

IN BRIEF

The Fire Inside is about a young boy who grew up to paint some of the world's most acclaimed artworks. Vincent van Gogh is the inspiration for this month's pack, which is all about art and artists. The activities you will find inside are designed to inspire creativity and a love of art in students...



1. LITERACY LESSON IDEAS

- When a student comes across a word they don't know in a story, it's a chance for them to use their research skills and build their vocabulary! Get them to turn to the **Storytime Glossary**, where they can look up words from this month's issue...
- This pack is all about art, and the **Class Discussion Sheet** has questions that encourage pupils to talk about art they like, where they encounter art in their lives, and where they could find inspiration for their own creative endeavours....
- The **Reading Comprehension Sheet** challenges kids to find adjectives, synonyms and a simile in an extract from 'The Fire Inside'. Can they come up with their own synonyms as well?
- Stories are made up of a series of events that happen one after the other, but what happens if the order gets mixed up? The **Story Sequencing Sheet** has the events of Vincent's childhood jumbled, and it's up to your pupils to work out the correct sequence, based on their knowledge of this month's story.
- One of the best ways to *really* understand a story is to retell it in your own words. The **Storyboard** page features gorgeous art from this month's story, which students can use as prompts for writing their own account of the artist's childhood...
- How well did your class get to know young Van Gogh? The **Character Sheet: Vincent** page has questions about him for pupils to answer.

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1. LITERACY LESSON IDEAS CONTINUED

- We hope that Vincent van Gogh's story (and this pack) have kindled your students' interest in art and artists! The first **Art Adjectives!** page has ten terms which can be very useful when talking about paintings. Can they match each word with the correct definition? Feel free to give them hints if they don't get them all right. The second sheet of the exercise features four paintings which they can describe using the new terms they have learned.
- The **A Letter to Vincent** page asks kids to write a letter to the artist, telling him what they think of his art. To prepare your class for this exercise, we recommend showing them some of his paintings and perhaps talking about them briefly.

2. ART LESSON IDEAS

- After reading 'The Fire Inside', children might want to learn about the rest of the artist's life. The **Top 10 Van Gogh Facts!** sheet has some cool information that could answer many of their questions...
- The **Art Masters!** page has eight profiles of Vincent van Gogh and other great artists from different times and places. After getting your class to read through the facts on the page, you could show them examples of art by these artists and ask them to discuss what is different and appealing about each of them.
- The **Types of Painting** page introduces readers to four different types of picture and asks them to identify an example of each. This could be a very useful task for them to do before going on a school trip to an art museum, as they should be able to find these kinds of painting there.
- **Tools of the Trade!** is about the different materials that can be used to create art. Like the previous exercise, this one would be good preparation for a gallery visit, so your students can spot art made with different media...
- Would your class like to try emulating Van Gogh's art style ? The **Fingerpaint a Starry Night!** activity gives instructions on how to do it and a template to paint on!

Continued on page 3...

2. ART LESSON IDEAS CONTINUED

- Many artists created images of themselves – even Vincent van Gogh! The **Do a Self-Portrait!** page has a frame and a face outline for students to use when they try to create a cool image of themselves. (The lines on the face are for positioning the eyes, nose and mouth in the correct places...)
- Vincent van Gogh was celebrated for his bold use of colours, and your pupils can emulate him when they complete the **Colour In the Sunflowers** sheet. Encourage them to be creative when choosing tones to use for shading and highlights. For example, why not try mixing blue or purple with yellow to create shading for the sunflowers' petals?

3. MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Making art can be a wonderful creative outlet for kids, but it can also be beneficial to their mental and emotional health! Creating something can be relaxing, distracting and absorbing, allowing them to put aside any worries they might have (for some time at least!). It gives them a chance to express their emotions, and creating something of their own builds feelings of pride, achievement and self-esteem. Also art does not need to be graded as most other subjects, allowing the students to build confidence and new skills. Art should be a part of every child's education and we hope this pack will inspire great lessons this term.

STORYTIME GLOSSARY

If you don't know a word, look up its meaning here!

Cool as a Capybara (Page 6)

- ▷ **Mammals** – warm-blooded animals
- ▷ **Rodent** – animal in the same family as rats, mice and squirrels
- ▷ **Waded** – walked through shallow water
- ▷ **Herd** – group of animals
- ▷ **Fluttering** – gentle flapping
- ▷ **Chirped** – said in a high-pitched way
- ▷ **Webbed toes** – toes with skin between them
- ▷ **Submerged** – underwater
- ▷ **Bravery** – courage
- ▷ **Marmoset** – kind of small monkey
- ▷ **Dignified** – serious
- ▷ **Take refuge** – go somewhere for protection
- ▷ **Greenery** – plant leaves
- ▷ **Armadillo** – animal with protective plates
- ▷ **Castaways** – stranded creatures
- ▷ **Piggyback ride** – ride on his back

White-Thorn and the Talking Bird (Page 10)

- ▷ **Peninsula** – narrow piece of land that sticks out into water
- ▷ **Acorns** – nuts of an oak tree
- ▷ **Property** – things that belong to someone
- ▷ **Manor** – big country house and its land
- ▷ **Graze** – eat grass
- ▷ **Ability** – talent or skill
- ▷ **Staff** – long thin stick of wood
- ▷ **Rap on** – knock on

- ▷ **Startled** – surprised
- ▷ **Gasped** – said in a surprised way
- ▷ **Brim** – top edge
- ▷ **Niceties** – polite actions
- ▷ **Fleece** – coat of wool
- ▷ **Shear me** – cut off my wool
- ▷ **Thrived** – did very well

The Fire Inside (Page 15)

- ▷ **Tidiness** – being neat and clean
- ▷ **Gloomy** – sad and negative
- ▷ **Stubborn** – not willing to give in
- ▷ **Temper** – mood
- ▷ **Scowling** – frowning angrily
- ▷ **Criticised** – said negative things about
- ▷ **Gorse** – kind of thorny bush
- ▷ **Blossoming** – flowering
- ▷ **Battered** – beaten up
- ▷ **Wilderness** – wild areas
- ▷ **Fashionable** – stylish
- ▷ **Stockroom** – place where things are stored
- ▷ **Inventive** – original and clever

The Crystal Ball (Page 20)

- ▷ **Sorcerer** – magician
- ▷ **Swelling** – growing bigger
- ▷ **Sneaked out** – went out secretly
- ▷ **Innkeeper** – person who runs an inn
- ▷ **Rumbling** – rough-sounding
- ▷ **Peculiar** – strange
- ▷ **Spun around** – turned around quickly
- ▷ **Blazed** – burned

Continued on page 2...



STORYTIME GLOSSARY

- ▷ **Talons** – claws of a bird
- ▷ **Swooped** – dived
- ▷ **Chamber** – room
- ▷ **Chuckled** – laughed quietly
- ▷ **Enchantress** – kind of female magician

Second-Hand Magic (Page 28)

- ▷ **Makeover** – change of style
- ▷ **Quirky** – odd-looking
- ▷ **Cobwebs** – webs made by spiders
- ▷ **Dinged** – made a ‘ding’ noise
- ▷ **Knick-knacks** – small objects
- ▷ **Grin** – wide smile
- ▷ **Contemporary** – modern
- ▷ **Vintage** – from the past
- ▷ **Wobble** – shake a bit
- ▷ **Fairest** – prettiest
- ▷ **Tiring** – making someone need rest

Nanabush and the Thunderbird

(Page 30)

- ▷ **Shores** – areas at edge of lake or sea
- ▷ **Legendary** – told about in legends
- ▷ **Wigwam** – type of traditional Native American dwelling
- ▷ **Foolhardy** – brave and perhaps foolish
- ▷ **Swift** – fast-moving
- ▷ **Shrouded in** – covered by
- ▷ **Scrambled up** – climbed up
- ▷ **Scurried** – went in a hurry
- ▷ **Scorch** – burn
- ▷ **Wounds** – injuries

Jokwa and the Stones of Five Colours

(Page 36)

- ▷ **Shelter** – places for safety and protection
- ▷ **Lance** – long spear
- ▷ **Galloped** – rode quickly
- ▷ **Bee stings** – stings from bees
- ▷ **Gloated** – said in a mocking way
- ▷ **Dwelt** – lived
- ▷ **In disguise** – dressed up as someone else
- ▷ **Fearsome** – frightening
- ▷ **Motionless** – not moving
- ▷ **Cauldron** – large round cooking pot
- ▷ **Wondrous** – amazing
- ▷ **Chasm** – deep crack

The Bat, the Bramble and the Seagull (Page 42)

- ▷ **Bars** – blocks of metal
- ▷ **Trading voyage** – journey to sell things in other places
- ▷ **Profits** – extra money we make
- ▷ **Cargo** – stuff carried by ship
- ▷ **Vessel** – ship
- ▷ **Disastrous** – extremely unsuccessful

CLASS DISCUSSION SHEET

LET'S TALK ABOUT... **creativity!** Vincent van Gogh became famous for painting unique art, but there are many other ways for you to express yourself creatively! These questions are about finding inspiration!

1. Painting is one kind of creative activity, but which other ones can you think of? Which ones do you like the best? Would you like to try creating some art of your own?

2. Where do you see art in your day-to-day life? People think of art as being found in galleries, but it can appear in unexpected places!

3. Vincent found ideas for his art by going out and observing nature. What could you do to get inspiration for a creative activity that you are interested in?

MY FAVOURITE ART!

Tell us all about it below...

My favourite kind of art is: _____

I like it because: _____

*Draw a picture of your
favourite artwork here!*

NAME _____

CLASS _____

READING COMPREHENSION SHEET

Do you know what an adjective, a synonym and a simile are?

“

Vincent's mum was called Anna. She was kind, but had a gloomy way of looking at life. "The world is full of troubles, and bad things might happen at any moment!" she would say to him. "The best thing you can do is keep your emotions under control and stay busy!"

Vincent tried his best to please his parents, but he was also very stubborn, with a temper that was as fiery as his red hair. Despite his best efforts, he often had arguments with his mum and dad.

”

1. In the second sentence of the extract, can you find two *adjectives* (describing words)? What are they?

2. In the second paragraph there is a word that is a *synonym* of 'determined'. Can you work out which one it is? (A synonym is a word that means the same thing as another one...)

3. Can you spot the *simile* in the second paragraph? A simile describes something as being *like* something else...

SYNONYM CHALLENGE!

Can you come up with words that have similar meanings to the ones below?

Bright: _____

Warm: _____

Cold: _____

Small: _____

ANSWERS: 1. Kind and gloomy. 2. Stubborn. 3. 'as fiery as his red hair'. **Synonym Challenge!** Possible synonyms are colourful or smart for bright, hot or cosy for warm, chilly or freezing for cold and tiny or little for small.

STORY SEQUENCING SHEET

Can you put these events from 'The Fire Inside' in the right order?
Number them to show which ones should be read first...

Vincent's mother taught him how to draw, but she wanted him to draw flowers instead of fields and old cottages!

During his wanderings, he would study the plants and creatures he discovered or just lie back and look at the sky.

The little boy did his best to obey his parents, but he had a fiery temper and often argued with them.

Finally, his mother wrote to Vincent's uncle, whose name was Cent. He was a rich art dealer who lived in the city.

They made him and his brothers and sisters go on walks around the little Dutch village where they lived, but Vincent didn't like this.

When it all got too much, he would go out and wander in the woods and fields that lay beyond the village. There he felt truly free!

At his new job, Vincent learned a lot about art. It became his new passion, and it lit a fire within him!

Young Vincent loved his parents, but they always told him what to do! They wanted him to behave properly and control his emotions.

The boy felt trapped in his family's house, but he was able to relax by drawing and reading books.

Cent offered Vincent a job in the city of the Hague. The boy accepted because he wanted to leave home and see the world.

His parents were worried when he came back late at night from his wanderings, with his shoes all muddy!

NAME _____

CLASS _____

STORYBOARD

Tell the story of little Vincent in your own words. Write about his life and adventures under the colourful pictures below!

1



2



3



4



NAME _____

CLASS _____

CHARACTER SHEET: VINCENT

Vincent was a brilliant but hot-tempered boy with a difficult life. Show how much you learned about him by completing the character sheet below!



Which three adjectives do you think his parents would have used to describe young Vincent?

Can you recall a good thing that Vincent's parents taught him?

How would Vincent have described life with his family?

Why did he like going out in nature?

Draw a stylish hat for Vincent to wear in this space!



What do you think Vincent might have dreamed of doing when he grew up? Which jobs do you think he could have done well?

ART ADJECTIVES!

1 OF 2

It's fun to talk about art! Here are some handy words that you can use to describe paintings and other creative works. See if you can match them with the correct definitions below...

- A. **ABSTRACT** B. **ANGULAR**
C. **MONOCHROMATIC** D. **SURREAL**
E. **COLOURFUL** F. **REALISTIC**
G. **MINIMALIST** H. **SOMBRE**
I. **MUTED** J. **EXPRESSIVE**

MATCH THE DEFINITIONS

1. Sad or serious-seeming.
2. Communicating powerful thoughts or feelings.
3. Having many bright colours.
4. Showing strange and dreamlike things that cannot exist in reality!
5. Having only one main colour.
6. With many lines and angles.
7. Using shapes and colours instead of trying to show realistic things.
8. Looking like something from real life, instantly recognisable.
9. With dull colours.
10. Extremely simple and with few details.

ANSWERS: A. - 4, B. - 6, C. - 5, D. - 4, E. - 3, F. - 8, G. - 10, H. - 1, I. - 9, J. - 2.

NAME _____

CLASS _____

ART ADJECTIVES!

2 OF 2

Can you use the ten new adjectives you learned on the previous page to talk about these artworks? Choose two to describe each one!



A. I think this landscape painting is
_____ and
_____.



B. I think this portrait is
_____ and
_____.



C. I think this artwork is
_____ and
_____.



D. I think this self-portrait is
_____ and
_____.

We hope that this month's story has inspired you to look at Vincent Van Gogh's art. Very few people appreciated his paintings when he was alive, so write a letter below telling him why you like his art!

A cartoon illustration of a boy with red hair, wearing a blue shirt and a straw hat with a blue band, peeking over a yellow, scalloped-edge border. The background is white with horizontal lines.



TOP TEN VAN GOGH FACTS!

You've read about Vincent's boyhood – now find out about his life as an artist!

He was very busy!

Vincent became a painter when he was 27 – and in the next ten years, he created 2100 works of art!

His biggest fan was his brother!

Theo van Gogh paid for Vincent's paint and tried to sell his art for him!

His mum wasn't so keen on his art!

Vincent gave her paintings, but she never thanked him for them...

The Impressionists made a big impression!

Vincent made friends with these artists, who tried to capture an 'impression' of how things looked with bold brushstrokes. They helped inspire his art!

He only sold one painting in his lifetime! But his art is now worth millions...



Vincent loved the great outdoors!

Many of his greatest works were painted *en plein air*, which is a fancy French phrase for 'outside'.

Living in France brightened up his art!

In 1888, he moved to sunny Provence, in the south of France. He painted what he saw there in vibrant colours!

Being unwell didn't stop him from creating! The artist created some of his most famous works when in hospital.

He painted himself!

When he couldn't find other people to paint, he created pictures of himself. These kinds of painting are called *self-portraits*.

He got fired from his first job! Van Gogh worked at an art gallery in Paris in 1875. He told customers exactly what he thought of paintings he didn't like, which upset his bosses!



Picture credits: left: Jakob Rutkiewicz - stock.adobe.com; bottom right: stock.adobe.com

ART MASTERS!

Vincent van Gogh was just one of many amazing artists who changed the way we look at the world. Here are some that you should know about...

LEONARDO DA VINCI

From: Italy **Lived:** 1452-1519

Art style: Renaissance art

Famous for: The intricacy and fine detail of his portraits. He gave his paintings a soft, smoky look called *sfumato*.

Amazing fact: His masterpiece, the 'Mona Lisa', is in the Louvre in Paris and is seen by 10 million visitors a year.

J.M.W. TURNER

From: the United Kingdom **Lived:** 1775-1851

Art style: Romanticism

Famous for: Creating bold and colourful landscape paintings with very expressive brushwork.

Amazing fact: He did watercolour paintings of the burning of Parliament, which he witnessed in 1834.

CLAUDE MONET

From: France **Lived:** 1840-1926

Art style: Impressionism

Famous for: Starting the 'impressionist' movement, which used dabs of paint to give the impression of a scene, without relying too much on details.

Amazing fact: He had problems with his eyes later in life, which made it difficult for him to see colour properly!

VINCENT VAN GOGH

From: the Netherlands **Lived:** 1853-1890

Art style: Post-Impressionism

Famous for: Creating bold and colourful paintings with very expressive brushwork.

Amazing fact: He is considered one of the best painters who ever lived, but he only sold one painting in his lifetime!

PABLO PICASSO

From: Spain **Lived:** 1881-1973

Art style: many, including Primitivism and Cubism

Famous for: He helped develop 'cubist' art, which tried to show its subjects from many angles at once!

Amazing fact: Picasso has had more works of art stolen than any other artist! Over a thousand works of Picasso's paintings have been listed as lost, stolen or faked.

FRIDA KAHLO

From: Mexico **Lived:** 1907-1954

Art style: Surrealism and Magic realism

Famous for: Painting vivid self-portraits influenced by the native art of Mexico.

Amazing fact: She began painting after she was seriously injured in a bus crash and had to stay in her bed for months!

YAYOI KUSAMA

From: Japan **Lived:** 1929–

Art style: Conceptual art, Pop art

Famous for: Producing large-scale installations with her signature polka dots, employing different media.

Amazing fact: She has lived in a hospital (by choice) since 1977 and has an art studio nearby.

JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT

From: USA **Lived:** 1960-1988

Art style: Contemporary art and Neo-Expressionism

Famous for: Vibrant abstract art inspired by his hometown, New York City.

Amazing fact: Before he became famous, Basquiat was a graffiti artist and had his own tag: SAMO!

TYPES OF PAINTING

Artists can paint anything they like, but there are certain classic types of painting that have special names! Can you match these Vincent van Gogh paintings with the types below?

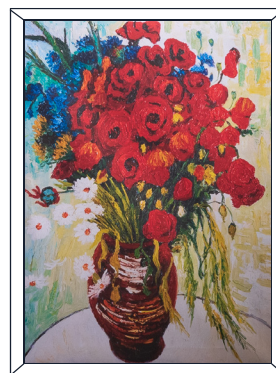
A. Portrait This is when an artist creates a picture of a person. They try to capture the person's mood and personality. Having a model to paint helps an artist to develop their skills in painting human features and proportions.

B. Landscape These pictures show outdoor scenes, often of the wilderness or countryside. Artists try to capture how the light and weather affect a scene at a particular time. Usually painted outdoors!

C. Still Life These pictures usually show smallish objects or items of food. Bowls of fruit or vases of flowers are popular subjects, and painting them is a great way to study perspective and proportions.

D. Self-portrait This is when the painter creates an image of themselves! It helps the artist to develop their style and is also a way to test their ability to capture an expression if they don't have a model!

1.



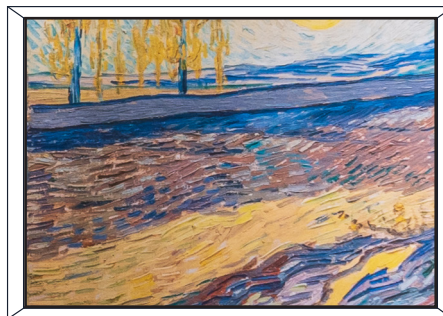
2.



3.



4.



Picture credits: 1, 2 and 4 Jakub Rutkiewicz - stock.adobe.com; Pecold - stock.adobe.com

ANSWERS: A - 2, B - 4, C - 1, D - 3.

OTHER TYPES OF PAINTING

Here are some other types of painting that are popular with artists...

ABSTRACT: This type of painting doesn't try to capture a realistic scene or subject, but plays with colours, forms and symbols.

HISTORICAL ART: These paintings show important historical events.

POP ART: These pictures use imagery from popular culture.

RELIGIOUS PAINTING: This art usually shows scenes of religious importance.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE!

There are many different ways for artists to create pictures!
Here are just a few of them – can you match the descriptions
with the different images below?

1. Oil Paint

This gooey stuff is made of oil mixed with coloured pigment. It's very colourful, thick, and easy to mix. It takes a long time to dry, though!

2. Charcoal

Sticks made from partly-burned wood. It's great for drawing black-and-white pictures with detailed shading.

3. Watercolours

These paints are made of coloured pigments mixed with water. They can create beautiful shades, but there's no easy way to correct any mistakes you might make!

4. Ink

This thin, dark liquid can be applied with a special pen or a brush. It is used for delicate line work and in classical East Asian art.

5. Pencils

They are made of ground graphite and are great for sketching, doodling, laying out, and putting the finishing touches on artworks.

6. Pastels

These dry crayons are used for drawing, and the colours can be mixed on the artwork. Pastels are often used on textured paper.



WHAT DO YOU PAINT ON?

Artists create art on many different surfaces! Paper is good for pencils, watercolours and charcoals, while oil paint is usually painted onto canvases (pieces of heavy fabric stretched over a wooden frame). Some artists painted on wooden boards or even walls!

NAME _____

CLASS _____

FINGERPAINT A STARRY NIGHT!

1 OF 2

Follow these instructions to create your own version of Van Gogh's famous 'Starry Night' – with your fingers!

You will need

- ★ The 'Starry Night' template on the next page
- ★ Masking tape or sticky tape
- ★ A piece of cardboard or wooden board slightly larger than the page
- ★ Paint in a variety of colours, including white, blue, black and yellow
- ★ Newspapers or newsprint to put under the art



Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890),
'The Starry Night', 1889, oil on canvas
Picture credit: Giorgio Morara - stock.adobe.com

How to do it

- 1.** First, tape the template to the cardboard or board. This will stop the paint from spreading too much and give you a neat border.
- 2.** In this exercise, the idea is to use your fingers to create swirls in the paint and blend the colours in interesting ways. First, add a dollop of yellow paint onto the moon and shape it into a crescent. Then use the paint on your fingers to dot in the yellow stars!
- 3.** Add a curved line of yellow along the bottom of the sky, with a layer of dark blue underneath it. Gently blend these two colours with your fingers and see what happens!
- 4.** Colour in the rest of the landscape with blue, grey and green. You can make green by mixing blue and yellow and grey by mixing black and white.
- 5.** Now, put dollops of blue and white paint in the sky. Mix it to create lighter blues, and then swirl the different shades in curves around the stars and moon.
- 6.** If you need to redo the stars and moon, add more yellow paint! Fill in the rest of the sky and ground with whatever colours you like. When you are happy with your picture, place it flat and let it dry.
- 7.** Peel off the tape. You can create a frame with four cardboard strips and hang your new masterpiece on the wall!

TOP TIPS!

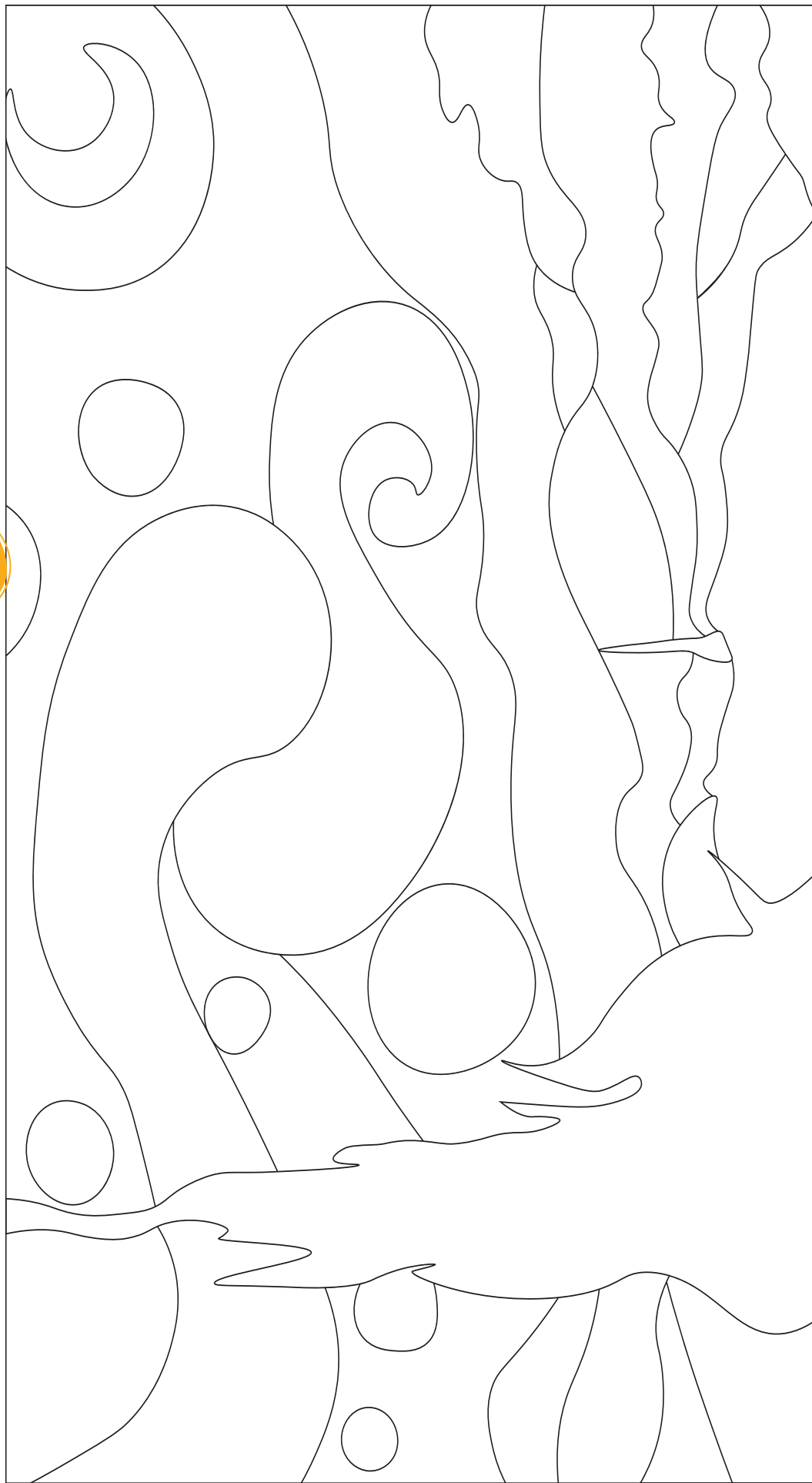
There is no right or wrong when it comes to art – it's all about self-expression!

- ★ Experiment with the different colours you get when the paints mix. Which colours look good together? You might discover some cool new hues!
- ★ Which patterns do you like? Move your fingers in different directions to come up with cool new effects!

AWESOME ADVENTURES: THE FIRE INSIDE

FINGERPAINT A STARRY NIGHT!

2 OF 2



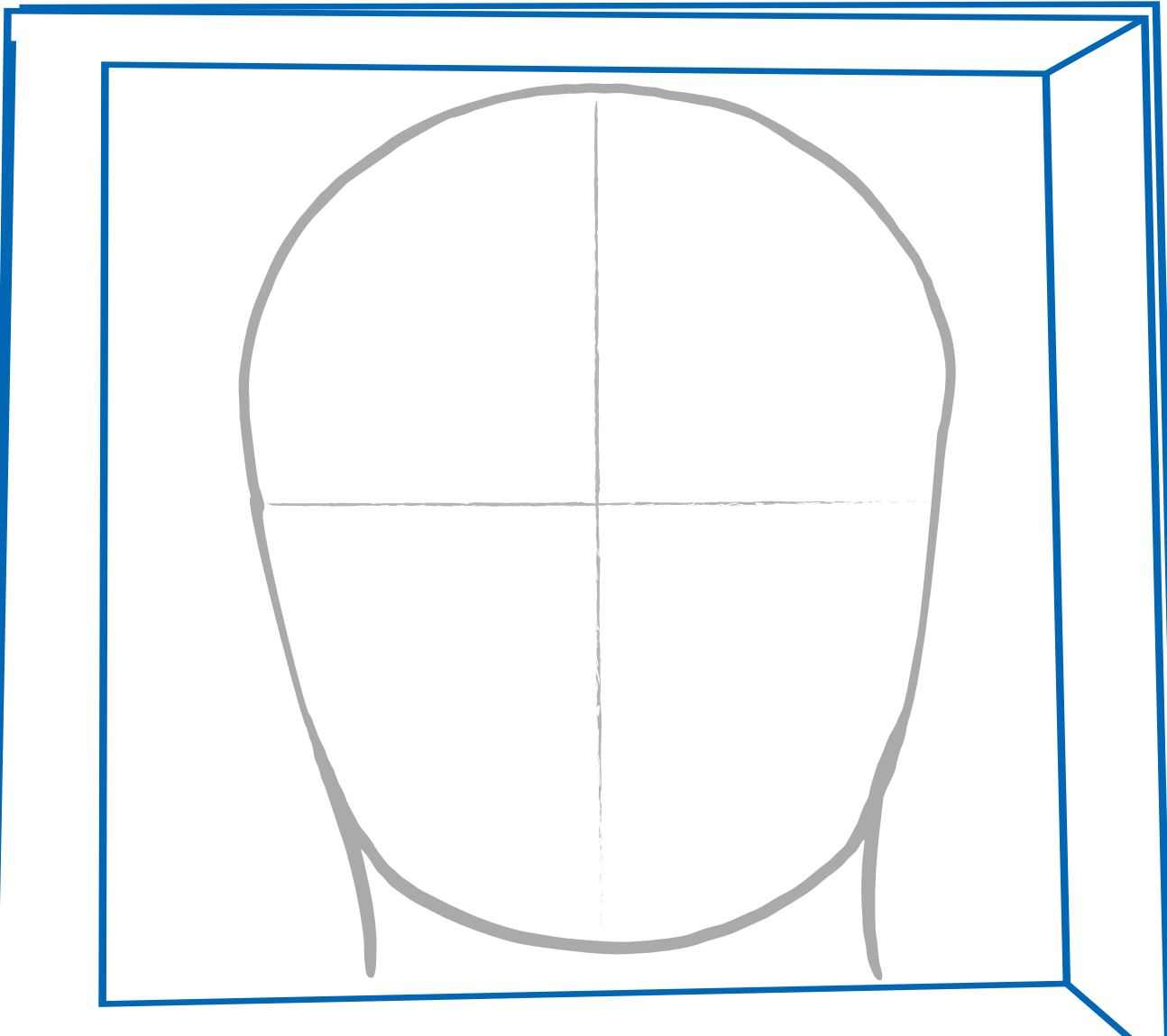
NAME _____

CLASS _____

DO A SELF-PORTRAIT!

Vincent created many pictures of himself – and you can do the same!

Read the tips below, and then draw yourself in the frame...

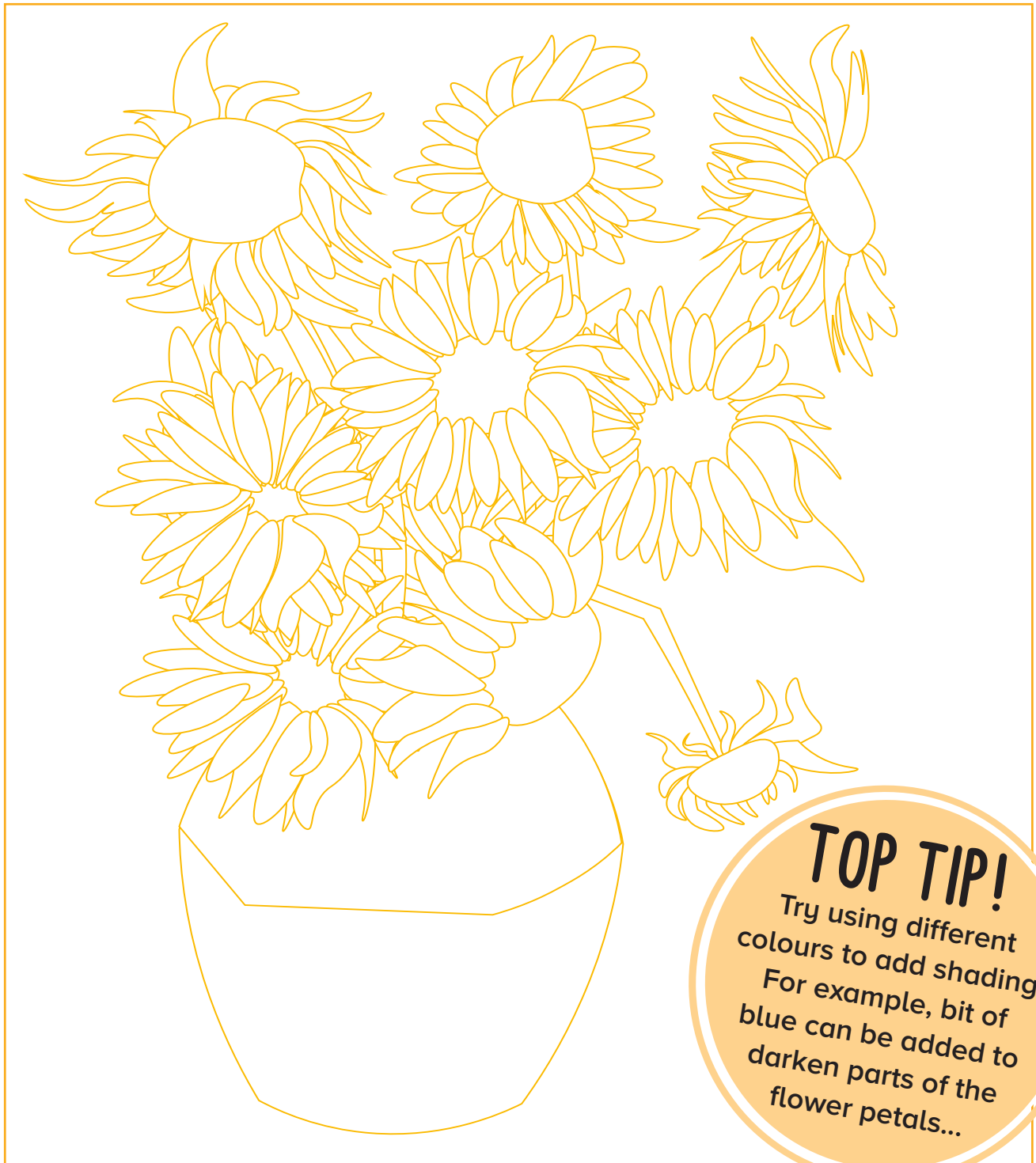


HOW TO DRAW YOURSELF

- ★ You can draw in front of a mirror or use a photo of yourself for reference!
- ★ The cross on the picture is there to help you put your eyes, nose and mouth in the right positions.
- ★ Pay attention to the shape of your nose, eyes, mouth and hair. Sketch them in lightly before adding more details and shading.
- ★ You don't have to be *too* realistic – why not emphasise your favourite features?

COLOUR IN THE SUNFLOWERS

Vincent van Gogh is famous for painting beautiful sunflowers!
You can colour in the image below to create your own version...



TOP TIP!
Try using different
colours to add shading!
For example, bit of
blue can be added to
darken parts of the
flower petals...