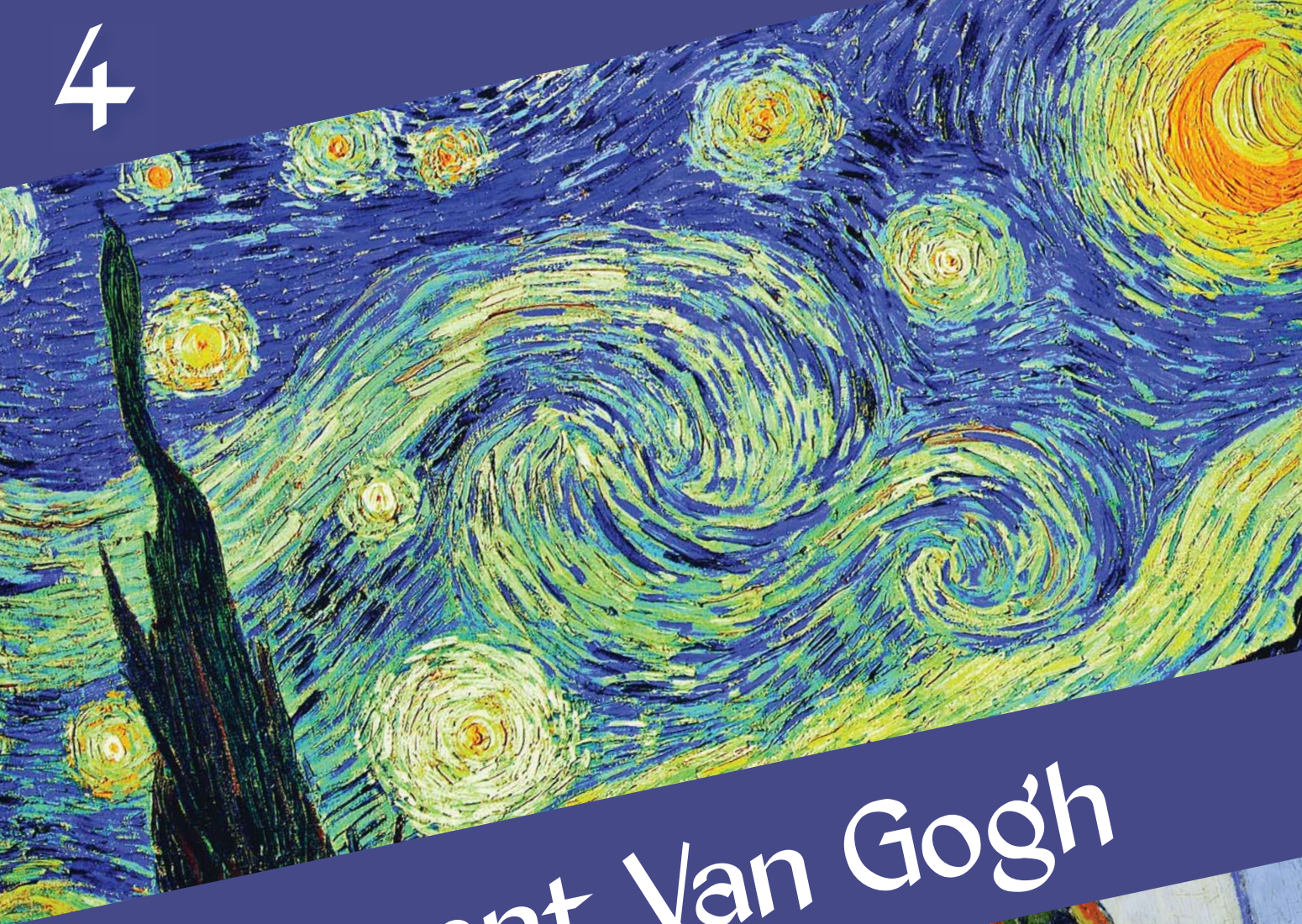
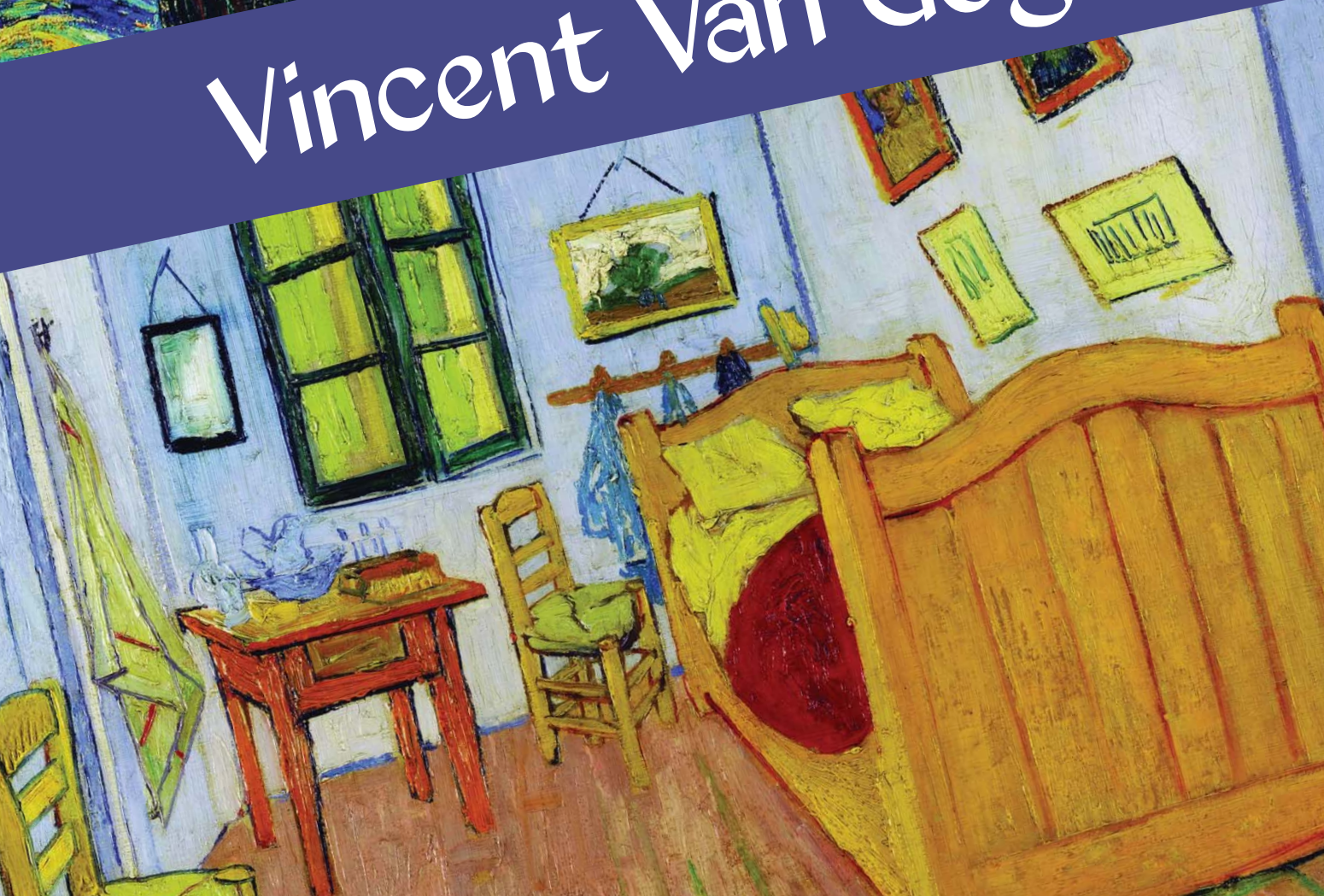
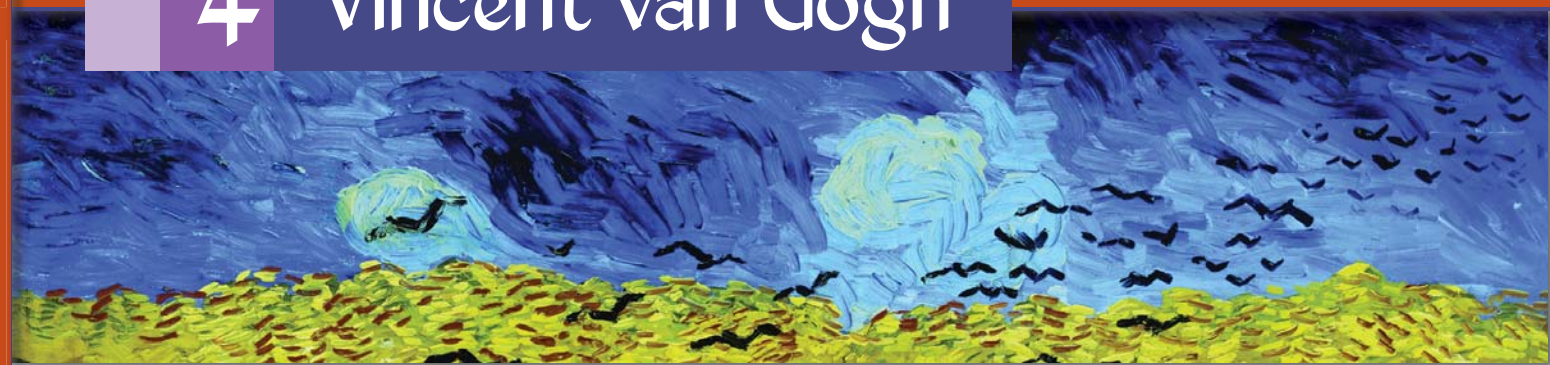


4



Vincent Van Gogh





- ✓ How many famous painters' names can you think of?
- ✓ Where are they from? Can you name some of their works?

You can browse through the internet and try to find as many famous painters' names as you can.



- You are going to watch a video and listen to a song called "Starry-starry Night" by Don Mc Lean. Before listening, read the lyrics of the song and match the underlined phrases with the relevant Van Gogh painting. Then watch the video and put the stanzas in the correct order.



()



Starry, starry night.
Flaming flowers¹ that brightly blaze,
Swirling clouds² in violet haze,
 Reflect in Vincent's eyes of china blue.
 Colors changing hue
morning field of amber grain³
Weathered faces lined in pain⁴
 Are soothed beneath the artist's loving hand.

()



()



For they could not love you,
 But still your love was true.
 And when no hope was left in sight
 On that starry, starry night,
 You took your life, as lovers often do.
 But I could have told you, Vincent,
 This world was never meant
 for one as beautiful as you.

()



Now I understand
 what you tried to say to me
 and how you suffered for your sanity
 and how you tried to set them free
 they would not listen they did not know how
 perhaps they'll listen now.

()



Starry, starry night.
 Portraits hung in empty halls,
 Frameless heads⁵ on nameless walls,
 With eyes that watch the world and can't forget.
 Like the strangers that you've met,
 The ragged men in the ragged clothes,
 The silver thorn of bloody rose⁶,
 Lie crushed and broken on the virgin snow.

()



Shadows on the hills,
 Sketch the trees and the daffodils⁷,
 Catch the breeze and the winter chills⁸,
 In colors on the snowy linen land⁹.

()



()



Now I think I know what you tried to say to me,
 How you suffered for your sanity,
 How you tried to set them free.
 They would not listen, they're not listening still.
 Perhaps they never will...

()



()



Starry, starry night.
 Paint your palette¹⁰ blue and grey,
 Look out on a summer's day,
 With eyes that know the darkness in my soul.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dipFMJckZOM>

or with lyrics

www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxHnRfhDmrk

συμπληρώνω

διορθώνω

3. Work with a partner. Together, you will try to fill in the blanks, correct the wrong words or strike out the extra words. Organise your work before you listen.



Starry starry night

..... your palette blue and grey
look out on a summer's day
with eyes that know the darkness in my bowl
Shadows on the hills and cliffs
..... the trees and the daffodils
catch the breeze and the winter drills
in colours on the linen land.

Now I understand

what you tried to say to me yesterday
and how you suffered for your vanity
and how you tried to them free
they would not listen they did not know how
perhaps they'll fasten now.

Starry starry night sky

Flaming flowers that brightly
swirling clouds in violet days
reflect in Vincent's eyes of china blue
colours hue
morning fields of amber grain
weathered faces lined in rain
are soothed beneath the artist's loving band.

Now I understand well

what you tried to say to me
and how you suffered for your sanity
and how you tried to set them free
they would not listen
they did not know how to listen
perhaps they'll listen now and forever.

For they not love you
but still your love was true
and when no hope was left beside
on that starry, starry night,
You took your life, as lovers often do
But I have told you, Vincent,
this world was never meant for one
as dutiful as you are.

Starry starry night

..... hung in empty halls
frameless heads on nameless dolls
with eyes that watch the world and can't
forget them
like the strangers that you've met
The ragged men in ragged clothes
a silver thorn a rose
lie crushed and broken on the virgin snow.

Now I think I know very well

what you tried to say to me
and how you suffered for your sanity
and how you tried to set them free
they would now listen
they're not listening still
..... they never will.

4. Now read the following questions, discuss them in your groups and then write the answers.



1. Do you think that the song reflects Van Gogh's ^{στάση} attitude and ^{στροφή (ποιήματος)} feelings? If so, mention specific verses.

2. How does this song make you feel?

3. Write up to 5 sentences giving facts about Van Gogh's life, based on the song. 

-
-
-
-
-

^{ρίχνω μια ματιά, φυλλομετρώ}

5. Browse the following sites and choose 4 or 5 paintings you like most. Spend some time ^{παράτηρώ} observing these paintings and write down how each one makes you feel. Finally, note ^{σημειώνω, καταγράφω} down the following information about these paintings. 

<http://www.googleartproject.com> (Van Gogh Museum Amsterdam)

www.vangoghmuseum.nl



- Title:
- Type of painting:
- Height: cm Width: cm
- Year it was painted:
^{σημειώσεις εξέτασης/θέασης}
- Viewing notes:

.....
.....



6. Match the following paintings with the viewing notes.



1. In the 19th century, absinth was a popular drink with many, including artists like van Gogh. This still life shows a solitary glass of absinth on a café table and a bottle of water. Van Gogh combines this with a view through the window. The chosen vantage point makes it feel as though you are yourself sitting at the café table where the painter sat.

2. After months of observing the local peasants' daily routines, van Gogh depicted a family gathered around the table for a modest dinner of the potatoes grown in their own garden. He chose his colors purposefully to connect his sitters with the earth that sustained them. The stark interior, their rough hands, and weather-beaten faces were the legacy of their life of labor. Neither sentimental nor romantic, The Potato Eaters expressed the compassionate sincerity of Vincent's aims in art.

3. Van Gogh returned to his earlier panoramic approach to depict the first harvest of the year in The Harvest, which he painted in 1888. His deliberate approach to spatial organization -- the crops in the foreground, the fields above, and the mountains on the high horizon -- reveals his desire to attain some epic grandeur.

4. Vincent van Gogh's Sprig of Flowering Almond Blossom in a Glass is an oil on canvas. He painted a sprig of an almond branch, which he forced into early flowering in a glass of water. The irregular pattern of the little branch, covered with pale, translucent blooms, gave him a subject that recalled the depiction of flowers in Japanese prints. The simple division of the silvery, violet background, with a scarlet band pays tribute to the Japanese aesthetic.

5. Location in the artwork: Paris, France On his trips to the areas around Paris, van Gogh often painted outdoors. This view of the Seine river was also made outside. Quite untypically, van Gogh did not complete this work.

6. When van Gogh arrived in Arles in the south of France from Paris, he was immediately inspired by the vast landscape. He painted this simple farmhouse in a cornfield there and then, partly in thick brushstrokes and partly using little stipples. Van Gogh made a sketch of this landscape in a letter to his brother Theo.

7. Read Vincent Van Gogh's biography and in pairs, answer the questions that follow.

Year of Birth : 1853

Death Year : 1890

Country of Origin : Netherlands

Vincent van Gogh was born in Zundert, Holland. The son of a pastor, was brought up in a religious and cultured atmosphere, a profession that Vincent found appealing and to which he would be drawn to a certain extent later in his life. His sister described him as a serious and introspective child, highly emotional and lacking self-confidence.

They provide a lot of insight into the life of the painter, and show him to be a talented writer with a keen mind. Theo would support Vincent financially throughout his life.

In 1880, Vincent van Gogh followed his brother Theo's suggestion and took up painting in earnest. For a brief period Vincent took painting lessons from Anton Mauve in Hague. Although Vincent and Anton soon split over divergence of artistic views, influences of the Hague School of painting would remain in Vincent's work, notably in the way he played with light and in the looseness of his brush strokes. However his usage of colours, favouring dark tones, set him apart from his teacher.

In spring 1886 Vincent van Gogh went to Paris, where he moved in with his brother Theo; they shared a house on Montmartre. Here he met the painters Edgar Degas, Camille Pissarro, Bernard, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and Paul Gauguin. He discovered impressionism and liked its use of light and color, more than its lack of social engagement (as he saw it). Especially the technique known as pointillism (where many small dots are applied to the canvas that blend into rich colors only in the eye of the beholder, seeing it from a distance)

made its mark on Van Gogh's own style. It should be noted that Van Gogh is regarded as a post-impressionist, rather than an impressionist, meaning that the artist uses color and lines to express an emotional response to the subject rather than to describing it accurately.



At age 16 Vincent started to work for an art dealer in The Hague. His four years younger brother Theo, with whom Vincent cherished a life-long friendship, would join the company later. This friendship is amply documented in a vast amount of letters they sent each other.

ασταθής, ανισόρροπος εκρηκτικός

Vincent was an unstable and volatile man, well known as the 'tortured artist'. His nervous temperament made him a difficult companion and night-long discussions combined with painting all day undermined his health. He decided to go south to Arles where he hoped his friends would join him and help found a school of art. Gauguin did join him but with disastrous results. Near the end of 1888, an incident led Gauguin to ultimately leave Arles, after a number of arguments with Vincent. Van Gogh pursued him with an open razor, was stopped by Gauguin, but ended up cutting a portion of his own ear lobe off.

Van Gogh then began to alternate between fits of madness and lucidity and was sent to the asylum in Saint-Remy suffering with depression. He spent much time in the asylum, though it was later believed that he suffered from epilepsy. While there he painted some 150 paintings. His most famous work The Starry Night was painted while staying in the asylum. The only painting he sold during his lifetime, 'The Red Vineyard', was created in 1888. In May 1890 Vincent van Gogh left the clinic and went to the physician Paul Gachet, in Auvers-sur-Oise near Paris, where he was closer to Theo, who had recently married. Here van Gogh created the portrait of the melancholic "Dr. Gachet". In two months Van Gogh was averaging one painting per day.

His depression aggravated. On July 27 of the same year, at the age of 37, after a fit of painting activity, van Gogh shot himself in the chest. He died two days later, with Theo at his side, who reported his last words as "The sadness will last forever". He was buried at the cemetery of Auvers-sur-Oise; Theo unable to come to terms with his brother's death died 6 months later and was buried next to him.

In a short period of ten years Van Gogh made approximately 900 paintings. Van Gogh's finest works were produced in less than three years in a technique that grew more and more impassioned in brushstroke, in symbolic and intense color, in surface tension, and in the movement and vibration of form and line. Dramatic, lyrically rhythmic, imaginative, and emotional, for the artist was completely absorbed in the effort to explain either his struggle against madness or his comprehension of the spiritual essence of man and nature.

Van Gogh's influence on expressionism, fauvism and early abstraction was enormous, and can be seen in many other aspects of 20th-century art. Vincent's brother's wife collected Vincent's paintings and letters after his death and dedicated herself to getting his work the recognition it deserved. It would not take long before his fame grew higher and higher. Today, several paintings by Van Gogh rank among the most expensive paintings in the world. On March 30, 1987 Van Gogh's painting "Irises" was sold for a record \$53.9 million at Sotheby's, New York. His Portrait of Doctor Gachet was sold for \$82.5 million at Christie's, thus establishing a new price record.

As mentioned earlier, Vincent van Gogh was also a passionate letter writer. Of the countless letters he wrote to his friends and family more than 800 have been preserved, as well as approximately 80 letters that he received. In one of his letters, he supports that "There are so many people, especially among our pals, who imagine that words are nothing. On the contrary, don't you think, it's as interesting and as difficult to say a thing well as to paint a thing." Van Gogh to Emile Bernard, 19 April 1888.

<http://www.vincentvangoghart.net/>

www.vangoghgallery.com/misc/bio.html



- A. Put the **γεγονότα** in Van Gogh's life in **χρονολογική σειρά**.



- Vincent moves to Paris sharing a house with his brother Theo.
- He shoots himself in the chest and dies two days later.
- Vincent starts to work for an art dealer in Hague.
- A portion of his ear lobe was cut off after an incident with Gauguin.
- He takes up painting after his brother's suggestion.
- He was sent to an asylum in Saint Remy for treatment.
- He discovers and appreciates impressionist artists.

- B. Which **δήλωση** about Van Gogh are true? Put a tick in the boxes.



- a. He was influenced by his father's profession.
- b. He was able to make his own money from his paintings.
- c. He is not considered to be an impressionist artist.
- d. He was close friends with Paul Gauguin, another famous artist.
- e. He produced a lot of paintings when he was at the asylum.
- f. He managed to sell most of his paintings at **σε ψηλές τιμές** high prices.

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

- C. Read the Biography again and find the answer to the following questions.



- ♦ What was Vincent's character like?

.....

- ♦ What events influenced Vincent's artistic style?

.....

- ♦ What are the main characteristics of his artwork?

.....

- ♦ Using his last phrase "The sadness will last forever", try to explain the reason why he killed himself.

.....

- ♦ What do you know about "The Portrait of Dr Gachet"?

.....



D. Now watch the video "Van Gogh - In His Own Words" on youtube

(<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hXMuK5NQEa>).

ξεχωρίζω, επιλέγω, διαλέγω

σημείο, θέμα

Single out, note down and discuss two points in Van Gogh's biography or personality which appealed to you most.

σημειώνω, καταγράφω

ελκύω, τραβάω



.....

.....

.....

.....

αυτοπροσωπογραφία

E. a. Vincent Van Gogh painted a large number of self-portraits.

Watch the following video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jb9DEKauhLY>

~~<http://videos.howstuffworks.com/discovery/29887-assignment-discovery-van-gogh-video.htm>~~

Some of these portraits appear below.

ομοιότητα

διαφορά

➤ Compare them in groups and write two similarities and two differences.



.....

.....

.....

.....

➤ Why did Vincent Van Gogh make so many self-portraits?

λεζάντα



b. Write a caption below each portrait and then choose your group's favourite, explaining why.

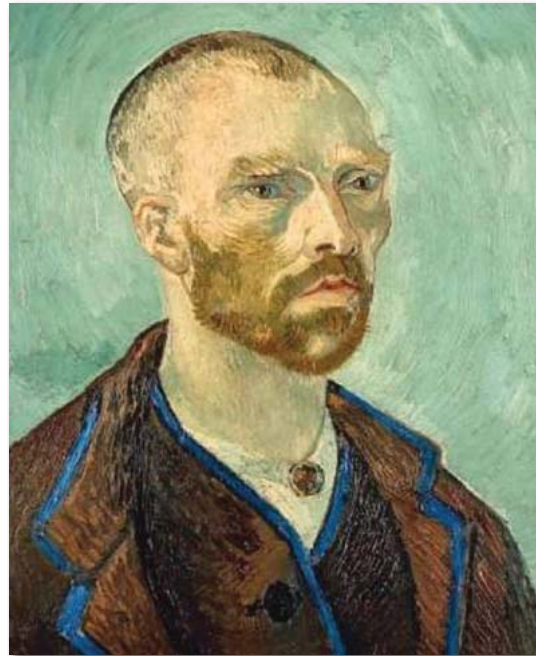
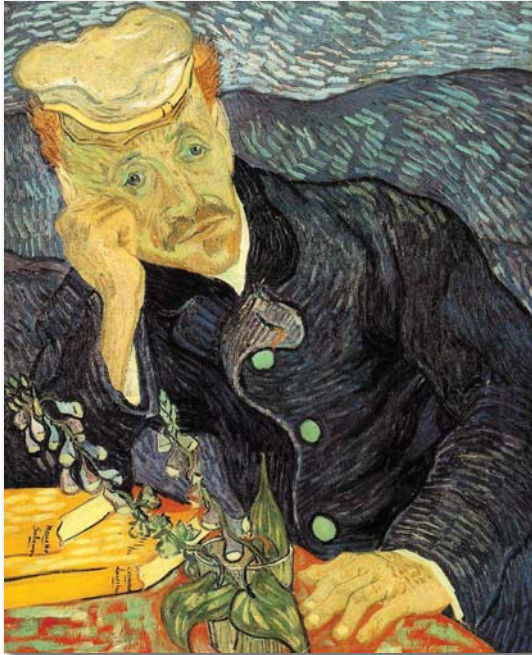


.....

βασισμένος σε

παρατηρώ

F. Based on the work you've done in class and Van Gogh's biography, observe the following paintings for a few minutes and then create an imaginary dialogue between Van Gogh and Dr Gachet. δημιουργώ φανταστικός



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8. The following letter is an ^{απόσπασμα} extract from one of Van Gogh's letters to his brother Theo Van Gogh.
- a. Read the extract, take notes and then discuss Van Gogh's feelings for his brother and his family. 
- b. Underline all the images in the letter. ^{υπογραμμίζω} ^{εικόνα} Then using your imagination, try to create a ~~painting of your own.~~ 



Isleworth, 7 October 1876

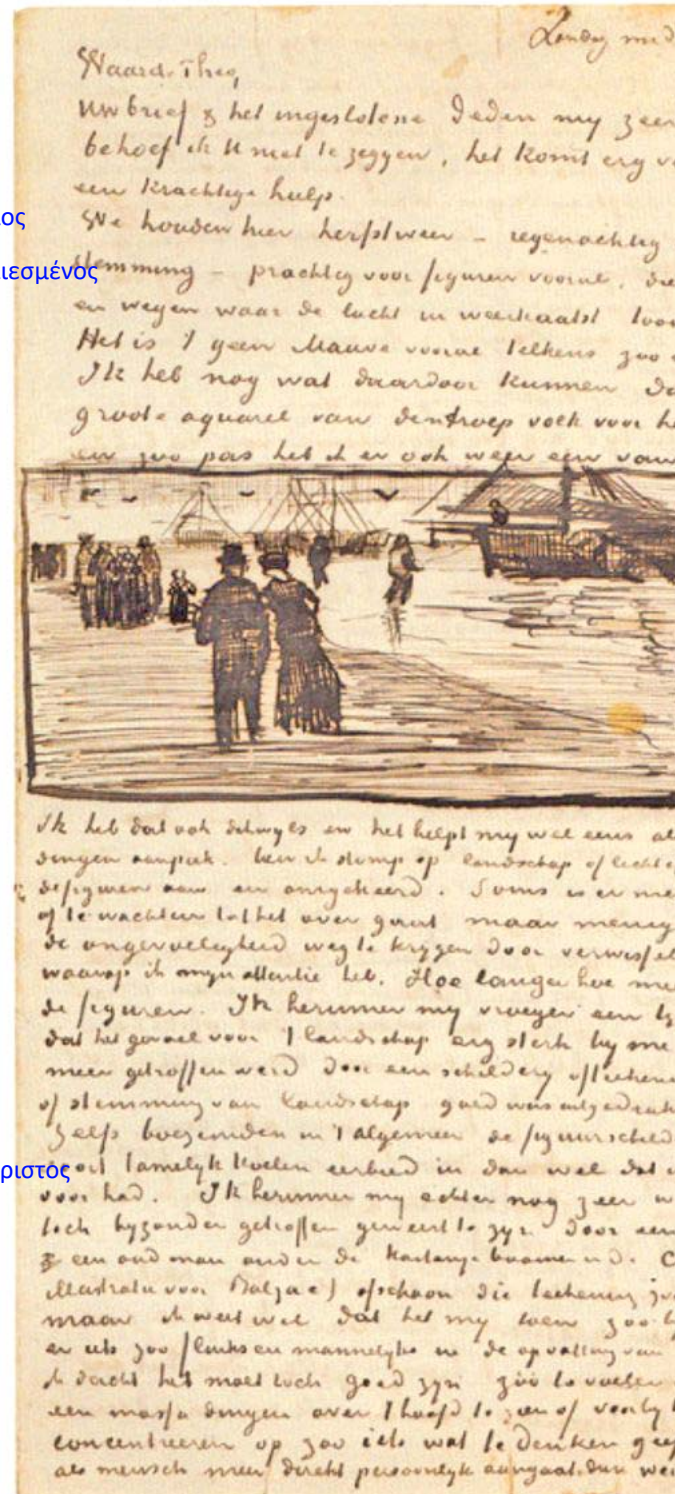
It is Saturday again and I write once ^{λαχταρώ, ποθώ} more. How I long to see you again, Oh! ^{λαχτάρα, πόθος} my longing is sometimes so strong. Write soon, a little word as to how you are.

Last Wednesday we took a long walk to a ^{απόσταση} village an hour's distance from here. The road led through ^{λιβάδι, βοσκότοπος} meadows and fields, ^{φράκτης από θάμνους} along hedges of hawthorn, ^{(φυτό) κράταιγος} full of black- ^{βατόμυρο} berries and clematis, ^{κληματσίδα} and here and there ^{σκιά}

a large elm tree. ^{φτελιά} ^{τυχαία} It was so beautiful when the sun set behind the grey clouds, and the shadows were long. By chance we met the school of Mr. Stokes, where there are still several of the boys I knew. The clouds retained their red hue long after the sun had set and the dusk had settled over the fields, ^{διατηρώ, κρατώ} ^{απόχρωση, τόνος} and we saw in the distance the lamps lit in the village. While I was writing to you, I was called to Mr. Jones, who asked if I would walk to London to collect some money for him. And when I came home in the evening, ^{ζητώ, γιούπι} hurrah, there was a letter from Father with tidings about you. How I should like to be with you both, my boy. And thank God there is some improvement, though you are still weak. And you will be longing to see Mother, and now that I hear that you are going home with her, ...

c. Here is another extract from the same letter to his brother. Read and discuss Vincent's attitude to life.

"... I have been ill, my mind was tired, my soul
 απογοητευμένος and my body suffering. I whom God
 προικίζω τουλάχιστον ηθικός
 has endowed at least with moral energy and a
 ένστικτο στοργή άβυσσος
 strong instinct of affection, I fell in the abyss of the
 μικρός αποθάρρυνση φόβος, τρόμος
 most bitter discouragement and I felt with horror
 θανατηφόρος διαπερνά που καταπνίγεται, καταπιεσμένος
 how a deadly poison penetrated my stifled heart.
 δηλητήριο χερσότοπος
 I spent three months on the moors, you know
 περιοχή αποσύρομαι
 that beautiful region where the soul retires within
 νοστιμότητας, γευστικότητας μέσα σε
 itself and enjoys a delicious rest, where everything
 αναπνέω, (εδώ) βγάζω παρουσία του
 γαλήνη, ηρεμία δημιουργία ξεφορτώνομαι
 of God's immaculate creation throws off the yoke of
 πεντακάθαρος, άψογος, απεγάδιαστος χαλαρώνω ζυγός
 conventions, forgets society, and loosens its bonds,
 σύμβαση δύναμη ανανεωμένος νιότη δεσμός
 with the strength of renewed youth; where each
 μορφή προσευχής
 thought takes the form of prayer, where everything
 αρμονία
 that is not in harmony with fresh and free nature
 σταματώ, κόβω, (εδώ) εγκαταλείπω
 quits the heart. Oh, there the tired souls find rest,
 ξανακερδίζω, ανακτώ νεανικός
 there the exhausted man regains his youthful
 strength. So I passed my days of illness ... And then
 να κάθομαι τζάκι
 the evening! To be seated before the big fireplace
 στάχτη σπηλωμένος
 with one's feet in the ashes, one's eyes fixed on
 ακτίνα άνοιγμα
 a star that sends its ray through the opening in
 καπνοδόχος διαμέσου, μέσα από ασαφής, άόριστος
 the chimney as if to call me, or absorbed in vague
 απορροφώ
 dreams too much to look at the fire, to see the
 φλόγα τρεμοπαίζω παραγκωνίζω, παίρνω τη θέση
 flames rise, flicker, and supplant one another as
 ανυψώνομαι, αυξάνομαι βραστήρας γλώσσα
 if desirous to lick the kettle with their tongues of
 αυτός που επιθυμεί γλείφω
 fire, and to think that such is human life: to be
 born, to work, to love, to grow and to disappear ..."



4 Vincent van Gogh

9. ~~Work in groups of four. Bring pictures of Van Gogh's paintings to make a collage.~~



Writing Task You can use the references below to gather the information needed.

10. ~~Based on the work you did in class and the notes you've made, write an article for the school newspaper, presenting his life and work from your own point of view. The article will be entitled "My Vincent Van Gogh". There will be prizes for the three best articles.~~
- References:** <http://www.webexhibits.org/vangogh/>
11. ~~At the computer lab or at home, visit the following website, browse through some of Van Gogh's letters and find out his personal attitude about Art.~~



<http://www.webexhibits.org/vangogh/>

FIELD STUDY

- ~~Organise a class visit to an art gallery. Make groups of four and observe exhibits, focus on detail, discuss techniques, draw sketches, or carry out special Worksheet tasks. Find information about particular works of art. Write reviews about the artists' work, personal feelings or impression. Present your work in your school.~~