

Talking Points: Paul Cezanne

How can still-lives help us explore [form](#) and colour in painting?

Paul Cézanne's repeated brushstrokes and carefully arranged colours reveal his interest in how shapes, light, and form interact. By exploring his still-life compositions, you can gain an insight into his approach to painting.

Use the sources provided to investigate Cézanne's work, then discuss the questions that follow.

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AGES 5-8

AGES 9-11

AGES 11-14

AGES 14-16

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Paul Cezanne

Cezanne was a French Post-Impressionist painter.

It is said that he formed the bridge between late 19th-century Impressionism and the early 20th century's Cubism.

Cézanne's often repetitive, exploratory brushstrokes are highly characteristic and clearly recognizable. He used planes of colour and small brushstrokes that build up to form complex fields. His interest was not in the objects themselves but in using them to experiment with shape, colour, and lighting. He arranged his still lifes so that everything locked together. The paintings convey Cézanne's intense study of his subjects. [Find out more here.](#)

Explore this [Google Arts and Culture](#) resource on Cezanne.



A Table Corner (Un coin de table) (ca. 1895) by Paul Cézanne. Original from Original from Barnes Foundation.

Questions to Ask Children

"It is understood that the artist places himself in front of nature; he copies it while interpreting it." – What do you think Cezanne meant by this?

What can you see in this painting?

What do you like/dislike about this painting?

How does it make you feel?

Whats your favourite part of the painting?



The Peppermint Bottle (ca. 1893-1895) by Paul Cézanne. Original from The National Gallery of Art.

Questions to Ask Children

What can you see?

How does the colours in this painting make you feel? Talk about the use of cold and warm colours.

What kind of atmosphere does this painting capture?



Paul Cézanne & Rococo Vase (1876) still life

painting. Original from the National Gallery of Art.

Questions to Ask Children

What do you like/dislike about this painting?

How does this painting compare with the other two paintings above. What are the similarities and differences?



The Three Skulls (ca. 1902–1906) by Paul Cézanne. Original from The Art Institute of Chicago. Digitally enhanced by rawpixel.

Questions to Ask Children

How does this drawing differ to Cezanne's paintings?

What do you like about the drawing?

Why do you think Cezanne included colour washes in his drawing?

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Pathway: Exploring Still Life



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