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# Lesson Plan: The Doctor and the Starry Night: Curating a Timey-Wimey Masterpiece

## Materials Needed:

- Access to watch *Doctor Who*, Season 5, Episode 10: "Vincent and the Doctor"
- Art supplies:
  - Thick paper, canvas board, or a small canvas
  - Paints (acrylic or oil work best for texture, but thick tempera or oil pastels are also great)
  - Brushes of various sizes
  - A cup for water and a palette or paper plate for mixing colors
- Computer or notebook for writing
- Optional: Access to the internet to look up examples of Van Gogh's paintings

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## Learning Objectives:

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

- Analyze how a fictional story can interpret and humanize a historical figure.
- Create a piece of visual art that emulates the Post-Impressionist style of Vincent van Gogh.
- Creatively synthesize two different interests (Doctor Who and art history) into a single project.
- Write a descriptive and informative text (a museum plaque) for a specific purpose and audience.

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## Lesson Activities

### Part 1: The Wibbly-Wobbly, Timey-Wimey Warm-Up (Approx. 60 minutes)

1. **Watch the Episode:** Begin by watching the *Doctor Who* episode "Vincent and the Doctor." This will be the foundation for our entire lesson.
2. **Post-Viewing Discussion:** After the episode, take a few minutes to talk about it. This isn't a test; it's about sharing ideas! Consider these questions:
  - How did the show portray Vincent van Gogh? Did it change how you think of him as a person?
  - The episode deals with big emotions like sadness and happiness. What was the most emotional part for you? Why do you think the final scene at the museum is so powerful?
  - Van Gogh could see the Krafayis when no one else could. What do you think the writers were trying to say about how artists or people with mental health struggles see the world?
  - Let's talk about the style. How did the show use color, camera work, and music to feel like we were inside one of Van Gogh's paintings?

### Part 2: The Pandorica Opens - The Curator's Project (Approx. 90-120 minutes)

#### 1. Introduce the Mission:

"You are a world-famous art curator working at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris. During a recent cleaning of the museum's archives, a previously unknown painting by Vincent van Gogh was

discovered! It looks like one of his famous works, but with a baffling, anachronistic detail... a mysterious blue box, or perhaps a strange man in a bowtie. It's your job to create a replica of this 'lost' painting and write the official museum description for its grand unveiling."

## 2. Step 1: Create the "Lost" Masterpiece.

- Choose a famous Van Gogh painting to use as your base. Good choices include *The Starry Night*, *The Cafe Terrace at Night*, *Bedroom in Arles*, or *Sunflowers*.
- On your paper or canvas, begin sketching out the basic scene.
- Now for the fun part: Secretly integrate a *Doctor Who* element into the painting. It could be the TARDIS sitting in the field, a Weeping Angel replacing a cypress tree, or the Doctor and Amy walking down the street. Be clever!
- Paint your scene, focusing on mimicking Van Gogh's style. Don't worry about perfection! Focus on:
  - **Thick Brushstrokes (Impasto):** Use lots of paint and let the strokes be visible and full of energy.
  - **Bold, Expressive Colors:** Don't just use the "real" colors. Use colors that show emotion. Is the sky a swirling, emotional blue and yellow? Is the cafe light a brilliant, hopeful orange?

## 3. Step 2: Write the Museum Plaque.

Now that you have your artwork, you need to write the description that will hang next to it in the museum. Your plaque should be about 100-150 words and include:

- **Title:** Give your painting a creative title (e.g., *Starry Night with Blue Box*).
- **Artist:** Vincent van Gogh
- **Date:** c. 1889
- **Medium:** Oil on canvas (or whatever you used)
- **Description:** Write a paragraph explaining the piece. Blend real facts about Van Gogh's style with your fictional discovery. Talk about the brushwork and color, but also introduce the "unexplained mystery" of the Doctor Who element. Write in a professional, curatorial tone. *Example: "This recently discovered masterpiece, long thought to be a preparatory study for The Starry Night, exhibits all the hallmarks of Van Gogh's Arles period... However, art historians are baffled by the inclusion of the peculiar blue structure in the foreground, an object that defies historical explanation..."*

## Part 3: The Curator's Gala - Presentation and Reflection (Approx. 20 minutes)

1. **Present Your Discovery:** Display your finished painting. Read your museum plaque aloud with the professional air of a curator unveiling a priceless artifact to the world.
2. **Reflection:** Discuss the project.
  - What was the most challenging part of trying to paint like Van Gogh? What was the most fun?
  - Why did you choose that specific Doctor Who element to hide in your painting?
  - The Doctor told Amy that they added to Van Gogh's life, rather than rewriting it. How does your painting add to his story?
  - If you could take the Doctor to meet any other artist in history, who would it be and why?

## Assessment and Feedback:

This project is all about creativity and effort. We'll know it was a success if:

- The artwork clearly shows an attempt to use Van Gogh's style (bold colors, visible brushstrokes).
- The Doctor Who element is creatively integrated into the scene.

- The museum plaque is well-written, clear, and perfectly captures the imaginative blend of art history and science fiction.
- The student can talk thoughtfully about their creative choices.

### **Extension Ideas (For the Companion Who Wants More Adventures):**

- **Write a Story:** Write a short story or diary entry from the perspective of Vincent van Gogh on the day he met the Doctor and painted your new masterpiece.
- **Compose a Soundtrack:** Create a short musical playlist for your painting. What songs capture the mood and story of your artwork?
- **The Next Artist:** Research another artist you think would be great in a Doctor Who episode (like Leonardo da Vinci, Frida Kahlo, or Salvador Dalí). Plan out the basic plot of that episode.

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