

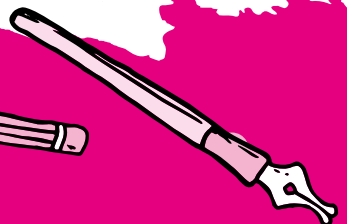


Unit

1



Modern Painters I





## Part One

## Listening and Speaking



**Task 1** Listen to a conversation between a student and his art history professor and answer the questions.

### Questions:

1. What's the topic of the student's writing?
2. Which painting of Van Gogh's was the student planning to focus on?
3. What's the problem of the student's writing?
4. How did the student work out the problem?
5. What's the shared feature between the two paintings called *Starry Night*?



**Task 2** Susan is visiting an art exhibition with Mike. Listen to their conversation and fill in the blanks with what you hear.

**Susan:** Mike, come and look at this painting of shrimp! It is so simple yet so **1.** \_\_\_\_\_!

**Mike:** Yeah. It is **2.** \_\_\_\_\_! Is it the work of Qi Baishi?

**Susan:** Yes, it is. How do you know that?

**Mike:** Well, Qi is famous all over the world, isn't he? Besides, I am quite **3.** \_\_\_\_\_ in Chinese painting.

**Susan:** Cool! What kind of Chinese painting do you **4.** \_\_\_\_\_, free sketch or elaborate-style painting?

**Mike:** I prefer free sketch, especially the **5.** \_\_\_\_\_ paintings. I can always feel **6.** \_\_\_\_\_ and harmony from those landscape paintings.

**Susan:** That's true. Chinese art **7.** \_\_\_\_\_ the harmony between man and nature, which is an important part of China's **8.** \_\_\_\_\_ culture.

**Mike:** I love this art exhibition!

**Susan:** So do I. Let's go to other areas to see what they have got, shall we?

**Mike:** OK.



**Task 3** Work in pairs. Suppose you are going to sign up for an art class, so you ask your friend for some suggestion. Make a conversation with reference to the expressions below.

### Useful Expressions

#### Asking about reasons

Why/Why not?

May I know the reason?  
I'd like to know the reason why...  
Give me one good reason why...  
Could you give me some reasons on...?  
Can you conclude the causes of...?  
What evidence can you offer to prove that...?  
Why do you think so?  
What are your reasons for...?  
How has it come about that...?  
What makes you choose...?  
How come...?

### Giving reasons

My point of view in.../that... largely results from the fact that...  
The main/major reason why... is because/is that...  
One of the reasons I say that is because...  
One possible explanation (for that) is...  
To understand why..., you first need to... (understand/know/be aware that)  
This is due to the fact that...  
It's closely linked to/associated with...  
Due to/Owing to...

### Giving reasons for

It's great because...  
One advantage is that...  
Another good reason is...  
You're right, but I also think...  
The other thing (reason) is that...

### Giving reasons against

The problem is that...  
One big disadvantage with that is...  
One argument against that idea is...  
I don't think...



## Part Two

## Active Reading



Van Gogh was a largely self-taught artist who changed the face of Post-Impressionism forever. Van Gogh was a troubled yet highly skilled painter, whose works were an outlet for his emotion, particularly when battling depression. Working at an often-furious pace, Van Gogh produced more than 2,000 works of art in his 10-year career. However, he sold only one painting during his lifetime and did not become successful until after his death. Some of his most famous works include *Starry Night*, *Sunflowers*, and *The Bedroom at Arles*. His expressive and emotive use of color and distinct brushwork became hugely popular and influenced Expressionism, Fauvism and early abstraction massively as well as various other aspects of 20th-century art. Today, Van Gogh is generally regarded as the greatest Dutch painter since Rembrandt.

### Text A

#### Vincent van Gogh

Whenever people mention Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890), the first thing that likely comes to mind is his masterpiece *Sunflowers*, which fascinates the public all the time. His paintings are so amazing and overwhelming that they have astounded millions of people around the world.

Van Gogh was born in Holland in 1853. The son of a pastor, brought up in a religious and cultured atmosphere, Van Gogh was highly emotional, lacked self-confidence and always struggled with his identity and direction.

At the age of 16, Van Gogh got his first job as a clerk in a gallery in France. Soon he lost interest in becoming a professional art dealer. He then studied theology and worked as a missionary in a dreary coal-mining area in Belgium. He once believed that his calling was to preach the gospel; however, it took years for him to discover his true calling as an artist. “An artist needn’t be a clergyman or a churchwarden, but he certainly must have a warm heart for his fellow men.” Van Gogh blended himself with the miners and peasants with whom he deeply empathized. It was nature, and the people living closely to it, that first stirred his artistic inclinations. Van Gogh was particularly taken up with the peasants he saw working in the countryside; his early compositions featured portraits of peasants and rural landscapes, and rendered in dark and moody tones, as exemplified in the piece entitled *The Potato Eaters*.

In 1886 Van Gogh relocated to Paris, where he encountered and was greatly influenced by works of Impressionism, an artistic trend in the late 19th century and gained exposure to artists such as Gauguin, Pissarro, and Monet. As a result, he adopted more vibrant colors in his art and

began experimenting with his skill. The style he developed in Paris and carried through to the end of his life became known as Post-Impressionism, a term encompassing works made by artists unified by their interest in expressing their emotional and psychological responses to the world through bold colors and expressive and symbolic images.

Two years later, in 1888, Van Gogh moved to Arles in the French countryside, again living close to the peasants who had inspired him early on. He concentrated on painting landscapes, portraits, and still lifes full of personal symbolism.

One of Van Gogh's dreams was to start a colony for artists in Arles. He hoped that his new friends would join him. Later Paul Gauguin did join him in Arles. Van Gogh entered the most productive and creative period of his life. It was in this period that he created the famous *Sunflowers* series. On the canvas, sunflowers erupt out of a simple earthenware pot against a blazing yellow background. Some of the flowers are fresh and perky, ringed with halos of flickering and flame-like petals; others are going to seed and have begun to droop. The sunflowers paintings proved that Van Gogh stood his ground as an artist.

However, it was also a time of great mental turmoil for the artist. Van Gogh's nervous temperament made him a difficult companion and nightlong discussions combined with painting all day undermined his health. Near the end of 1888, an incident led Gauguin to ultimately leave Arles—Van Gogh, in a fit of madness, pursued Gauguin with a razor and threatened him intensely. Van Gogh was then sent to an asylum for treatment.

From then on, Van Gogh began to alternate between fits of madness and lucidity. In the asylum, he created the *Starry Night*, based on his direct observations as well as his imagination, memories, and emotions. It is his most popular work and one of the most influential pieces in history. The swirling lines of the sky are a possible representation of his mental state. This shaken style is visible in all of his works during his time in the asylum.

On July 27, 1890, Van Gogh attempted suicide by shooting himself in the chest. He survived, but died two days later from the wound. It wouldn't take long for the art world to recognize the genius they lost. Van Gogh's inimitable fusion of form and content is powerful, dramatic, lyrically rhythmic, imaginative, and emotional, for the artist was completely absorbed in the effort to explain either his struggle against madness or his comprehension of the spiritual essence of man and nature. Van Gogh is now viewed as one of the most influential artists who have helped lay the foundation of modern art.



## New Words

fascinate	['fæsɪnert]	vt. 使着迷, 使神魂颠倒 vi. 入迷
overwhelming	[,ouvər'welmɪŋ]	adj. 压倒性的; 势不可当的
astound	[ə'staʊnd]	vt. 使惊骇, 使震惊
pastor	['pæstər]	n. 牧师
emotional	[ɪ'mouʃənl]	adj. 情绪的; 易激动的; 感动人的
dealer	['di:lər]	n. 经销商; 商人
theology	[θi'ɑ:lədʒi]	n. 神学; 宗教体系
missionary	['mɪʃənəri]	n. 传教士
dreary	['dri:ri]	adj. 沉闷的, 枯燥的
gospel	['gɑ:spɪl]	n. 真理; 信条
empathize	['empəθaɪz]	vt. 移情; 神会
inclination	[,ɪnklɪ'neɪʃn]	n. 倾向, 爱好; 斜坡
render	['rendər]	vt. 使处于(某种状态); 实施; 着色
exemplify	[ɪg'zemplɪfaɪ]	vt. 例证; 例示
vibrant	['vaɪbrənt]	adj. 充满生气的; 振动的
encompass	[ɪn'kʌmpəs]	vt. 包含; 包围
symbolism	['sɪmbəlɪzəm]	n. 象征, 象征主义; 符号论; 记号
productive	[prə'dʌktɪv]	adj. 多产的; 能生产的; 富有成效的
erupt	['ɪrʌpt]	vi. 爆发; 喷出; 长芽
earthenware	['ɜ:rθnwer]	n. 陶器
blazing	['bleɪzɪŋ]	adj. 闪耀的; 强烈的; 燃烧的
perky	['pɜ:ki]	adj. 神气的; 得意洋洋的; 自信的; 活泼的
halo	['heɪləʊ]	n. 光环; 荣光
flickering	['flɪkərɪŋ]	adj. 闪烁的, 忽隐忽现的; 摇曳的
droop	['dru:p]	vi. 下垂; 萎靡; 凋萎
turmoil	['tɜ:rmɔɪl]	n. 混乱, 骚动
temperament	['tempərəmənt]	n. 气质, 性情, 性格; 急躁
undermine	[,ʌndər'maɪn]	vt. 破坏, 渐渐破坏
asylum	[ə'saɪləm]	n. 收容所, 救济院; 庇护
alternate	['ɔ:ltərneɪt]	vi. 交替; 轮流
lucidity	[lu:'sɪdətɪ]	n. 清醒度; 明朗; 清澈
influential	[,ɪnflu'enʃl]	adj. 有影响的; 有势力的
swirling	['swɜ:rlɪŋ]	adj. 打旋的
inimitable	[ɪ'nɪmɪtəbl]	adj. 独特的, 无比的; 无法仿效的
rhythmic	['rɪðmɪk]	adj. [生物] 有节奏的; 间歇的; 合拍的

### Useful Expressions

blend with	与……混合
experiment with	做实验
carry through	贯彻；完成；坚持下去
lay the foundation of	打下……的基础，奠定了……的基础

### Proper Names and Cultural Notes

Impressionism	印象主义，西方现代艺术流派之一，19世纪60—80年代风行于法国，强调作品中对外光和色彩的直接表现。
Gauguin	保罗·高更，法国后印象派画家、雕塑家，与梵高、塞尚并称为“后印象派三大巨匠”，对现当代绘画的发展有着非常深远的影响。
Pissarro	毕沙罗，法国印象派大师，是印象派的先驱，有印象派“米勒”之称。
Monet	莫奈，法国画家，被誉为“印象派领导者”，是印象派代表人物和创始人之一。

### Reading Comprehension



#### Task 1 Read the text and answer the following questions.

1. What can we know about Van Gogh's family background?
2. What's the feature of Van Gogh's early paintings?
3. What is Post-Impressionism in terms of Van Gogh's style?
4. Which painting proved Van Gogh's ground as a great artist?
5. Why was Van Gogh sent to an asylum for treatment near the end of 1888?



#### Task 2 Read the text and choose the best answer to the questions.

1. Where did Van Gogh begin to paint?
 

A. In Holland.	B. In France.
C. In Belgium.	D. In England.
2. What did Van Gogh not enjoy about painting?
 

A. Landscapes.	B. Portraits.
C. Architectures.	D. Flowers.
3. Which words best describe Van Gogh's later years?
 

A. Sad and boring.	B. Normal and peaceful.
C. Happy but fruitless.	D. Painful but productive.



4. Why did Van Gogh kill himself?
- A. Because he was a failure as an artist.
  - B. Because he had an unhappy family.
  - C. Because he lost his beloved brother.
  - D. Because he was suffering from mental illness.

### Language in Use



**Task 1** Match the underlined words in Column I with their corresponding meanings in Column II.

#### I

1. His paintings are so amazing and overwhelming that they have astounded millions of people around the world.
2. Van Gogh entered the most productive and creative period of his life.
3. He adopted more vibrant colors in his art and began experimenting with his skill.
4. Van Gogh blended himself with the miners and peasants with whom he deeply empathized.
5. Some of the flowers are fresh and perky, ringed with halos of flickering and flame-like petals.
6. Van Gogh's nervous temperament made him a difficult companion and nightlong discussions combined with painting all day undermined his health.
7. Van Gogh began to alternate between fits of madness and lucidity.
8. This same shaken style is visible in all of his works during his time in the asylum.
9. Van Gogh is now viewed as one of the most influential artists who have helped lay the foundation of modern art.

#### II

- A. characterized by liveliness and lightheartedness
- B. understood someone's situation, problems, and feelings because you have been in a similar situation
- C. made something less strong or less secure than it was before, often by a gradual process
- D. producing abundantly
- E. having a lot of influence over people or events
- F. doing a scientific test in order to discover what happens to it in particular conditions
- G. a combination of different ideas or things that are created
- H. affecting someone very strongly
- I. describing something that people notice or recognize



10. Van Gogh's inimitable fusion of form and J. the ability to think clearly content is powerful and emotional.



**Task 2** Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the words given below.

form	draw	consume	emerge	personal
weak	establish	motivate	experiment	success

Van Gogh was born on March 30, 1853 in Dutch. He was the son of a clergyman. The young Van Gogh made religion a **1.** \_\_\_\_\_ interest and during the next few years he traveled in Britain, Belgium and Holland, trying to **2.** \_\_\_\_\_ himself as a preacher, but without **3.** \_\_\_\_\_. His first artist impressions were **4.** \_\_\_\_\_ as a boy, from his uncle, an art dealer. The **5.** \_\_\_\_\_ bore early fruit and from the age of 12, the young Vincent was drawing.

In 1880, at the age of 27, he found himself **6.** \_\_\_\_\_ back to art. He had a job as an assistant evangelist in the mining village in Belgium but realized an artist drive which was to motivate him unceasingly until his death 10 years later.

In 1886, Van Gogh left Holland forever and travelled via Antwerp to Paris, and to major changes in artistic style. Van Gogh's work became more youthful in Paris. A new, more animated, painting style **7.** \_\_\_\_\_ and the impressionist tendencies of earlier work **8.** \_\_\_\_\_ somewhat. Van Gogh developed a taste for **9.** \_\_\_\_\_ brushwork and brilliant, unmixed colors. Among his most prominent **10.** \_\_\_\_\_ with color were a series of some 30 flower paintings, a fascination which stayed with him until his death.



**Task 3** Translate the following sentences into English.

- 梵高以色彩作为其创作的主要表现手法。(symbol)
- 作为一名牧师的儿子,梵高在宗教的氛围中长大。(atmosphere)
- 梵高容易情绪化,而且缺乏自信。(emotional)
- 从那时起,梵高开始一时疯狂,一时清醒,两种情绪互相交替着。(alternate)
- 梵高被认为是19世纪最具影响力的艺术家之一,他奠定了现代艺术的基础。(lay the foundation of)

**Text B**

**Paul Cézanne**

The French painter Paul Cézanne, who exhibited little in his lifetime and pursued his interests increasingly in artistic isolation, is regarded today as one of the greatest forerunners of modern



painting.

Cézanne was born at Aix-en-Provence in the south of France on January 19, 1839. When he was a little boy, he was sent to a local school. Against the implacable resistance of his father who wished his son to be a lawyer, Cézanne made up his mind that he would be a painter. His father's reluctant consent at that time brought him financial support and, later, a large inheritance on which he could live without difficulty. In Paris he met Camille Pissarro and came to know some impressionist artists, with whom he would exhibit in 1874 and 1877. Cézanne was a contemporary of the Impressionists, but he went beyond their interests in the individual brushstroke and the fall of light onto objects, to create, in his words, "something more solid and durable, like the art of the museums".

Cézanne is not an easy man to love, but professors and painters adore him. Art critics lavish him with superlatives, including "prophet of the 20th century", "the most sensitive painter of his time", "the greatest artist of the 19th century" and "the father of modern art". But he is not quite a household name, and his posters have never been best sellers at museum shops. In fact, most non-professionals wouldn't stand a chance of recognizing Cézanne unless it was clearly labeled.

Cézanne's pictures are restrained, impersonal and remote—they don't have the gut-wrenching appeal of Van Gogh's portraits. They can't compete with Monet's lush expanses of water lilies or Renoir's sensuous women with their come-hither looks. Bowls of fruit and the hills and trees of Provence—where Cézanne spent most of his life, are a hard sell against the Tahitian backdrops of Gauguin, with or without the naked women.

Cézanne is an artist's artist. He was obsessed with form rather than content, so subject matter was always secondary to the act of painting itself. He wanted the methods and skills of the painter to be more important than the image. That meant the subject of the painting couldn't be so dynamic as to overshadow the artist's act of creation. The more he concentrated on this, the less viewer-friendly his works became. But that suited his personality just fine. His goal was not to have a mass audience or sales appeal; it was to satisfy himself.

It's hard to imagine that the man who created such restrained, methodical and time-consuming works had a violent and volatile temper. Painting was his salvation, a way to balance the fires within. Rather than let his personalities shine in his art—that scared him too much—he suppressed it. He worked in virtual seclusion and seldom ventured out.

Cézanne was versatile; in his pursuit of perfection and a unique style, he experimented a lot. Art students often copy paintings—you still see them in museums with their sketchbooks—and Cézanne did just that, but unlike most, he never stopped copying. To him, it was an important form of discipline and inspiration. He felt he could understand art better through copying, and whenever he came to an impasse, he went off to the nearest museum with a sketchbook in hand.

His earliest works, from his first days in Paris, are expressionistic. In the early 1870s, he