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# Lesson Plan: The Doctor, The Artist, and The Exploding TARDIS

## Subjects

Art History, Creative Writing, Visual Arts

## Suggested Grade Level

Grades 6-9 (Adaptable for younger or older students)

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- Analyze the emotional impact and key stylistic elements of Vincent van Gogh's work (e.g., impasto, bold colors, swirling lines).
- Write a short, creative narrative that connects the worlds of Doctor Who and Vincent van Gogh, focusing on themes of seeing beauty, sadness, and hope.
- Create an original piece of art that emulates Van Gogh's style while incorporating a theme or icon from Doctor Who.

## Materials Needed

- Access to watch *Doctor Who*, Series 5, Episode 10: "Vincent and the Doctor".
- Paper or notebook for writing.
- Pencil or pen.
- Art supplies:
  - **Surface:** Thick paper, canvas board, or cardstock.
  - **Color Medium (choose one or more):** Crayons, oil pastels, acrylic paints, or thick tempera paints. The key is a medium that allows for thick, textured application.
  - **Tools:** Paintbrushes (if using paint), paper towels.
- Access to images of Vincent van Gogh's paintings online or in a book (specifically "The Starry Night," "Sunflowers," and "The Church at Auvers").

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## Lesson Activities

### Part 1: The Hook - Entering the Painting (15 minutes)

Begin by looking closely at an image of Van Gogh's "The Starry Night." Don't give any information yet. Just explore it together with questions:

- If you could step into this painting, what would it feel like? What would the air smell like? What sounds would you hear?
- How does looking at this painting make you feel? Excited? Calm? A little dizzy? Why do you think the artist used those swirling shapes and bright colors?
- Notice the thickness of the paint. It's not smooth. Why do you think he painted it that way?

**Teacher's Note:** This is to get the student thinking like an artist and an observer, focusing on feeling and texture before getting into historical facts.

## Part 2: The Investigation - "Vincent and the Doctor" (60 minutes)

1. **Watch the Episode:** Watch *Doctor Who*, Series 5, Episode 10 together. Keep a notebook handy.
2. **Pause and Discuss:** Pause briefly at these key moments for discussion:
  - **When the Doctor and Amy first meet Vincent:** How is he portrayed? Is it what you expected?
  - **When Vincent describes how he sees the world:** ("...the deep, deep colors, the wind whipping up the dust...") What does this tell you about how he experiences life differently from others?
  - **The "Krafayis" monster:** The monster is invisible to everyone but Vincent. What could this monster represent? (Possible answers: depression, loneliness, his unique artistic vision).
  - **The final scene at the Musée d'Orsay:** This is a powerful moment. Discuss why the Doctor thought it was important for Vincent to see his own legacy. Talk about how art can touch people across time.

## Part 3: The Storyteller's Quill - A New Perspective (30 minutes)

Now it's time to become a writer. Choose one of the following creative writing prompts. The goal is to capture the emotional tone of the episode and Van Gogh's world.

- **Prompt A:** You are the curator, Dr. Black, from the end of the episode. Write a journal entry for the day after you met that strange man in the bowtie and the young woman who cried. What are you thinking about Vincent van Gogh's work now?
- **Prompt B:** Imagine you are a sunflower in the field where the Doctor, Amy, and Vincent were lying down. Write a short story from the sunflower's perspective, describing what you saw, heard, and felt that day.
- **Prompt C:** Write a new, short scene for the episode. What if Vincent got a brief glimpse inside the TARDIS? Describe what he would see and how he would try to paint it later.

## Part 4: The Creator's Canvas - Painting the Universe (45-60 minutes)

This is the main creative project. The student will create their own "Doctor Who meets Van Gogh" masterpiece.

1. **Brainstorm:** How can you combine these two worlds?
  - A starry night with a TARDIS instead of a church spire?
  - A Weeping Angel painted with the swirling energy of Van Gogh's cypress trees?
  - The "Pandorica Opens" explosion painted in the style of "Sunflowers"?
  - A portrait of a favorite Doctor using Van Gogh's thick, emotional brushstrokes?
2. **Study the Style:** Look at Van Gogh's paintings again. Pay close attention to:
  - **Impasto:** The technique of laying on paint thickly so it stands out from the surface. If using crayons or pastels, press hard! If using paint, don't spread it thin—glob it on.
  - **Color:** He used bold, often non-realistic colors to show emotion. The sky doesn't have to be blue!
  - **Movement:** Use short, thick dashes and long, swirling lines to create a sense of energy and motion.
3. **Create:** Let the student sketch out their idea lightly first, then begin applying color. Encourage them to be bold and expressive, not perfect. The goal is to capture a feeling, not a photograph.

## Part 5: The Curator's Corner - Sharing and Reflection (10 minutes)

End the lesson by having the student present their work. Ask them to be the museum curator for their own art.

- Give their artwork a title.
- Explain the choices they made (e.g., "I made the TARDIS yellow like the sunflowers because it represents hope.").
- Read their creative writing piece aloud.
- Discuss the final question: The Doctor said, "The way I see it, every life is a pile of good things and bad things... The good things don't always soften the bad things, but vice versa, the bad things don't necessarily spoil the good things or make them unimportant." How did we see that theme in both the episode and in Vincent's life?

## Assessment

- **Discussion:** Student's active and thoughtful participation in discussions about the episode and artwork.
- **Creative Writing:** The completed story is evaluated based on its creativity, emotional tone, and connection to the themes of the lesson.
- **Artwork:** The final art piece is evaluated on its successful use of Van Gogh's stylistic elements (color, texture, movement) and its creative synthesis of the two topics.

## Differentiation and Extension

- **For Support:** Provide a pre-drawn outline of the TARDIS or a Dalek for the art project. For the writing, offer sentence starters like, "From my place in the field, I saw..." or "After the strange man left, I couldn't stop thinking about..."
- **For a Challenge:** Research another artist featured in Doctor Who (like Leonardo da Vinci or Elisabeth Sladen's character in "The Mona Lisa's Revenge" from The Sarah Jane Adventures) and create a similar lesson. For the art project, challenge the student to use a more complex medium like mixing their own acrylic colors or working with oil paints. For writing, ask them to write a full one-act play of a new scene.

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