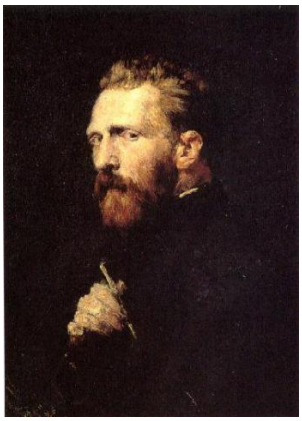
Vincent Van Gogh



0. Vincent Van Gogh - Story Preface

1. EARLY LIFE

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4. THE FIRST MASTERPIECE

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6. INFLUENCE of JAPANESE ART

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Vincent van Gogh portrait painted by John Peter Russell in 1886. Currently maintained at the van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam. Online courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

I can't change the fact
that my paintings don't sell.
But the time will come
when people will recognize
that they are worth more than the value
of the paints used in the picture.

Vincent van Gogh
(Quoted in *Van Gogh*, by Ingo F. Walther, page 89)

It was July of 1890. Vincent van Gogh, a Dutch artist living in the French village of Auvers, had created nearly eighty paintings in less than three months.

In recent weeks, he'd been attracted by the fields and plains not far from the Auberge Ravoux Inn where he lived that summer. At the height of his genius, the prolific artist was despondent.

He was thirty-seven years old, financially supported by an ailing brother and had produced more than eight hundred paintings which no one wanted to buy. (It is believed during his entire career he sold only one - The Red Vineyard - which he painted in 1888 and Anna Boch, also an artist, purchased in 1890.)

At dusk on Sunday, the 27th of July, Vincent walked to one of the fields in Auvers-sur-Oise. What happened there abruptly cut short the life of an artist whose paintings today are among the most sought-after - and valuable - in the world.

Who was Vincent? How did he develop his talent? What are we to make of his artistic drive which often propelled him to work at a maniacal pace?

Perhaps we can learn something about the man by examining his letters and paintings. Let's take a look.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Vincent-Van-Gogh

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:
http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Vincent-Van-Gogh

Questions 2 Ponder

How Does Persistence Help to Achieve Our Goals?

Vincent van Gogh was a brilliant artist, but he only sold one painting during his lifetime. Decades later, his works were selling for millions of dollars.

In addition to his artistic talents, Vincent was prophetic. He recognized the value of his work when he once said:

> *I can't change the fact that my paintings don't sell. But the time will come when people will recognize that they are worth more than the value of the paints used in the picture.*

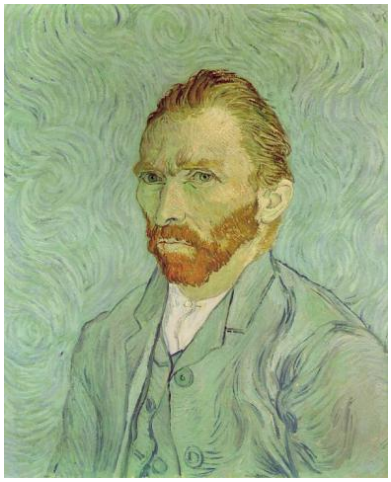
Creating painting after painting, Vincent was not selling what would eventually be recognized as masterpieces. Can you explain his persistence? Was he driven by something internal? If so, what would that be?

Have you ever wanted to achieve a goal that always seemed out-of-reach? How do you develop the patience to keep working toward that goal?

Vincent eventually reached the superstar level of the artistic world (although he didn't live long-enough to realize that achievement). Was his persistence worth it? Why, or why not?

Would you consider persistence to be a valuable character trait? Why, or why not?

Media Stream

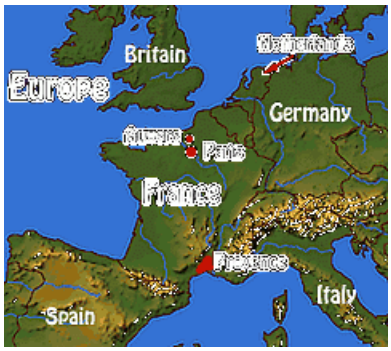


Self-Portrait of van Gogh
Image online, courtesy Web Gallery of Art.
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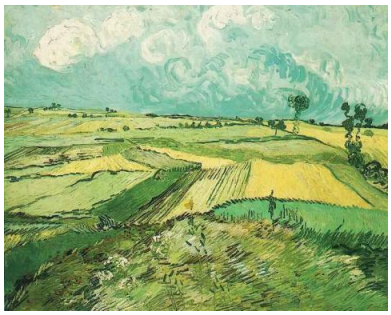


van Gogh Painting - Village of Auvers
Image online, courtesy Web Gallery of Art.
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Auvers - Map Depicting its Location
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Wheat Fields at Auvers under Clouded Sky

Image online, courtesy Web Gallery of Art.
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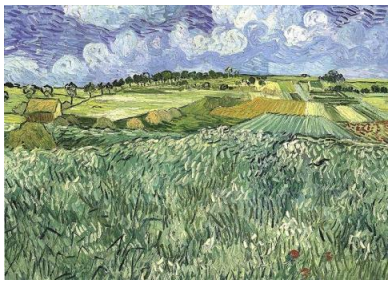
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van Gogh Painting - Wheat Field with Crows

Image online, courtesy Web Gallery of Art.
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van Gogh Painting - Plain Near Auvers

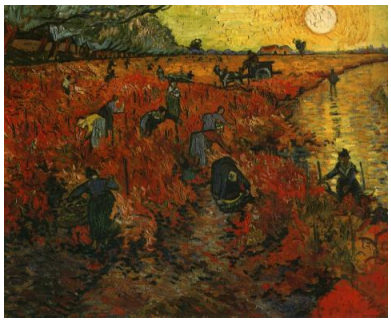
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Auberge Ravoux Inn

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van Gogh Painting - The Red Vineyard

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Anna Boch

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Anna Boch at Work

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