

Claude Monet

The French artist Claude Monet was one of the founders of the nineteenth century style of art known as impressionism. Impressionism broke many of the rules of art that were in place at the time. The impressionist painters used subjects from the world around them. They painted in lighter colors and often put one color on top of another before the first color was dry. This gave the paintings a more blurred and softer appearance.

Born in Paris in 1840, Monet learned about art from older artists as well as by observing the landscape around him. In his own words, he was born undisciplined and found it difficult to follow rules. He had a hard time in school and would often draw his teachers in his notebook during class. He quickly became known as an artist, and people paid him to draw their portraits. As a teenager, Monet met and became friends with several other artists. One of them, Eugene Boudin, encouraged him to paint outdoors.

Most of Monet's paintings focus on the differences in light and atmosphere that occur at different times of the day and during different seasons of the year. He would show natural color by breaking it into separate parts. Monet knew a great deal about light, and he carefully observed the effect that light had on the subjects of his paintings. He did not use black or gray, preferring instead to paint only in color. Monet mastered the art of painting landscapes and is famous for his paintings of water lilies. He is so well known for his paintings of landscapes that he is often referred to as "landscape painter."

In Monet's later paintings, the structure of his subjects appears almost dissolved in the colors. He created many "series paintings", in which he would paint the same object or scene at different times of the day or at different times of the year. His first series was a group of paintings of haystacks. Monet had a beautiful, colorful garden at his home in Giverny, France. The garden was the subject of his famous water lilies series of paintings. During World War I, Monet painted a series of Weeping Willow trees as a tribute to fallen French troops.

Claude Monet (cont'd)

As Monet grew older, he began to have problems with his eyesight. He developed cataracts, which often make people see things in reddish colors. Because of this, many of Monet's later paintings have a lot of red tones in them. The cataracts nearly caused Monet to go blind, but he had surgery to remove them, and his eyesight improved. After he had the surgery, Monet repainted some of his "reddish" water lily paintings, changing the color of the flowers to make them bluer.

Claude Monet continued to paint until the end of his life. He died of lung cancer in 1926 when he was 86 years old. Today, his paintings are worth millions of dollars. They hang in museums throughout the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and the Louvre in Paris, France.

Claude Monet Questions

1. Which style of art did Claude Monet help found?
 - a. impressionism
 - b. improvisation
 - c. modern art
 - d. cubism

2. *Undisciplined* means
 - a. very organized.
 - b. unable to concentrate.
 - c. unable to follow rules.
 - d. unique.

3. Monet learned about art from
 - a. other artists.
 - b. observing things around him on his own.
 - c. both of these
 - d. neither of these; he went to art school and was formally educated in the techniques of his day.

4. Who encouraged Monet to paint outdoors?

5. Monet is known for his
 - a. painting of landscapes.
 - b. paintings of his own garden.
 - c. series paintings.
 - d. a and c
 - e. All of these

6. During World War I, what did Monet paint in honor of fallen French troops?
 - a. a series of haystacks
 - b. a series of Weeping Willow trees
 - c. a series of French flags
 - d. a series of army boots

Claude Monet (cont'd)

7. Monet's water lilies were paintings
 - a. of his favorite flower.
 - b. of his own garden.
 - c. of the garden in his favorite park.
 - d. that he created from his own imagination.

8. When Monet got older, he
 - a. developed cataracts that affected his painting.
 - b. developed cataracts that had no affect on his painting.
 - c. painted mostly in blue because of his failing eyesight.
 - d. went blind.

9. Monet painted
 - a. until the end of his life.
 - b. until his eyesight failed.
 - c. less when he got older.
 - d. more when he got older.

10. Name one place where you would find a Monet painting today.

Name _____

Date _____

Claude Monet Answers

1. a
2. c
3. c
4. Eugene Boudin
5. e
6. b
7. b
8. a
9. a
10. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City or The Louvre in Paris, France