

READING A PAINTING

When you write about a painting think about the following.

SUBJECT AND INTERPRETATION

Start by describing what you see in the painting. Is it a portrait, still life, natural environment, built environment, figure, fantasy painting? What is it about? What do think is happening in the painting? Are there any people? What time of day? What time of year? What is the weather like? If it is a portrait. What is the person thinking and feeling? What is the persons personality? Remember it is important to use your imagination at this stage. It is what you think about the painting that is important.

COLOUR AND EFFECT

Colour creates a mood, an atmosphere, a feeling. An artist uses colour to communicate feelings and emotions. What is the artist trying to say about the subject by using colour? How does the colour affect you?

TOPE AND EFFECT

Tone is used to make things in the painting look solid and real. Has tone been used to make things look realistic? Are they painted in a flat way, like cut out paper? Has the artist used tones of a colour to link areas of the painting together?

COMPOSITION AND EFFECT

Composition is the way the artist has arranged things inside the shape of the canvas. What do you see first (focal point)? How has the artist done this? Where is your eye led to next ? Has the artist used colour like stepping stones, line to give direction, dark areas, light areas or texture to lead your eye around the painting?

TECHNIQUE AND STYLE

How has the artist put the paint onto the canvas? Is the paint thick or thin, rough or smooth? Do you see the brushstrokes? Does the painting look realistic like a photograph? Does the painting look unrealistic, the artist using a free and expressive style? Is it an Abstract painting where the artist has used shape, line and colour for its own sake and does not include objects.

The wonderful thing about writing about a painting is that there is no wrong answer. It is to do with what **you** think?
If you make a comment back it up with evidence.

COMMENT I think that this painting shows a morning scene in winter
EVIDENCE because I can see the sun and the moon in the sky
and you normally see this in winter time.

DESCRIPTION

COMMENT

EVIDENCE