

Expressive Questions – Natural Environment

Use these questions to help build your essay, but make sure you think up your own
You get most marks for having a personal opinion and backing it up with evidence from
the painting or from books

- 1) What is the subject matter of the picture? eg. landscape, natural forms, allegory, seascape, cloudscape
- 2) How has the picture been composed or the sculpture put together? How much of the landscape can you see? Or - what forms has the artist created using natural materials
 - i) Why do you think they have done this?
- 3) How much movement is in the work?
 - i) Is it more of a snapshot or does it look like a distilled essence of a scene (i.e. does it look like a summary over time rather than an instant 'photo')
- 4) What kind of landscape or form is in the portrait?
 - i) What clues do you have in the painting to help you decide this?
 - ii) Is this an idyllic country scene, a turbulent storm, a calm snowscape?
 - iii) Is this a natural form that describes a shape or does it symbolize something?
- 5) Start to describe in detail what you see in the picture.
 - i) What is in the foreground, middleground and background?
 - ii) Does any part attract your attention? Why?
 - (a) How has the artist captured your attention?
- 6) Which of the key elements of line, tone, texture, pattern, colour, shape and form are most important in this painting and why?
 - i) *Use the keywords on the classroom wall to help you.*
- 7) What medium has the artist used? Oil paint? Chalk? Pencil? Watercolour? Stone? Wood? Leaves? Snow?
- 8) What type of brushstrokes, marks or methods of assembly/construction have been used?

9) Is there any sense of depth or perspective in the picture, or does it appear flat?

10) What mood do you think the work gives?

i) How does the work make you feel?

ii) How do you think it's meant to make you feel? [If it may have been made a long time ago, maybe you feel differently about things than they did]

iii) *Put yourself in the work – imagine what it would feel like to be in this place.*

11) How has line been used (if at all)?

12) How has the artist shown light and dark tones?

13) How have they used colour?

i) Is there an obvious colour scheme?

ii) What are the main colours used?

(a) How has the artist used contrasting colours?

(b) How have they used harmonious colours?

(i) *[Use the colour wheel in the classroom to help you decide.]*

(c) How warm or cold are the colours? Why?

14) Do you think this landscape is realistic? If you were to go there would you recognize them?

15) How do you think the artist has altered how the scene or natural objects look?

i) How have they distorted the image?

ii) How have they improved upon things?

(a) *Have they made it look prettier, uglier, more impressive and/or more important looking?*

16) When was the work made?

i) Find out information about the style of the painting/sculpture or if there is an artistic movement/group that the artist belonged to.

17) What purpose does the work have?

i) Why did the artist make it?

ii) Did someone pay the artist to make it? Why?

- iii) Is it meant as a landscape (e.g. "This is a painting of Cairngorm") or is there more meaning to it (e.g. "The stormy landscape is meant to symbolize turmoil")?
- 18) Find other works by the artist and see if they have made them differently.
- i) Why might they have done this? What are they trying to say?
- 19) What do you think, or feel about the work?
- 20) Why do you like it or dislike it?
- 21) How successful is the work? Why do you think this?
- 22) How does it attract your attention?
- 23) How could the artist have changed the work to improve it or make it different?