

Unit 14 Biography

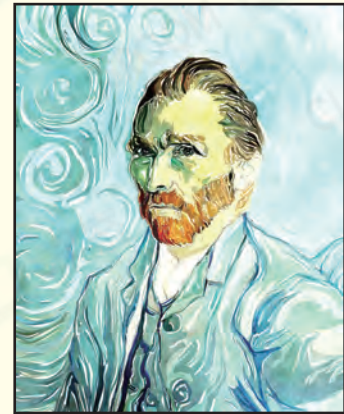


Working out the meaning of unfamiliar words

Eunice is reading a biography of Vincent van Gogh. Read the biography.

VINCENT VAN GOGH (1853–1890)

Vincent van Gogh, born in the Netherlands on 30th March, 1853, was a Dutch painter. In his early years, he worked for several jobs but none of them lasted long. He took the advice of his brother, Theo, and decided to become a painter. He started to study Art at the age of 27. Later, he moved to France to continue his art creations. Over the years, he had created around 2,100 pieces of artwork, including landscape paintings, object drawings and **portraits**, in which 860 of them were oil paintings. Van Gogh gained recognition and became well-known and influential in the 20th century. Most of his works caught great attention and were sold at high prices after his death. Despite this, van Gogh struggled to earn a living and suffered severe depression during his lifetime. Sadly, in 1890, he died by **suicide** due to the illness at the age of 37.



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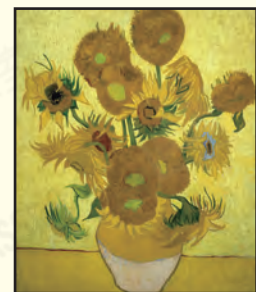
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Between 1889 and 1890, van Gogh stayed in an **asylum** in Paris to receive mental treatment for a few months. His most famous creation, The Starry Night, was a creation in that period of time.

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Sunflowers were another **significant** symbol of van Gogh. There was a series of sunflower paintings and most of them were created in France. He once described sunflowers as 'the flowers that belong to him'.



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Fun Facts about van Gogh:

- Van Gogh's life was documented through more than 800 letters he wrote to his brother and friends. Those letters were edited and later published in 1914.
- He created more than 900 artworks within only ten years, including numerous iconic paintings.
- There is a **rumor** that he cut his left ear off after arguing with a friend. Yet, the truth and details are still unknown.

25



10 mins

DATE

Choose the best answers by blackening the circles.



1. In line 13, the word 'suicide' means 'to _____'.

- A. end one's own life
- B. see a doctor
- C. make a promise
- D. end a relationship



2. In line 14, the word 'asylum' means '_____ '.

- A. a school for students to receive education
- B. a hospital for patients with mental disorder
- C. a hospital for patients who are physically ill
- D. a building to display artistic and historical objects

3. Which of the following is TRUE about Vincent van Gogh? (Choose more than one answer.)

- A. Being a painter was the only job in his life.
- B. His friend cut off his left ear during their quarrel.
- C. His paintings became famous after he died.
- D. He had more than one piece of sunflower painting.

Tip

Q1: Try to replace the unfamiliar word with the words in each option.

READING

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

4. How did van Gogh describe sunflowers?

5. How did people know about van Gogh's life after he died?

Fill in each blank with ONE word from the biography. Change the word form when necessary.

Van Gogh was born in the Netherlands, but he moved to live in 6. _____ for a long period of time. He was fond of painting landscapes, flowers and 7. _____. His paintings have been 8. _____ to the world. Most of them were either 9. _____ at auctions or kept in museums.