



Art History

English Lessons



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Egon Schiele

Egon Schiele was an Austrian painter born on June 12, 1890, in Tulln, Austria. He is widely recognized for his distinctive and often provocative style, which marked him as one of the key figures of the Expressionist movement. Schiele's work is known for its raw, emotional intensity and exploration of human sexuality and existential themes.



Schiele began his artistic training at the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts, where he studied under several notable teachers. His early work was influenced by the Symbolist movement and the art of Gustav Klimt, with whom he developed a close professional relationship. However, Schiele's style evolved rapidly, characterized by bold lines, distorted forms, and an intense use of color. The twisted body shapes and the expressive lines that characterize his paintings and drawings mark the artist as an early exponent of Expressionism.

One of Schiele's most famous works is *The Embrace* (1917), which depicts a couple in a passionate and unsettling embrace. The painting is notable for its angular forms and vibrant colors, capturing the emotional and physical intensity of the subject. Schiele's portraits are also significant, often featuring stark, dramatic expressions and a focus on the psychological depth of his subjects.

Schiele's work was not without controversy. His exploration of erotic and often unsettling themes led to several legal issues and accusations of obscenity. Despite these challenges, Schiele remained a powerful and innovative force in art, pushing boundaries and challenging traditional norms.

In 1911 he met the 17-year old Wally, a former model of Klimt, who moved in with Schiele and was the model for many of his paintings. They had a passionate relationship until 1915 when Schiele chose to marry another woman who was socially acceptable. After their break-up the artist drew the heartbreaking "*Death and the Maiden*" which contains a portrait of them both.

Tragically, Schiele's career was cut short by his untimely death from the Spanish flu on October 31, 1918, at the age of 28. Despite his brief life, Schiele's impact on art was profound. His work continues to be celebrated for its originality and emotional depth, influencing subsequent generations of artists and leaving a lasting legacy in the world of modern art.

"Art cannot be modern. Art is primordially eternal" Egon Schiele





Death and the maiden (portrait of Schiele and Wally)

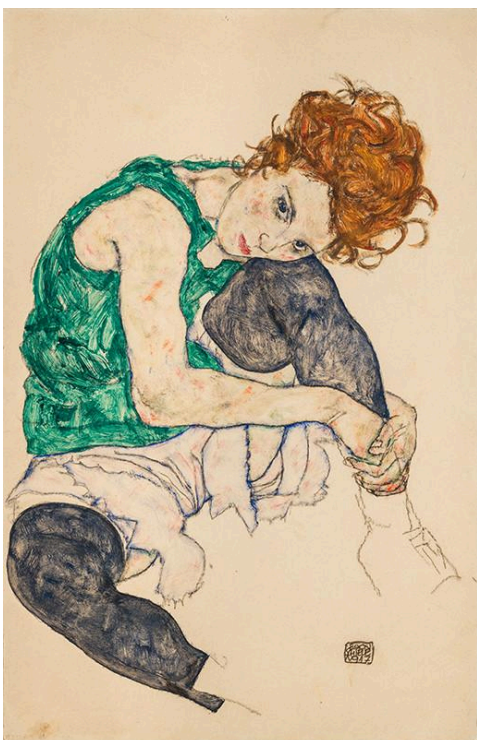


Decide if the sentences are True or False and correct the false ones:

1. Egon Schiele was born in Tulln, Austria, on June 12, 1890.
2. Schiele's art was primarily influenced by the Impressionist movement.
3. *The Embrace* (1917) is one of Schiele's most famous paintings, known for its passionate and unsettling depiction of a couple.
4. Schiele's portraits are characterized by their subtle and realistic representations of his subjects.
5. Schiele's exploration of erotic themes led to his exclusion from the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts.
6. Egon Schiele died from the Spanish flu at the age of 28.
7. Schiele's career was long and widely recognized during his lifetime.



Look at the paintings below and compare them to the poem on the next page:



The following poem was written during the same period in another part of Europe. William Butler Yeats, the Nobel Prize winning Irish poet, the son of a painter himself, also dealt with the issue of love. Read the poem and write your opinion about it and the way you think is connected with the paintings of Egon Schiele.

You can also listen to Colin Farrell reciting this poem: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ttISOHESJE>

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read, and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true,
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face;

And bending down beside the glowing bars,
Murmur, a little sadly, how Love fled
And paced upon the mountains overhead
And hid his face amid a crowd of stars.



Decide if the sentences are True or False and correct the false ones:

1. Egon Schiele was born in Tulln, Austria, on June 12, 1890. True
2. Schiele's art was primarily influenced by the Impressionist movement. False (His work was influenced by the Symbolist movement and Gustav Klimt.)
3. *The Embrace* (1917) is one of Schiele's most famous paintings, known for its passionate and unsettling depiction of a couple. True
4. Schiele's portraits are characterized by their subtle and realistic representations of his subjects. False (His portraits are known for their stark, dramatic expressions and psychological depth.)
5. Schiele's exploration of erotic themes led to his exclusion from the Vienna Academy of Fine Arts. False (He faced legal issues and accusations of obscenity but was not excluded from the Academy.)
6. Egon Schiele died from the Spanish flu at the age of 28. True
7. Schiele's career was long and widely recognized during his lifetime. False (His career was brief but impactful; he died at a young age.)



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

[Egon Schiele](#) (1890 – 1918) was an Austrian painter. A protégé of [Gustav Klimt](#), Schiele was a major figurative painter of the early 20th century. His work is noted for its intensity and its raw sexuality, and the many self-portraits the artist produced, including naked self-portraits. The twisted body shapes and the expressive line that characterize Schiele's paintings and drawings mark the artist as an early exponent of [Expressionism](#).(information from Wikiart).

Paintings

You can see Schiele's work online here:

<https://www.wikiart.org/en/egon-schiele/all-works#!#filterName:all-paintings-chronologically,resultType:masonry>

The first painting after the text is called “Death and the maiden” (1915) and you can see it in Belvedere in Vienna

<https://www.belvedere.at/>

The second painting is called “Seated woman with bent knee” (1917) and you can see it in the National Gallery in Prague

https://sbirky.ngprague.cz/en/dielo/CZE:NG.K_17864

The third painting is called “Reclining woman with green stockings” (1917) and it is in a private collection



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

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