

# Van Gogh's Starry Night

## Art Project Plan



Time: One to two 30-45 minute sessions, depending on skill of students

### Project:

1. Share a little about Van Gogh's life and examples of his paintings.
2. Show a reproduction of "The Starry Night" to the class and discuss. (It is a night-time image of a village within a mountainous area. Note the tree in the foreground.) Ask them how the painting makes them feel and what they find interesting about it.
3. Note the use of color and visible short brushstrokes in the painting. ("The Starry Night" is a very dark painting, full of small, blended strokes of paint.)
4. Let students study the painting reproduction. (Divide the painting into three parts and talk about each one: tall tree, village and mountains, and sky.) Encourage them to reproduce the painting, using lots of color and small strokes.



### Artist Bio:

Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890) was a Dutch painter known for his highly emotional and dramatic paintings. He was one of the first artists to use color and brushstrokes to express emotion. This style was eventually referred to as Expressionism in the 20th century. His paintings are some of the most recognizable (and expensive) in the world.

5. (If using black or dark blue paper, skip to #6.) Direct students to paint the window on the KidsArt Fairs paper canvas completely black or dark blue with tempera paint and allow to dry.
6. Ask class what colors are in the tree. Instruct students to use pastels to draw the large tree in the foreground.



(Oil pastels have a waxy feel like crayons and work well on dark paper. Students can layer oil pastels like paint to create new colors. Regular pastels are similar to chalk and are vibrant on top of dried black tempera paint. Regular pastels can be blended with fingers. Spray final pastel artwork with spray fixative for protection.)



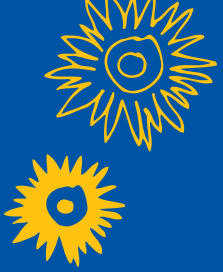
### Materials:

- Reproductions of Van Gogh's "The Starry Night," "Irises," and Sunflowers series (*Reference: [www.van-goghgallery.com/painting/](http://www.van-goghgallery.com/painting/)*)
- Black construction or art-quality paper measuring at least 8 1/2" x 12 1/2" (or, black tempera paint and brushes)
- KidsArt Fairs paper canvases
- Oil pastels (if using black paper) or regular pastels (if using black paint)

### Objectives:

- Identify a painter's style
- Use color and line to express emotion

**Note:** Art can be created on other paper and then mounted within the 8 1/2" x 12 1/2" window of the KidsArt Fairs paper canvas. All artwork must be horizontal.



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### Project continued:

9. Discuss how Van Gogh depicted the light given off by the stars and moon by drawing circles around them. Point to the swirls in the sky and ask class what they think the swirls represent – wind, clouds, etc.
10. Ask the class to add the sky. Encourage students to draw the stars before the swirls. (Students sometimes run out of room for the stars because they make the other elements in the piece too big.)

Allow enough time for students to share their artwork with the class, discussing how they used color and line to express emotion in their pieces.



Oil pastel on black paper mounted on KidsArt Fairs paper canvas in gallery-style frame.



Colored pencil on KidsArt Fairs paper canvas in gallery-style frame.



Watercolor on KidsArt Fairs paper canvas in gallery-style frame.