[Art: How to Describe a Work of Art](https://gettheballrollingonenglish.blogspot.com/2014/02/art-how-to-describe-work-of-art.html)

**Start your own research into art**

**Your study plan**

1. Choose a museum.

2. Go to the museum’s website. All the famous museums have virtual tour you can take.

3. Choose one work of art that strikes you and research it.

4. Look it up on Wikipedia, any resource.

**Describing a Work of Art**

When we describe something, we want to give the reader/listener a good idea of what it looks like. All artists try to express their feelings and emotions through art/ in their paintings. When we describe a work of art we also want to describe its style and the mood that it portrays, as well as express our opinion.

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| **1) Introduction: Introduce the work of art. Include its name  and the date it was created.**  The painting is called… .  ...........was painted/made by/ ............. in ............. .  ……. belongs to… .  To be honest, I can’t really remember when I first saw this painting.  I probably saw a picture of it in a book.  I have only ever seen the original painting once, in the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.  First I saw it in…  I wish I knew more about this painting really. |
| **2) The type of work of art:**   portrait/ landscape, still life/ history painting/genre/abstracts...  This painting is a landscape. |
| **3) Describe the style .**  The picture has a very interesting style.  The artist painted in the Cubist/Surrealist/Impressionist/Modernist/(Abstract) Expressionist style. |
| **4) The materials:**  oil (on wood/ on canvas), watercolour, charcoal, ink, pastel, guache, enamel  The artist prefers/chooses to use pastel.  The painting is/may be oil…on… .  It's made on.... |
| **5) Talk about lines, shapes, texture, colour, tone/shade.**  IT'S A/AN (OPINION + SIZE + AGE + SHAPE + COLOUR) + NOUN  If you look closely at the canvas, you’ll see the artist’s techniques clearly.   It shows .........  Its / line/s is/are curved/ straight...  He used shapes such as… .  Its texture is rough/smooth/soft/sandy/curved...  Its colours are bright/cheerful/dull/rough/lovely...  The painting is in grey.  The colours are mostly green.  All the colours are in dull/bright shades.  The painter uses mostly blue.  It’s the way the artist used colour to show meaning.  One of the things I love about this painting is the way that the artist uses… .  Another thing I find fascinating about this painting is the … . |
| **6)  What is where?**  The prominent in the composition is**…**   |  | | --- | | In the foreground/background you can see ... | | In the foreground/background there is ... | | In the middle/center there are ... | | At the top/At the bottom there is ... | | On the left/right there are ... | | Behind/In front of ... you can see ... | | Between ... there is ...  It’s such a powerful exciting composition. | |
| **7) Who is doing what?**  Here you describe the objects in the work of art or you say what is happening just now. Use the [Present Continuous](http://www.englisch-hilfen.de/en/grammar/pres_pro.htm)  Describe season/weather.  What can we see? At the first glance very little, but suddenly we notice… .  This famous picture depicts a scene from… .  The subject is depicted… .  (Detail/s) tell/s us that the subject was a tailor.  Other details (symbols) represent ideas of themes. The skull in the foreground symbolizes death. |
| **8) What I think about the picture. What you think the artist was trying to express.**   |  | | --- | | It seems as if ... | |  | |  | |  | | The painting looks very realistic/ formal/ informal/ dramatic/ ambiguous/ lyrical/ natural/ abstract/ life like. | | The atmosphere is peaceful/depressing/lively/ | |  | | It makes me think of ... |   When I look at the painting, it makes me feel astonished/ anxious/ curious/ confused/ exited/ quite sad… .  This gives me a gloomy feeling.  This painting arouses some merry holiday feelings.  So it’s like seeing the period of past natural history **through the eyes of the artist**  It’s a really remarkable work.  This portrait is one of Rembrandt’s most famous pieces. |

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