therefore Vincent decides to go to Brussels to become a **lay preacher**, after being sent to study theology in Amsterdam. He reaches the mining region of Borinage in order to proselyte the people, living in contact with the humble miners of the area. The love he feels towards others is total; it is offset by the solidarity of the **miners** and by the demonstration of being accepted.

His temperament is marked by alternating waves of enthusiasm that consist of intense religious fervour, striving for love and redemption of the **humble**, but also towards art. The fact of having become a **preacher**, which is also a family profession, unfortunately doesn't give him rest. The family considers him an **outsider**, an outcast. For this reason, as a kind of rebellion against them, Vincent will sign his works with his name only, finally moving away from his origins.

2.	Who was Theo Van Gogh? Why are the letters of Vincent so famous?					

3. Insert into the mind map the experiences the artists made before deciding to become a painter.



4. Read some of the quotations by Vincent Van Gogh, look at his self-portrait (Musee d'Orsay) in the gallery (http://artblobs.com/en/2015/04/vincent-van-gogh-what-colour-is-in-a-picture-enthusiasm-is-in-life/) and say what personality and what style of painting you imagine him to have.

One should try, at least once, to immerse him/herselves in the lives of the most miserable. Only then one will be able to understand people

I believe that a blade of grass is not less than the work of the stars

One has a big fire in his heart, and no one ever comes close to warm up, and passersby only see a little smoke on top of the chimney, and then they leave, continuing on their way

The emotions guide me and sometimes these emotions are so strong that I work without even noticing that I am working

	Useful language	
I think		
I don't think		
It seems to me		
In my opinion		

5. Fill in the gap with the following words.
UNDERPRIVILEGED DIGNITY MISSION
SOLIDARITY DEMOCRACY 30
MYSTICISM HUMBLE
Vincent realizes that his greatest ambition is to restoreto those involved in the mechanisms of industry through painting. He will develop a
type of art for thewhich he conceives as an expression of
in words but documented by his works. "One should try, at least once, to immerse him/herselves in the lives of the most miserable. Only then one will
be able to understand people" people simply serve as a prototype
for a different society in which the artist puts faith in. He figures out his love for art when he is years old and decides to devote his life to it. It is
possible to recognize a sort of running through his paintings, which is
also his credo: "Things are not as they appear: God teaches us, through
everyday life, higher things. Things are not what they seem, but hint at something hidden, deeper".
Art is intended as a, a divine service, the same way for which there is
beauty in the human heart.

6.	Read the passage concerning the artwork "The Potato Eaters"	and
	complete the chart finding extra information on the internet.	

Artist	
Title	
Museum	
Date	
Chromatism	
Subject	
Brief description	
Moral content	
Style	

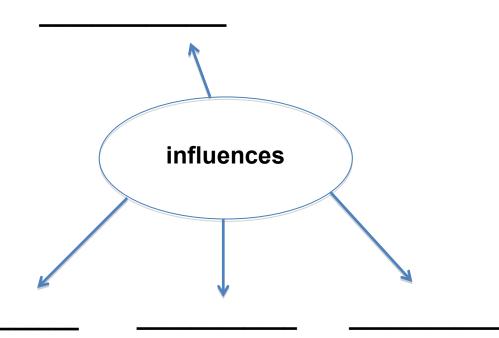
From this conception of art, **masterpieces** are born: the **dark tones** of "*The Potato Eaters*" and their rough peasant faces, embodied by the vibrant ruddiness similar to the one of "a dirty potato full of dirt and unpeeled", makes it an artwork of deep moral content.

"I tried to emphasize that these people eating potatoes by the light of the lamp dug the earth with the same hands that now stretch into the pot, so I wanted to speak about manual labour and how these workers have honestly earned this food. I think it is wrong to give a **smooth** and conventional outer layer to a canvas that represents farmers. If a painting of farmers gives the impression of bacon, smoke and vapours that rise from the hot potatoes, it means it is successful. A painting does not have to be **scented**". Soon he understood that his concept of art wasn't accepted by society. Inevitably he will become an outsider, even in this field.

Link Picture: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b1/Van-willem-vincent-gogh-die-kartoffelesser-03850.jpg/350px-Van-willem-vincent-gogh-die-kartoffelesser-03850.jpg

7. How can you define his new brushstroke during his stay	/ in Paris?
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Complete the mind map related to the influences in Vincent style.



8. Fill in the gap with the following words.

YELLOW HOUSE TROPICS STUDIO

LIGHT ARLES

Always interested in colour and, Vincent leaves for the south of France, settling in, where he plans to found a together with his friends Bernard and Gauguin: the Atelier du Midi, also known as the All artists were supposed to fight together for a different way of painting, intended to lead to a different world, a beautiful utopia. The appeal will only be responded to by Gauguin, who will arrive in Arles with the sole objective of

getting help from Theo to sell some paintings in order to leave for the

Vincent did not know the intentions of his friend. In this period an extraordinary momentum sustains him: "The emotions guide me and sometimes these emotions are so strong that I work without even noticing that I am working".

9. Find extra information on the Internet to fill in the chart.

During this period Vincent dedicated himself to a series of paintings that were a joyful series of fields of sunflowers and wheat fields painted in bright sunlight, characterized by a blinding light given by the bright yellow sun. Sunflowers, a metaphor for Sacred Love, are flowers that are responsive to the motion of the sun and images of the human soul that is naturally attracted by the divine light. His brush was able to capture the intensity of the summer light in the moment of greatest splendour.

Artist	
Title	
Museum	
Date	
Subject	
Meaning	
Brushstroke	

Link picture:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d3/Tournesols_van_g ogh_echantillon.jpg

10. Read the passage and choose which sentences are related to Vincent and Gauguin.

After some time the cohabitation with Gauguin, whose character was quite different from Vincent's, being a proud and arrogant atheist, will lead to a psychological collapse of the artist. Vincent sees his friend as a teacher, and, full of devotion and respect, is happy to be the student. He will change his style: he sacrifices the typical thickness of his stroke to a velvety smoothness. Vincent moves away from the subject, leaving the familiarity of known things to entrust himself to the study of pure pictorial effects. Gauguin becomes the infallible, who expresses himself with encyclicals, while Vincent is getting smaller, even uncertain about the value of his works. Following the episode of cutting his own earlobe, an episode that will mark the beginning of the illness of Van Gogh, Gauguin will abandon his friend forever. The two will never see each other again. Vincent, with the loss of his friend, loses a utopia that had been laboriously pursued. Gauguin was not willing to sacrifice his life for the hope of a new world while Van Gogh personified the concept of a union between art and life.

Vincent Van Gogh		Gauguin		
student	respect	he will ab	andon his friend	
uncertain about the value of his work arrogant				
he will change his style into a velvety smoothness				
proud	atheist	teacher	devotion	

11. Read the passage and answer the questions.

But the aim of Van Gogh did not remain fruitless: his **struggle** for a personal art had so far remained confined to the narrow circle of his private life. Following the tragic gesture of cutting off his earlobe, the crowds now are judging him as crazy. The artist, with his existential malaise, becomes the victim of the conviction of being ill. Van Gogh's suffering is the suffering of the time he is living in, that is lost in the obscurity of the world. The crisis he is suffering from is an attempt to escape an unbearable experience, that of loneliness. In 1889 he decided to seek treatment at the health institution for mentally alienated in Saint -Remy, to finally escape the demon of insanity. Insomnia causes him to look out the window of his cell, towards the starry sky that he will crystallize forever as his greatest masterpiece: "The Starry Night" "when all sounds cease and only the voice of God is heard under the stars". "I want to ride atilt to win it on the cypresses". Waves of matter in the sky and the stars that populate it have endless talks with cypress trees, that are usually tied to the cult of the dead through light pulses, and the hills in the background. The brushwork is back **whirling**, **vibrant**, embossed, cypresses seem flames that rise into the sky, running away, as the soul of the artist, as if seeking a contact with the divine, with what is elsewhere.

With this work Van Gogh will be considered a precursor of Expressionism, a painter of moods that are masterfully evoked through the chromatic contrast between the blue and the yellow lights, a contrast of emotions that upset the mind of the artist, the misunderstood genius who expressed the discomfort of a century, the twentieth century that saw loneliness, alienation and individualism as diseases of man. The illness of Van Gogh can be seen as a mirror and reflection of the disease of the century, that cosmic pain which is the consequence of a life dictated by the cult of money that has completely impoverished humanity, that godless world where nobody pays attention to details anymore.

But that mission was the expression of his life and his art, as it had become completely aimed at studying the infinitely small, because only through the little things one is able to understand the infinitely large. And the quote that we will always remember: "I believe that a blade of grass is not less than the work of the stars".

Why is Vincent defined a precursor of Expressionism?		
How can you defi	ne the brushstroke used in the "Starry Night"?	
Why can we say that this artwork became a famous masterpiece?		
 Find extra information on the Internet about "The Starry Night" and complete the chart. 		
Artist		
Title		
Museum		
Date		
Subject		
Meaning		
Description		
Brushstroke		
Chromatism		

Link picture: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/6/66/VanGoghstarry_night_ballance1.jpg/350px-VanGogh-starry_night_ballance1.jpg

12. Create a timeline with all the experiences and travels realized by Vincent in his life to have a visual summary of the most important elements of his biography.



GLOSSARY

Activity	English	Italian
1	canvas	tela
	art dealer	mercante d'arte
	lay preacher	laico
	miner	minatore
	humble	umile
	outsider	estraneo
5	masterpiece	capolavoro
	tone	tonalità
	smooth	levigato
10	struggle	sforzo
	whirling	vorticoso
	vibrant	vibrante
	painter of moods	pittore di stati d'animo
	chromatic contrast	contrasto cromatico
	cosmic pain	dolore cosmico

LISTENING TEST

Listen to the video about Van Gogh and complete the text.

2.	Date of deathbecause of Feelings he had experienced:
	He used paint to express
	He was concerned with
6.	Van Gogh used a free as did Monet, Seurat Van Gogh was born in he started a career in the artistic world, not as an artist but as an
7.	He admired the Dutch master and in London he developed the taste forand in Paris he became familiar with the work ofand
8.	Over the following three years Van Gogh worked as ain England. He attended training as aand spent several months as anin
9.	He would follow hisfootsteps. His brother Theo introduced him to
	Theo had suggested Van Gogh become anHe transferred his interest in theto drawing and painting.
11.	He began to study textbooks of and and he
12.	copied the works of
	His letters reveal information about brushstroke
	When Van Gogh's father died, art was nowfor the artist. The Potato eaters (describe a brief analysis):
17	Van Gogh was especially impressed byVan Gogh's enthusiasm for colour was also inspired by
18	Vincent discoveredhe liked about this kind of
	art Vincent came toand it was here that his greatness as an
	artist began. Van Gogh liked the Impressionist practice of
	Van Gogh was content to learn from Gauguin

24.	Through colour he could convey
25.	His destination was the city ofhis pigments
W	ere
26.	He was renting the so-calledhe was obsessed with the
C	blourbecause
	The sunflowers (meaning and style):
28.	His first fellow in the Yellow house wasHe put
G	auguin in the position of the
29.	Did he paint just a single "Starry night"?
30.	In Vincent's 'Room' he wanted to convey a sensation of
31.	The two chairs:
32.	Vincent had a mental diseaseand went to
33.	New technical feature:
34.	He returned to the subject of(analysis and
m	eaning)
35.	He was using exaggeration in order to convey
36.	'Self-portrait', a man whose life was nothing but a
37.	The most expensive painting ever was

MATERIALS related to the e-twinning project

Group 1: The curators

You are the curators of the art exhibition. You have to create a virtual art gallery dedicated to Vincent Van Gogh. Choose 10 works of art to put on show. Write the title, date, place where each work is kept, and explain why you have chosen these works. Prepare also a description of the style and an analysis of the artworks chosen.

Homework: to study 10 artworks and prepare an exhibition using different kind of technologies (VOKI, INSTRAGROK, MIND MAPS, POWER-POINT)

The moderator-journalist

The moderator will present the project and will moderate the debate. He will think about who will speak and when, coordinating the debate.

Gruppo 2: Virtual catalogue

This group will create a virtual catalogue with the pictures of the artworks chosen by the curators, writing why they chose those specific artworks and some information related to the biography of the artist that will emerge during the debate. They will have to take notes during the debate to create the catalogue.

Gruppo 3: Problem solving

This group will think about solutions to any problem. They will be helpful and open to dialogue during the debate to suggest any kind of solution respecting the ideas of the Italian and Dutch students.

Gruppo 4: Graphic design, Advertisement, Poster, Logo

This group will think about the promotion of the event creating a logo and a captivating graphic design for the poster of the art-exhibition.

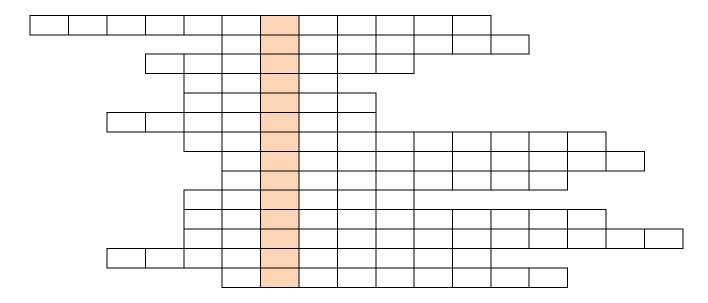
PEER ASSESSMENT: QUESTIONNARIE

- 1. How do you evaluate the work of your group? Write your opinion about what could have done better and what was well planned.
- 2. Can you say that the curators succeeded in stimulating your curiosity about Van Gogh's artworks and expressing their ideas in a clear way?
- 3. Can you say that the moderator succeeded in coordinating the debate in an appropriate way?
- 4. How do you consider the catalogue? How could they improve their ideas? What, in your opinion, are the strong points?
- 5. Do you think the problems were coordinated in a good way by your classmates?
- 6. Do you think the graphics used were efficient? Why?

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

CROSSWORD

Complete the crossword to find out the mysterious artwork of Van Gogh.



- 1. A scientific theory invented by Cheuvreul and Goethe and used by the Impressionist artists.
- 2. Typical brushstroke used by Van Gogh
- 3. Wooden board used for mixing colours for a painting
- 4. To assume a posture for artistic purposes
- 5. The subject of a painting
- 6. A typical brushstroke used by Van Gogh
- 7. The most important innovation of the Renaissance in art
- 8. Movements of the brush
- 9. A way of intending the art of Van Gogh close to the spiritual world
- 10. Support for painting
- 11. Technique of painting in which small dots of colours are applied to form an image
- 12. Synonym of "chiaroscuro"
- 13. Synonym of glare, referred to the use of colour by Van Gogh
- 14. Art genre
- Who was Theo Van Gogh? Why are the letters of Vincent so famous?

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Why is Vincent defined a precursor of Expressionism?		
 How can you define the brushstroke used in the "Starry Night"? 		
 Why can we say t 	hat the Starry night became a famous masterpiece?	
	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
Analyse the painting "The Sunflowers" of the National Gallery.		
Artist		
Title		
Museum		
Date		
Subject		
Meaning		
Brushstroke		

RESOURCES:

The article used to create the activities was written by me. You can find it at the link:

http://artblobs.com/en/2015/04/vincent-van-gogh-what-colour-is-in-a-picture-enthusiasm-is-in-life/

At the end of the gallery you can find the pictures taken from Wikipedia the free encyclopaedia