

An impressionist painting of a forest path. The scene is dominated by a path that leads from the bottom center towards the middle ground. The path is rendered with dappled light and various colors, including a prominent vertical strip of orange and red. The surrounding trees and foliage are painted with soft, blended colors of blue, green, and purple, creating a sense of atmosphere and light. A single, bright red dot is placed in the upper middle section of the painting, just above the path. The overall style is characteristic of Impressionism, with visible brushstrokes and a focus on light and color.

Monet Art Study

Mini Unit

Carrie De Francisco, 2020
coffeewithcarrie.org

MONET: The Father of Impressionism

The Impressionism Art Period began in France in the late 1800's. Claude Monet was known as the Father of Impressionism. Since his paintings lacked details, they gave the "impression" of a subject. Monet followed a method called "Plein Air," which roughly translates to working fully outdoors. Artists had been sketching in nature since the time of the Renaissance, but Monet took this method much further. Rather than sketching with a pencil and pad, he painted full works of art out in nature.

Since Monet loved color, he also loved painting the same subject in different seasons and at different times of the day. These similar paintings became known as a series.

Perhaps Monet's most famous series is Water Lilies, a collection of approximately 250 works centered around the garden pond at his home in Giverny, France. Working outdoors gave Monet the chance to work with his favorite subjects- light, color, and movement.

Included in this Monet Art Study are suggested art projects, artist bio, several art prints with discussion questions, and recommended resources.

WEEK ONE:

Read the author bio handout or any picture book listed in the recommended resources.

Next, show the student the print, “Haystacks.” Discuss the painting using the questions given as a guide. Then begin Art Activity ONE: Monet’s Series of Art Work. For fun, play Go Fish Impressionism card game.



WEEK TWO:

Learn about the Impressionist period by reading From Impressionism to Post-Impressionism: Art History Book for Children by Baby Professor or by visiting Monet’s official website. Next, show the student the print, “Impression: Sunrise.” Discuss the painting using the questions given as a guide. To help the student further understand impressionism and Monet’s unique style, show and discuss the Monet Trio Art Packet. Then do Art Activity TWO: A Sunrise Impression. For added fun, play play Go Fish Impressionism card game.

WEEK THREE:

Learn more about Monet, his life, and his style by reading any of the picture books listed in the recommended resources. Next, show the student the print, “Water Lily.” Discuss the painting using the questions given as a guide. To enhance the lesson, search the internet for other versions of the water lilies. Then do Art Activity THREE: Monet’s Water Lilies. For added fun, watch the Claude Monet: A Collection of 1,540 Paintings YouTube video or take a virtual tour of Monet’s gardens.

WEEK FOUR:

Finish up the unit on Monet by reading a few more picture books about the life and times of Claude Monet. Next, show the student the print, “Japanese Bridge.” Discuss the painting using the questions given as a guide. To enhance the lesson, search the internet for other versions of the Japanese Bridge. Then do Art Activity FOUR: Monet’s Japanese Bridge. For added fun, play another round of Go Fish Impressionism card game.

EXTRA LESSONS:

If your student would like to learn more about Monet or create more Monet-inspired art work, then use activities and projects from Monet and the Impressionists for Kids by Carol Sabeth and I Heart Monet Activity Book by Mudpuppy.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

READ ALOUD BOOKS

[*Claude Monet: Sunshine and Water Lillies*](#) by True Kelly

[*The Magical Garden of Claude Monet*](#) (Anholt's Artists Books for Children) by Anholt

[*Linnea in Monet's Garden*](#) by Christina Bjork

[*Monet Paints a Day*](#) by Julie Danneberg

[*Katie and the Waterlily Pond*](#) by James Mayhew

[*Where is the Frog? A Children's Book Inspired by Famous Artworks*](#) by Geraldine Elschner

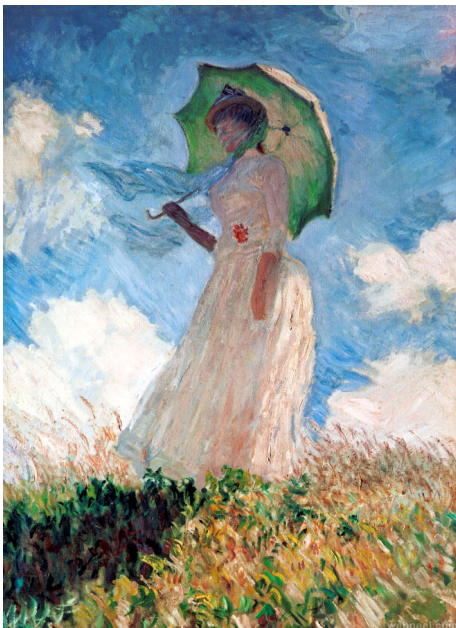
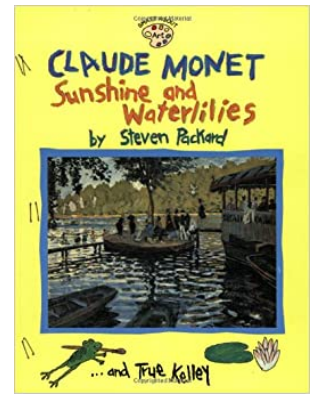
[*Claude Monet: Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists*](#) by Mike Venezia

[*Who Was Claude Monet \(Who Was Series\)*](#) by Ann Walderon

[*From Impressionism to Post- Impressionism: Art History Book for Children*](#) by Baby Professor

[Monet Website with works, biography, and quotes](#)

[Claude Monet: A Collection of 1540 Paintings](#) (youtube video put to music)



ACTIVITY BOOKS & GAMES

[*Monet and the Impressionists for Kids*](#) by Carol. Sabbeth

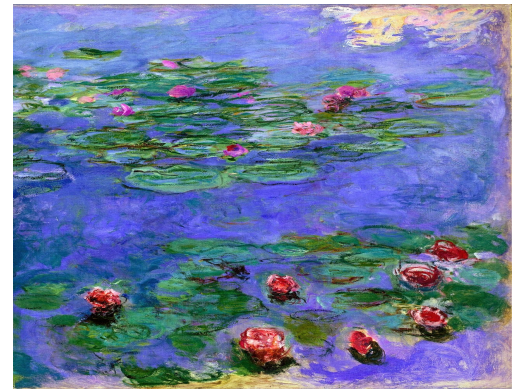
[*I Heart Monet Activity Book*](#) by Mudpuppy

[*Birdcage Press Impressionist Book & Art Game*](#) by Wendy O'Reilly

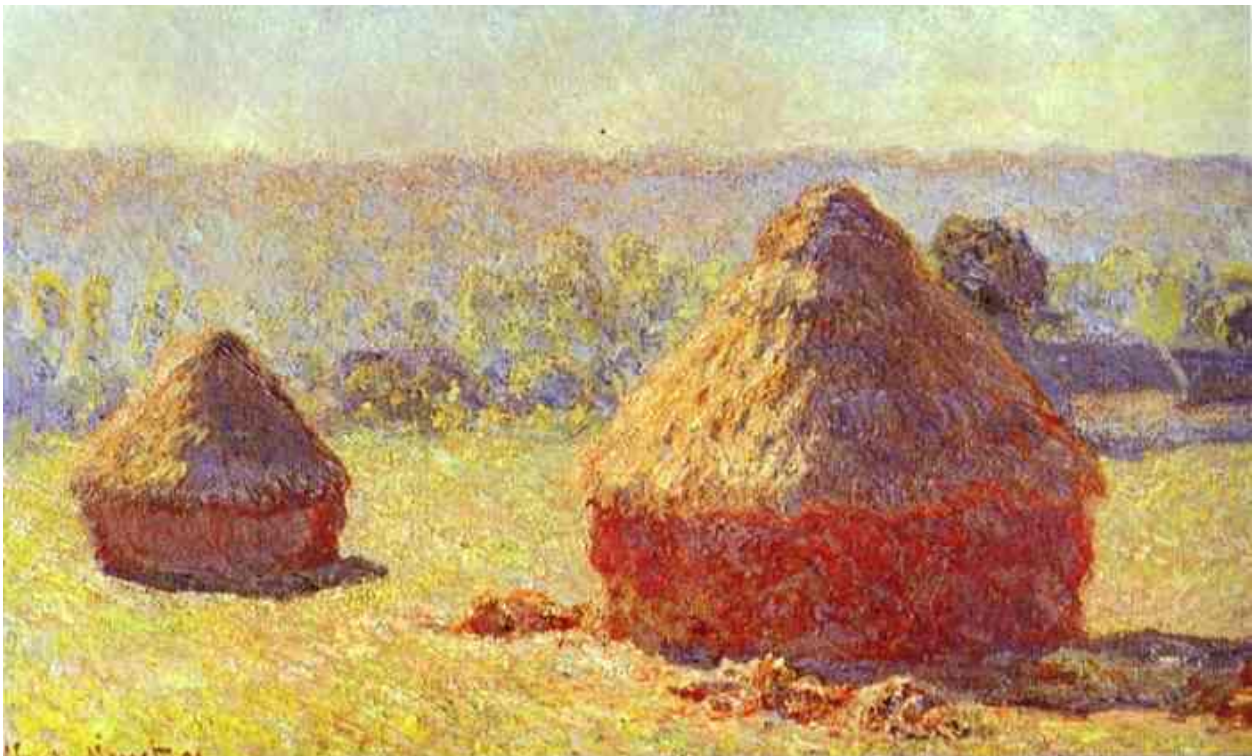
PAINT LIKE MONET LESSONS

Art Activity ONE: Monet's Series of Art Work

Experiment with light and create your own series.



1. Pick a spot in your yard and one tree or flower bush to draw.
2. Using colored pencils, draw and color the tree. Make sure you include any shadows being casted.
3. Then at a different time of the day, go outside and draw and color the same tree again. This time you will notice the leaves and bark are slightly different colors and the shadows are being casted in different areas.
4. On another day at a different time of the day, perhaps at sunset, draw and color the tree again.
5. Then wait a few months until the seasons have changed. Repeat the process. The tree will look differently in the spring or wintertime and the light and colors will be slightly different too.
6. At the end of the school year, collect all of the colored pencil drawings of the tree. You have created a series and experimented with light and colors just like Monet!



Art Activity TWO: Impression Sunrise, Artist Garden at Giverny, The Isle of Grande Jatte, or The Poppy Field:

Create one of Claude Monet's first paintings and/or some of his most famous Impressionist paintings. The best part of creating Monet's paintings is that they do not need to be perfect. They just need to create an "impression" of something.

1. On art paper or card stock paper, lightly draw lines with a pencil where you want trees to be in the painting.
2. Then dip a Q-tip into brown tempera paint. You child can experiment with tones by adding a little black or reds to the brown paint. This will create different shades of brown.
3. Using the Q-tip, trace the tree lines with brown paint. This will create the illusion of tree trunks. Some can be thick. Some can be thin. To create depth to the painting, make the thicker lines closer to the front of the painting and thinner lines in the back.
4. Once the brown tree trunks have dried, the use different Q-tips to paint or dap different colors of paint onto the trees. This will give the "impression" of leaves. For fun, bundle up a few Q-tips and wrap them with a rubber band. Dip the bundle into multiple colors to create several "leaves" at one time.
5. Experiment with mixing colors like Monet did. Instead of mixing the colors on the palette, give the illusion of different colors by creating colors directly on the canvas. While the different dabs of color are still wet, dab other colors of paint right next to them or right on top of them. Without actually mixing the colors, you will have the "impression" of green if you dab some blue dots next to and on top of some dabs of yellow paint. Create other colors on using this technique.
6. Continue doing this until the trees are covered with leaves.
7. For fun, do this project again but pick a season to represent. If you paint your trees to look like fall, your painting will have more golden colors.



Art Activity THREE: Water Lilies

Explore watercolors and the technique of wet on wet.

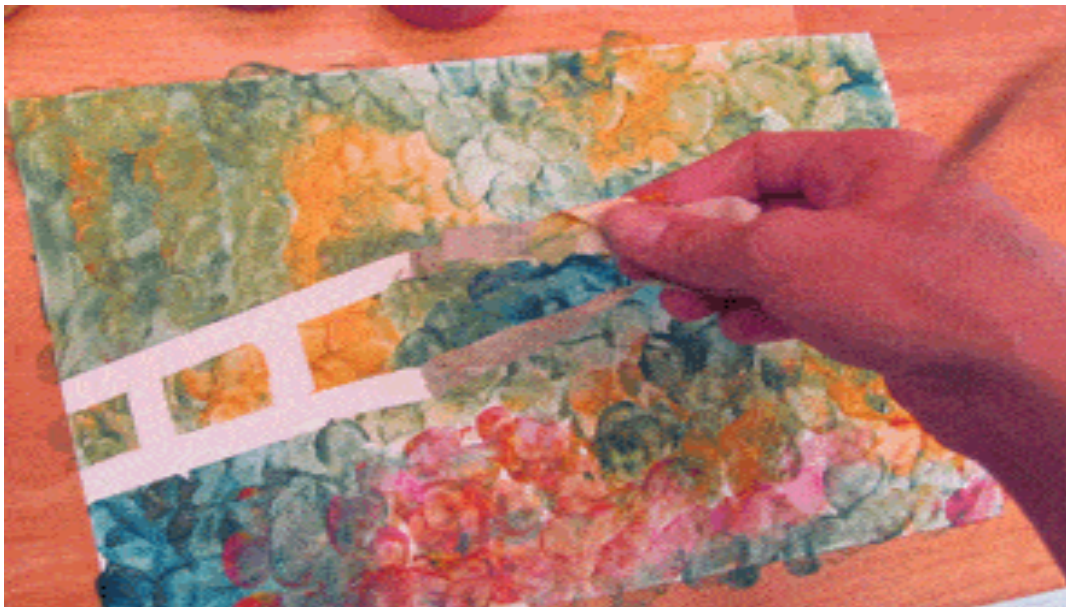
1. First make sure you are using water color paper. It has a surface more suitable for watercoloring.
2. Gather any kind of watercolors you want to use. I recommend liquid watercolors but tubes of watercolor or simple \$1 store watercolor sets will work too.
3. Soak the paintbrush in clear, clean water and brush it all over the watercolor paper. You want the paper to be wet but not so wet it buckles.
4. Next using your paint brush, dip it into the blue paint. Then dab or gently sprinkle the blue paint onto the wet surface. The blue paint will spread on its own. Keep doing this with more blue paint on different parts of the paper. If the water begins to dry, then wet the paintbrush and add a brush a little more water on the paper.
5. Clean your brush and then do the same thing with some green watercolor paint or different shade of blue. The green will naturally mix with the blue paint to create different shades of blue and aqua marine.
6. Once the painting is completely dry, use oil pastels to draw a few water lilies. Remember, they don't have to be perfect. You are just giving the illusion of water lilies floating on top of the water.
7. For a more 3D effect, cut out a few water lily shapes from purple or pink construction paper or use purple and pink tissue paper. Glue them onto of the watercolor pond. For an added 3D effect, gently bend the paper or or crunch the tissue so they don't lay flat on the paper.



Art Activity FOUR: The Japanese Bridge

Finger-paint and use negative space to create the illusion of a bridge.

1. Using painter's tape or masking tape, create a bridge. Cut the tape in half to get thinner strips. Form the shape of the bridge using your masking tape. Continue building the bridge using small sections of tape for the slats. Try to add five or six of them across the bridge at equal intervals.
2. Provide students with a rainbow of colors for them to use. It is time to finger paint. Dab their fingers multiple times in different colors to start filling in the canvas. Overlap their fingerprints to blend the different colors together.
3. Continue filling in the canvas with a multitude of colors and blends. Don't worry about painting over the tape. As long as it's securely fixed to your paper, the paint will not seep through.
4. After the entire canvas is full of colorful fingerprints, let it dry completely! As tempting as it is to peel off the tape, set your art aside to dry.
5. Once your art project has dried, carefully peel back the sections of tape to reveal Monet's bridge!



Claude Monet



- **Occupation:** Painter
- **Born:** November 14, 1840 in Paris, France
- **Died:** December 5, 1926 in Giverny, France
- **Style/Period:** Impressionist

Claude Monet was born on November 15, 1840 in Paris, but his family moved to the port city of Le Havre, France while he was still young. He loved to draw as a child. He began drawing caricatures of people that were quite good. Even as a kid, he was able to make some extra money drawing pictures of people.

Around the age of eleven, Claude entered a school for the arts. His mother supported his becoming an artist, but his father wanted him to take over the family grocery business. Claude met some other artists around this time and began to use oil paints to paint the outdoors.

A few years after his mother died in 1857, Claude moved to Paris to study art at the Academie Suisse. He was there for about a year when he was drafted into the army. He became sick with typhoid fever in the army and returned home a few years later.

Monet continued to paint outdoor scenes. His paintings were becoming accepted by the art critics in Paris. He then decided to take on large project he called Women in the Garden. This was a huge painting, over eight feet tall, that he painted outside in the natural light. It was a normal everyday scene. He spent a lot of time on it, but the critics did not like it. He became depressed and was also ran out of money.

War broke out in France in 1870 and Claude moved with is new wife, Camille, to London. There he met art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel who would become one of his strongest supporters.

Monet became friends with several of the leading artists of the time including Pierre Renoir, Edouard Manet, and Camille Pissarro. Together they formed the Society of Anonymous Painters, Sculptors, and Printers. They wanted to experiment with art and not do the same classical art that art critics of Paris preferred.

They organized an exhibition of their art in 1874. One critic called it the Exhibition of the Impressionists. The term "impressionist" was used to imply that the art was just an impression of something and not completed. It was meant as an insult.

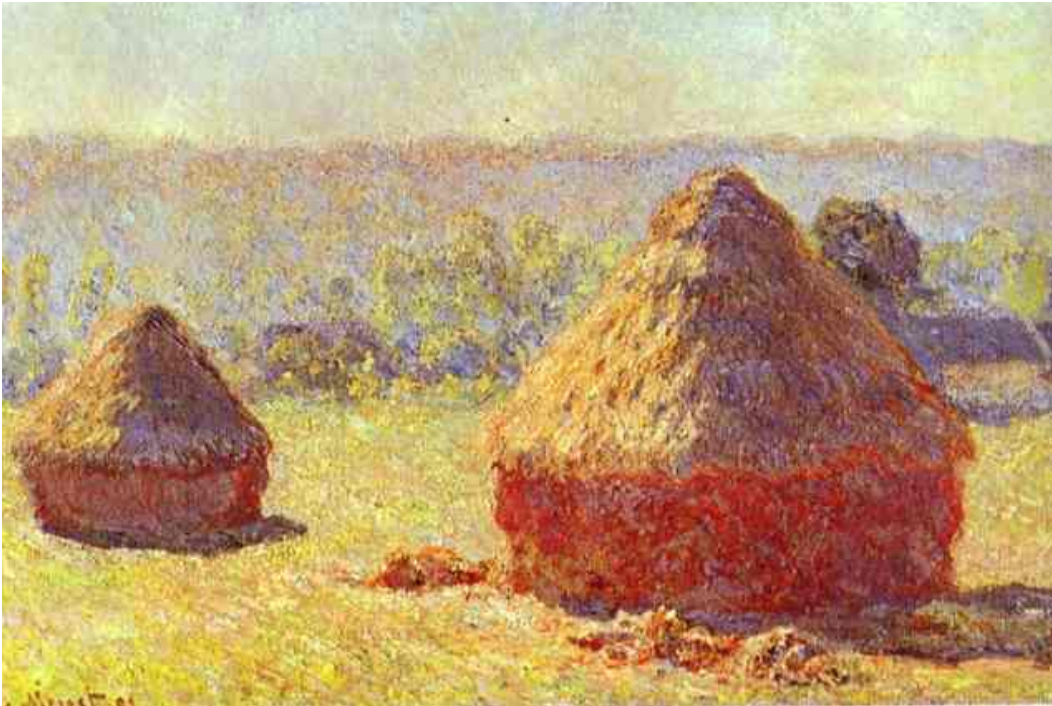
The critic got the word "impression" from one of Monet's works. It is called *Impression: Sunrise*. This painting was a great example of the new style. The lighting gives the viewer the feeling or "impression" that the sun is just rising. Monet's use of light was unique. An interesting fact about this picture is the brightness of the sun. It is the same as the sky.

Despite the critics of Impressionism, Monet continued to refine his work. He continued to try and capture the changing effects of color with light. He used a wide range of vibrant colors and painted quickly using short brushstrokes. Soon, Monet's work began to gain recognition. His paintings started to sell. He even organized an Impressionist art exhibition in the United States in 1886.

In order to continue his experiments with light, Monet began to paint series of the same scenes. He would paint them at different times of the day and in different types of weather. He painted a series on haystacks, the Rouen Cathedral, and the London Parliament.

Near the end of his life, Monet embarked on his largest project. It was a series on the pond at his home in Giverny. It involved a number of huge paintings of the pond in different lighting and conditions such as morning, sunset, and clouds. He called it the *Grandes Decorations*. When finished, all the panels together were over 6 feet tall and nearly 300 feet long. During much of the project, Monet was suffering from bad eyesight and lung cancer. He spent the last ten years of his life on the project and donated it to France in honor of the end of World War I.

At the prime of his career, Monet was considered the preeminent artist in France. He is still considered one of the great French artists of all time. He also founded the Impressionist movement, one of the major movements in art history and had a major influence on future artists.



THE HAYSTACK

Monet often created a series of paintings by painting the same subject but from different angles and at different times of the day.

- What season or time of day do you think this is? How can you tell?
- Look at the shadows. Can you tell from which direction the sun is shining?
- What colors does Monet use to show the back of the haystacks?
- What things do you see in the distance?
- Do you like this painting?



IMPRESSION: SUNRISE

- 🌀 Why do you think this painting is called “Impression: Sunrise”?
- 🌀 What colors do you notice?
- 🌀 How many boats do you see on the water?
- 🌀 What do you see in the distance?
- 🌀 How is this painting different than a photograph of a sunrise?

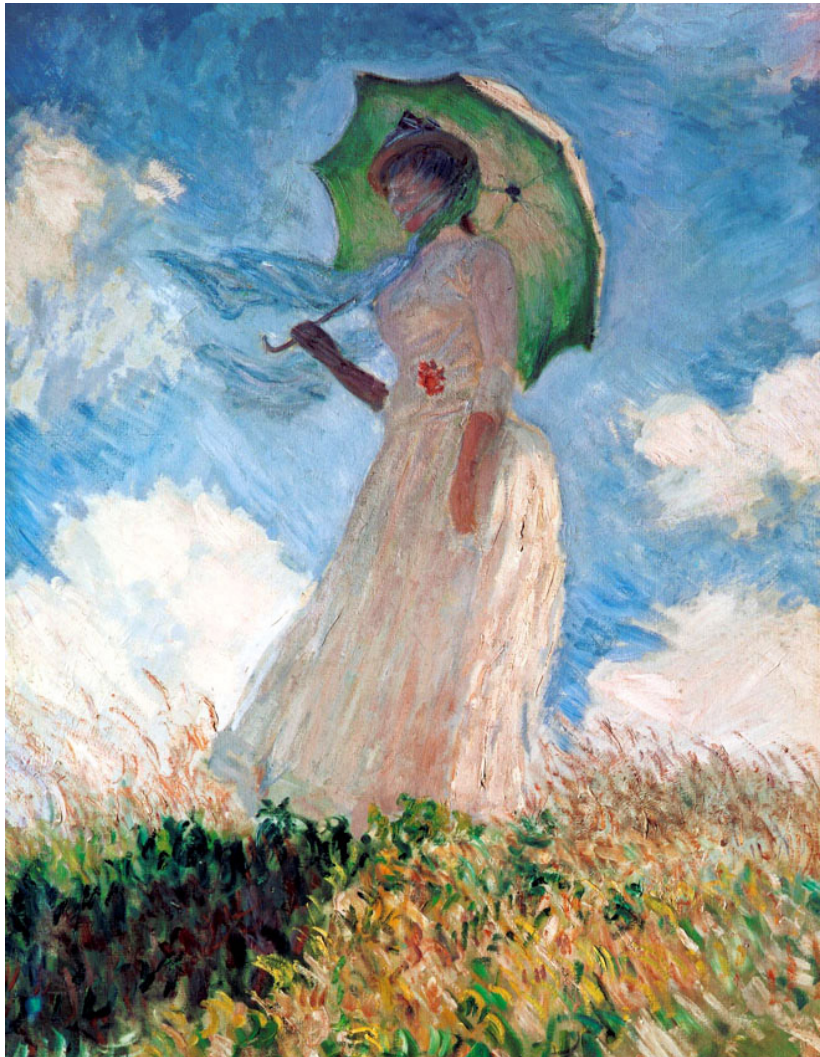


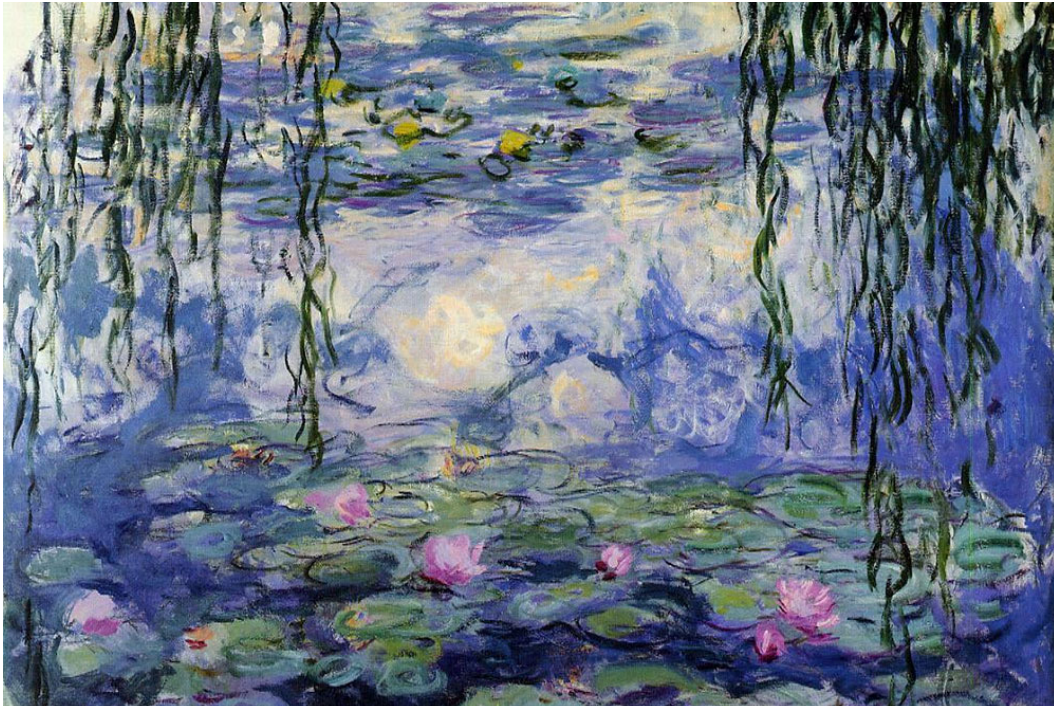
GARDENS AT GIVERNY



POPPY FIELDS

- Look at these three pictures. What do they have in common?
- What is different about each one?
- How does Monet give an impression of someone walking in a flower field without drawing a detailed face?
- Which painting do you like better? Why?





WATER LILIES

- 🌀•What kind of flowers are in the pond?
- 🌀•What do you notice about the water or the pond?
- 🌀•How many flowers can you count? What colors are they?
- 🌀•How can you tell the difference between the leaves and the flowers?
- 🌀•Have you ever seen flowers floating on top of a pond? Did you notice any other animals living in or around the pond?



JAPANESE BRIDGE AND WATER LILIES

- 🌀•What time of the day do you think this is? What season do you think it is?
- 🌀•What kind of flowers do you see? What colors are they?
- 🌀•Look close at the picture with a magnifying glass. Do you see flowers or blobs of paint?
- 🌀•What shape is the bridge? Why do you think Monet painted a wooden bridge instead of a rope bridge or a flat bridge?
- 🌀•If you were on the bridge looking down into the pond, what do you think you would see?