



Art History

English Lessons

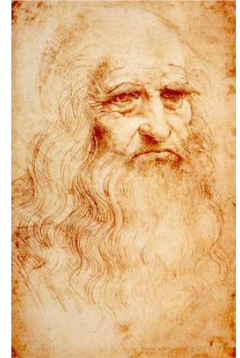


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Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci was a famous Italian artist born on April 15, 1452, in Vinci, Italy, so his name actually means “Leonardo from Vinci”. He is known as one of the greatest painters in history. Leonardo painted many famous works, including the *Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper*. He was not only a painter but also a scientist and inventor, he loved to learn about everything, from how the human body works to how machines can be built. His notebooks are full of drawings and ideas for inventions. He was curious about nature and always tried to understand how things work. He died on May 2, 1519, in France. He is considered a true genius of art and science.



This is a video from the American television channel CBS called “The genius of Leonardo da Vinci”. Watch it and answer the questions below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJboCFa4iVQ>

- 1 What makes the *Mona Lisa* such an emotional painting, according to Walter Isaacson?
- 2 How did Leonardo da Vinci document his life's work and what insights does this provide into his character?
- 3 Why was Florence tolerant of Leonardo da Vinci despite his unconventional traits?
- 4 What are some examples of Leonardo da Vinci's stunning inventions and designs?

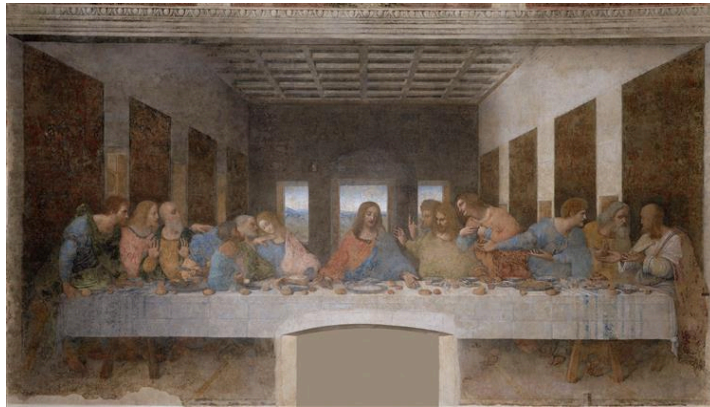
5 How did Leonardo da Vinci's sketches at the Metropolitan Museum leave a lasting impression on viewers like Walter Isaacson?

6 What is one superstition mentioned in the video?

7 Why do you think Leonardo da Vinci's curiosity and inventiveness have continued to captivate audiences over the centuries?



Look at the paintings below and write a paragraph expressing your ideas and feelings taking into consideration what you learnt about Leonardo's art:



1 What makes the Mona Lisa such an emotional painting, according to Walter Isaacson?

Walter Isaacson believes that standing before the Mona Lisa allows one to appreciate its emotional depth and understand why it has been a celebrity painting for 500 years.

2 How did Leonardo da Vinci document his life's work and what insights does this provide into his character?

Leonardo da Vinci documented his life's work through 7,200 pages of scribbles and sketches, showcasing his insatiable curiosity about various subjects.

3 Why was Florence tolerant of Leonardo da Vinci despite his unconventional traits?

Florence was tolerant of Leonardo da Vinci although he was left-handed, gay, vegetarian, illegitimate. He was on the other hand exceptionally talented, incredibly good-looking, which made him stand out in the city.

4 What are some examples of Leonardo da Vinci's stunning inventions and designs?

Some examples of Leonardo da Vinci's inventions include a portable bridge for battles, a helicopter designed for theater performances, and underwater diving apparatus for attacking ships.

5 How did Leonardo da Vinci's sketches at the Metropolitan Museum leave a lasting impression on viewers like Walter Isaacson?

The sketches at the Metropolitan Museum impressed viewers like Walter Isaacson by providing a glimpse into the artist's creative process and attention to detail.

6 What is one superstition mentioned in the video?

In the painting "The Last Supper", Judas knocked over the salt and it is spilt on the table, this is considered bad luck

7 Why do you think Leonardo da Vinci's curiosity and inventiveness have continued to captivate audiences over the centuries?

Students' answers may vary. We could say that his enduring appeal can be attributed to his insatiable curiosity, inventive spirit, and ability to blend art with science seamlessly, creating a timeless legacy.





For more ideas on how to use masterpieces of Art to teach critical thinking, you can read my blog post here:

<https://www.ruthlessteacher.com/how-to-use-works-of-arts-to-teach-critical-thinking/>

And about the use of images in the language classroom, another of my blog posts here:

<https://www.ruthlessteacher.com/the-use-of-images-in-language-learning/>

I have made a pdf with a set of questions that I use a lot with my students when we study all types of images, you can download it here:

<https://www.ruthlessteacher.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Questions-about-images-in-class.pdf>





Painter

One of the most important and influential figures of the **Renaissance** was the painter, sculptor, architect and engineer, [Leonardo Da Vinci](#) – a man that epitomized the Renaissance humanist ideal. (information from Wikiart).

Paintings

You can see Leonardo's work online here:

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/leonardo-da-vinci/all-works#!#filterName:all-paintings-chronologically.resultType:masonry>

The painting inside the text is a self portrait he is believed to have made in 1510, you can see it in the *Biblioteca Reale* in Torino

https://museireali.beniculturali.it/le-collezioni-disegni-e-arti-grafiche/#/dettaglio/472193_Autori_tratto

The first painting is called "Mona Lisa" (1503-1509) and you can see it in the *Louvre Museum* in Paris

<https://www.louvre.fr/en/explore/life-at-the-museum/mona-lisa-an-immersive-exhibition>

The second painting is called "The Last Supper" (1495) and you can see it in the church *Santa Maria delle Grazie* in Milan

<https://cenacolorvinciano.org/en/>

The third painting is called "The virgin of the rocks" (1483-1505) and you can see it in the *National Gallery* in London

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/leonardo-da-vinci-the-virgin-of-the-rocks>

Video

The video was made by the American TV channel CBS

You can visit their site here:

<https://www.cbs.com/>

and their Youtube channel here:

<https://www.youtube.com/@CBS>



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For any questions you may have you can message me at info@ruthlessteacher.com

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