

Meet the Masters
November Program

Grade 4 Artists Use Texture

Vincent Van Gogh "The Starry Night"

Marc Chagall "Chambon-sur-Loz"

Artwork overview:

Texture is the way a surface feels when you touch it. Texture can be seen as well as felt. Rough, smooth, and silky are examples of texture. Artists show texture in paintings and drawings by the way they apply paint or draw.

Artists who work with three-dimensional materials, such as clay, marble, or wood, can recreate the textures they see and feel. The surfaces of their artworks can be rough, smooth or silky, exactly like the objects they represent. These are actual textures.

Artists who work on flat surfaces must create the appearance of texture. The artists use lines, differences in value, and other techniques to show texture. Paintings, drawings, prints, and other two dimensional artworks have visual, or implied texture. Some painters, by thickly applying their paint, give their works both visual and actual texture that can be touched.

Topics for Discussion:

1. Which of these paintings best shows the material the work was made of.?
2. How does Van Gogh's handling of the paint show texture?
3. How did Van Gogh use the texture of the paint to show movement?
4. Does Chagall show texture in his painting.? How are the brush strokes different from Van Gogh's?
5. Compare how each painting makes you feel?
6. Do you think the colors the artists used effect the way you feel when you look at the painting? Why?
7. Which painting contains more cool colors and which contains more warm colors?
8. If you could touch each of these paintings how do you think they would feel?
9. Do you think the artists used a lot of paint in order to achieve texture?

Hands-on Art Activity: Make Rubbings to Show Texture with Collage

Materials: White tagboard
Thin paper (copy paper) for making rubbings
Scissors
Glue (white glue or glue stick)
Crayons (broken ones work best)
Found objects with texture: lace, wire mesh, flat buttons, coins, etc.
Rough fabric scraps or sand paper
Toothpicks, craft sticks and other small objects

Directions:

1. The tagboard will be your background.
2. Objects should have enough flat area that a student can place paper on top and rub with the side of a crayon.
3. Place object on table, then place thin paper on top of object. Hold paper in place.
4. Using side or edge of crayon, rub paper until texture or a design appears on the paper.
5. These will be the shapes for your texture collage.
6. Abstract designs or decorative combinations of textures and colors can be made.
7. Be sure to cover entire surface of the paper.
8. The shapes can be cut out to make a design or a landscape.
9. Glue the rubbings onto the tagboard.
10. Color around the rubbings to fill in the background.
11. Be sure each student's name appears on the front of the collage.

Marc Chagall

Marc Chagall (1887-1985), was a Russian-born artist. He combined elements of dreams, fantasy, and religion to create paintings with a joyous quality rare in art of the 1900's.

Chagall was born and raised in a deeply religious family in the Russian-Jewish village of Vitebsk. In 1910 he moved to Paris. There he began to paint in a style that incorporated religious symbols and childhood memories in the colors and structures of French art of the time. He portrayed realistic scale. Figures including animals, lovers, and musicians often float in the air. These fantasy aspects relate Chagall's art to *surrealism*.

After 1922, Chagall became interested in the graphic arts and became a leading *lithographer*. In 1945, he designed the sets and costumes for a production for the ballet *Firebird*. During the 1960's he completed a ceiling painting for the Paris Opera and Murals for the Metropolitan Opera in New York City. In 1964 he designed stained glass windows for the Hadassah-Hebrew Center in Jerusalem. He also designed the stained glass exhibit "America Windows" in 1977 at the Art Institute of Chicago, it measures over 8 ft x 32 ft.

"Chambon-sur-Loe"

Although this is a French village, here it seems inhabited by Russian peasants who look very much like the wooden toys from that country. A nostalgic, yet happy combination of memories and actualities, the painting is filled with fluttering feathers, slanting houses, and a wagon full of green hay. It might well be a setting for a ballet or a play.

Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1910)

Vincent Van Gogh was born on March 30, 1853 at the parsonage of Zundert, a village in Dutch Brabant near the Belgian frontier. His father and grandfather were Protestant ministers. Among his ancestors were a sculptor and several goldsmiths. Three of his uncles were art dealers, and one was instrumental in giving him his start in life as an artist. He was born into a family penetrated with art and religion, the two aspirations he continually ventured and eventually fused together.

When Van Gogh was 16 he went to The Hague to work for his uncle. His brother Theo stayed in the family art dealer business and became Van Gogh's dealer. In 1876, Van Gogh tried to become a preacher but failed his theology exams. Although he was not ordained, in 1876 he became a preacher in a poor coal-mining district in what is now southwestern Belgium.

In 1880, Van Gogh began painting as a profession. His early works were still lifes and scenes of peasant life. He used dark somber colors. By 1886 he moved to Paris. He became a part of the intellectual excitement of the Paris art scene. He made contacts with many French impressionist painters such as Camille Pissarro, Emile Bernard, Paul Gauguin, and Georges Seurat. He experimented with Impressionism while painting scenes of suburban and city life. Van Gogh collected Japanese prints, which no doubt influenced his work.

In 1888, Van Gogh moved to Arles in southern France. The sunlight and colors of the French countryside inspired him to experiment with rich vibrant colors. His paintings became strong with rich tones and bold shapes. His commitment to God and to showing the beauty of God's creations permeated his paintings. His heavy, thick (impasto) technique reveals the fury of his painting technique. He must have painted very quickly with great precision in application,

Van Gogh suffered from alternating bouts of depression and flurries of painting activity. His mental illness was never diagnosed. The last 19 months of his life were spent in a mental hospital. When he realized his mental condition would not improve, he committed suicide.