

SSIS CAGLIARI  
AA 2005-2006  
Lingue –Inglese-  
Prof. Cuccu, *Linguaggi Settoriali e Multimedialità*

CLIL Module

English-Visual Arts

## Reading a Painting

Unit 3 **De-constructing a Painting**

Unit 4 **Colour Matters**

Maria Antonietta Santoro



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CLIL English-Visual Arts

Module: ***Reading a painting***

**Title:** Reading a painting

**Class:** 2nd class of a Liceo

**Level:** B1

**Time:** CLIL        5 hours

                  Fine Arts    6 hours

**Place:** classroom, Lab

**Prerequisites:** describing people and things, express feelings and emotions  
ability To identify theme

**Objectives:** learn and identify the basic features of the language of art, learn  
some basic guidelines for reading a painting, learn some technical  
terms about art, express personal response to a work of art.

**Material:** *The starry Night* (1889) by Vincent Van Gogh  
*Self-Portrait between the Borderline of Mexico and the United States*  
(1932) by Frida Kahlo

Trainee: **Monica Maricosu**

<b>Part only for the English teacher</b>	<b>Part to be done as a team, in co-presence.</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Unit 1</b> <i>Constructing a painting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn the basic notions and technical terms concerning composition, line, painting.</li> <li>▪ Learn how to read a painting following a series of guidelines</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Unit 2</b> <i>The Line</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn the code of visual communication: the line</li> </ul>	<b>A S S E S M E N T</b>

Trainee: **Mariantonietta Santoro**

<b>Part only for the English teacher</b>	<b>Part to be done as a team, in co-presence.</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Unit 3</b> <i>De-constructing a painting</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn basic notions of a painting ground</li> <li>▪ Learn how to read a painting following a series of guidelines</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Unit 4</b> <i>Colour matters.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn the basic skills of colours</li> </ul>	<b>A S S E S M E N T</b>

<b>Part only for the Content Specialist</b>
<b>Unit 5</b> <i>Love themes in sculpture and painting</i>

### Unit 3

#### De-constructing a painting

- What** ➡ In Unit 3 Ss will analyze Frida Kahlo's *Self-Portrait*, starting from its de-struction, through the study of colours which play s a significant role in painting.
- How** ➡ Ss will see an image of Kahlo's painting divided into three parts, each one containing important information for its reading, especially in the use of colours.

### Unit 4

#### Colour Matters

- What** ➡ Ss will learn the colour theory starting from the wheel colour in which is possible to distinguish primary, secondary and tertiary colours.
- How** ➡ Ss will associate different colours to natural elements in order to understand colours through a natural perception. Colours in fact are not artificial elements but part of the natural world,

## Unit 5

### Love themes in painting and sculpture

**What** ➡ In this unit Ss will learn how to analyze a group of paintings and sculptures. This works have a common topic.

**How** ➡ Ss should compare different works of art trying to perceive similarities and differences among them.

#### *Love themes in sculpture and painting*

- Love Desire

Antonio Canova, *Amore e Psiche* (1787-1793)

Francesco Hayez, *Il bacio* (1859)

Tranquillo Cremona, *L'edera* (1878)

Auguste Rodin, *Il bacio* (1904)

- Maternal Love

Adriano Cecioni, *La madre* (1880 ca)

Giovanni Segantini, *Le due madri* (1888-90), confrontato anche con *Scena familiare*, di Alfred Stevens.

- Courtesan Love

Gustav Klimt, *Judith I* (1901), *Judith II* (1909)

Toulouse Lautrec, *Sala di Rue des Mulins* (1894)

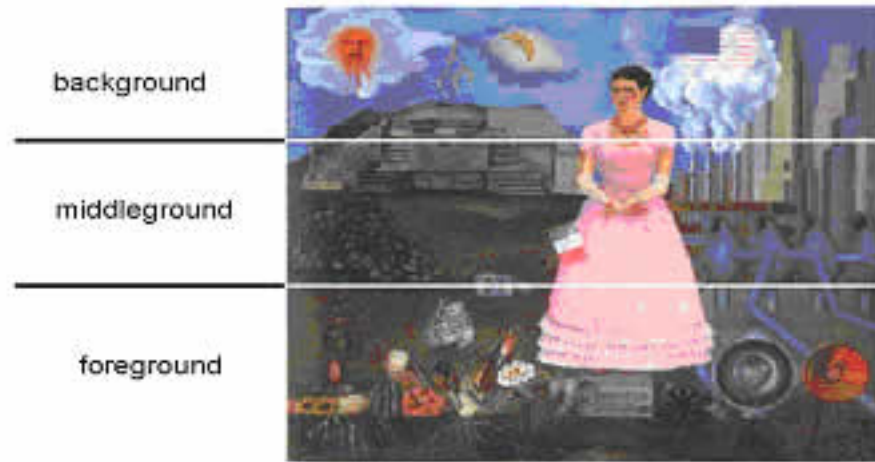
## Unit 4 *De-constructing a painting*

Frida Kahlo is a Mexican artist who spent several months in the US. She was staying in the States when she painted the picture we are going to analyse.



The painting shows Kahlo standing between Mexico and the USA.

- Matching: consider the items below and say what you can see, use arrows to match the word with its appropriate item.**  
Mexican cacti  
blossom  
the American flag  
grey pipes and shaft  
red speaker  
a stone skeleton head  
industrialised chimneys  
a dark flood light  
two fertility figures  
a Mexican pyramid  
the concrete block



- The **foreground** is the part of a painting which appears closest to the viewer
- The **middleground** is the middle part of a view
- The **background** is the part which appears farthest away from the viewer

The painter has created a sense of space by giving the painting depth and the various items which fill up the picture seem to be at a different distances from the viewer.

Artists give their work a sense of depth by using perspective.

Perspective relies on the fact that:

- Objects/people look smaller and less detailed the further away they are
- People/objects in the foreground hide part of more distant ones
- Imaginary lines converge in the distance.

**2. Describe what Kahlo looks like incorporating the elements you have identified. Begin like this:**

The artist stands on the top of a concrete block where her name and the date of the painting are inscribed. She wears a bright, pink dress, braids in her hair, ...

- Colour defines the shape and outline of objects, it completes the characterization of the surface, it communicates feelings, it evokes sensations, emotions and moods.. Colour can be warm, cool, bright, light, dark, fading; its perception varies depending on the viewer's psychological associations. For example, black is generally associated with the idea of death and evil; white with innocence etc.

**3. Consider how the artist used colour**

- a. On which side are bright colours mostly found? On which side does the colour tend to be monochromatic? Can you think of a reason?**
- b. What is the function of the pink dress the artist wears?**



## Unit 5

## Colour Matters

Another component is colour, which has great importance in art. The purest colours are yellow, red and blue and they are known as primary colours. They cannot be produced by blending but they mix, in various combinations, to form all the others. Secondary colours are produced by a mixture of two primaries: for example, yellow and blue produce green. The more blue you add, the darker the green is, if you use more yellow, the green will be lighter. The colours which are contiguous on the wheel, like red and orange, blend together and tend to produce a sense of harmony. Colours which are opposite on the wheel, like green and red, are called complementary colours and create the strongest contrast.

### Colour Theory

Colour theory encompasses a multitude of definitions, concepts and design applications. All the information would fill several encyclopaedias. As an introduction, here are a few basic concepts.

### The Colour Wheel



A colour circle, based on red, yellow and blue, is traditional in the field of art. Sir Isaac Newton developed the first circular diagram of colours in 1666. Since then scientists and artists have studied and designed numerous variations of this concept. Differences of opinion about the validity of one

format over another continue to provoke debate. In reality, any colour circle or colour wheel which presents a logically arranged sequence of pure hues has merit.



**PRIMARY COLORS**  
**Red, yellow and blue**

In traditional colour theory, these are the 3 pigment colours that can not be mixed or formed by any combination of other colours. All other colours are derived from these 3 hues



**SECONDARY COLORS**  
**Green, orange and purple**

These are the colours formed by mixing the primary colours.



**TERTIARY COLORS**  
**Yellow-orange, red-orange, red-purple, blue-purple, blue-green and yellow-green.**

These are the colours formed by mixing one primary and one secondary colour.

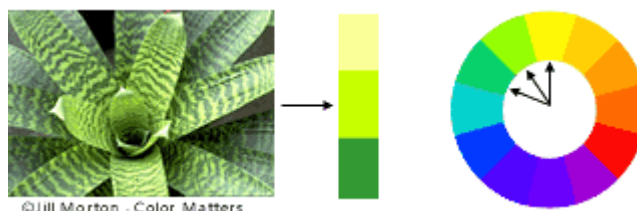
## Colour Harmony

Harmony can be defined as a pleasing arrangement of parts, whether it be music, poetry, colour, or even an ice cream sundae. In visual experiences, harmony is something that is pleasing to the eye. It engages the viewer and it creates an inner sense of order, a balance in the visual experience. When something is not harmonious, it's either boring or chaotic. At one extreme is a visual experience that is so bland that the viewer is not engaged. The human brain will reject under-stimulating information. At the other extreme is a visual experience that is so overdone, so chaotic that the viewer can't stand to look at it. The human brain rejects what it can not organize, what it can not understand. The visual task requires that we present a logical structure. Colour harmony delivers visual interest and a sense of order. In summary, extreme unity leads to under-stimulation, extreme complexity leads to over-stimulation. Harmony is a dynamic equilibrium.

### Some Formulas for Colour Harmony

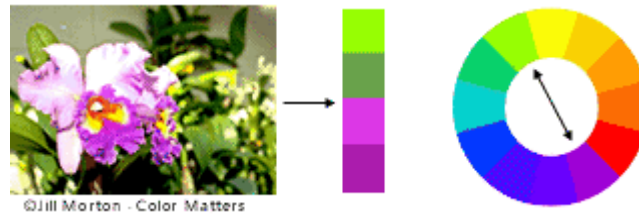
There are many theories for harmony. The following illustrations and descriptions present some basic formulas .

#### A colour scheme based on analogous colours



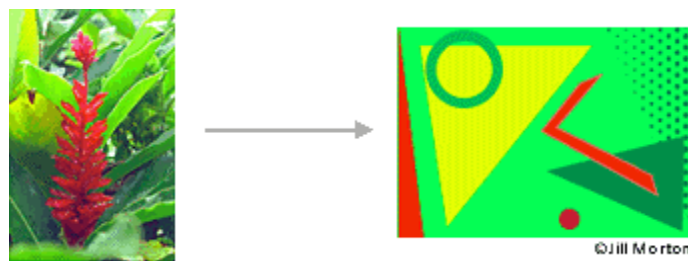
Analogous colours are any three colours which are side by side on a 12 part colour wheel, such as yellow-green, yellow, and yellow-orange. Usually one of the three colours predominates.

### A colour scheme based on complementary colours



Complementary colours are any two colours which are directly opposite each other, such as red and green and red-purple and yellow-green. In the illustration above, there are several variations of yellow-green in the leaves and several variations of red-purple in the orchid. These opposing colours create maximum contrast and maximum stability.

### A colour scheme based on nature



Nature provides a perfect departure point for colour harmony. In the illustration above, red yellow and green create a harmonious design, regardless of whether this combination fits into a technical formula for colour harmony.



# Assessment

## How to read a visual image

In looking into Art you carried out a work of analysis regarding some paintings. The first step is the description of the image. This means identifying objects and sitters and locate them in time and space. Then you focused on the analysis of the stylistic code, i.e. the technique employed by the maker. Now you should be able to complete the following:

1. **Look at the painting by Van Gogh**
  - a. Which are the dominant colours? Are they primary or secondary?
  - b. What is each used for?
  
2. **Consider the feelings and mood the painting suggests**
  - a. How do you think Van Gogh felt in the presence of the starry night?
  - b. How do you like the painting?
  - c. Are you now able to understand what aspects of the painting have influenced your choice –for example the composition, the line, the colour?
  
3. **Consider Kahlo's Self Portrait, which is the brightest colour in the painting?**
  
4. **Are the Mexican cacti in blossom in the background, middleground, foreground? And the industrialised chimneys?**

5. Look at *The Portrait of Marie-Thérèse Walter* by Picasso and consider the colour theory you have studied, try to colour the print.



6. Lines and shapes. Look at the painting, draw on Microsoft Power Point using lines and shapes to reproduce the painting.



### **The Two Mothers**

1889

oil on canvas; 157 x 280

Milano, Galleria d'arte moderna

### **Example**

