

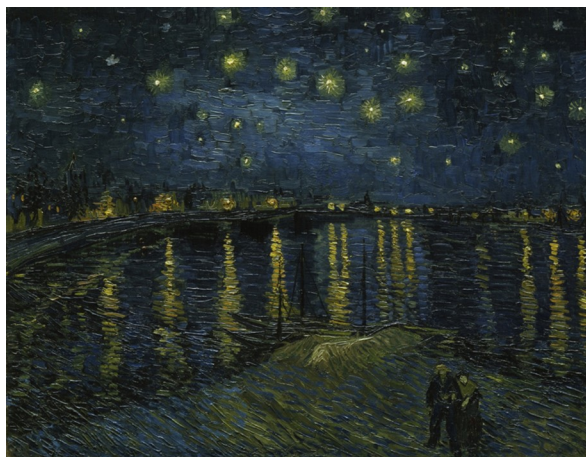
Monet vs Van Gogh

Color, Brushwork and the Experience of Place

Teacher lesson plan, comparison assignment, visual evidence cards, rubric and research record



Claude Monet, The Water-Lily Pond, 1899



Vincent van Gogh, Starry Night Over the Rhône, 1888

CLASS LENGTH

60-90 min

LEVEL

Secondary / undergraduate

OUTPUT

Evidence-led comparison

Teacher lesson plan

Essential question

How do Monet and Van Gogh use repeated color and directional brushwork to make a familiar place feel unstable, immersive or emotionally charged?

Learning objectives

- Identify precise visual evidence and locate it within each image.
- Compare the same visual problem across two artworks instead of writing two separate summaries.
- Distinguish observable facts from supported interpretation.
- Write a comparative thesis that explains why a visual difference matters.

Materials

Projected classroom deck; printed evidence cards; student comparison assignment; access to the comparison tool and citation generator.

ASSESSMENT CHECKPOINTS

Listen for precise location words during discussion. Collect one relationship sentence before thesis writing. Use the rubric to identify one revision priority.

DIFFERENTIATION

Offer the supplied claim only after students describe each crop. Let developing writers use the thesis frame; ask advanced students to test an alternative argument.

EXTENSION / HOMEWORK

Choose one new Monet or Van Gogh work. Add one paired evidence relationship, verify the museum record and explain whether the original thesis still holds.

60-90 minute sequence

Time	Activity	Teacher action / student output
0-8 min	Silent looking	Show both paintings without titles. Students record three colors, three directional marks and one question.
8-18 min	Establish the objects	Reveal artist, date, movement, medium, dimensions and museum. Separate object facts from interpretation.
18-38 min	Paired evidence	Use the three evidence cards. For each pair, ask what is visible, where it appears and what relationship can be defended.
38-55 min	Small-group claim	Groups select one evidence pair and draft a relationship sentence using because, while or whereas.
55-72 min	Comparative thesis	Students combine at least two evidence pairs into one thesis that explains significance.
72-90 min	Review and export	Peer-score the thesis with the rubric, revise it and export the research record or citation.

Student comparison assignment

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Task

Answer the essential question with evidence from both paintings. Do not write one paragraph about Monet and a separate paragraph about Van Gogh. Organize the response around shared visual problems.

1. Object facts

Confirm title, artist, date, movement, medium, dimensions and museum for both works.

2. Paired evidence

Record at least two matched or contrasting details. State what is visible and where it appears.

3. Relationship

Explain what the similarity or difference changes: attention, space, emotion, time or meaning.

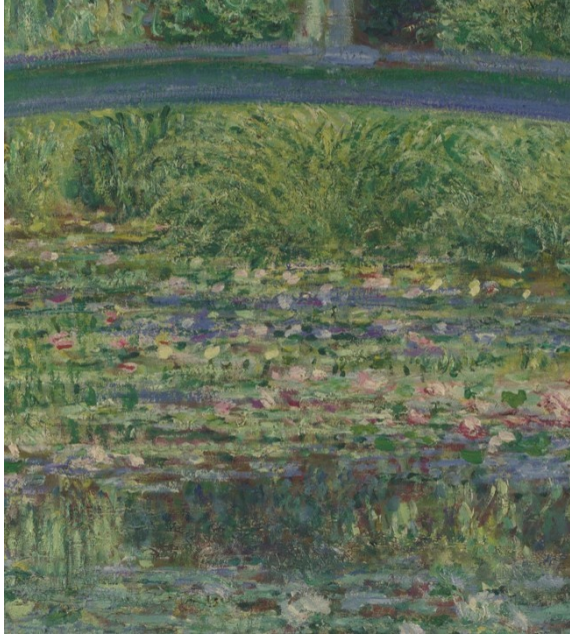
4. Thesis

Write one defensible sentence supported by evidence from both works.

Visual evidence cards

Cut along the page breaks or display each pair. Ask students to describe the image before reading the supplied claim.

Evidence pair 1: Surface and depth



A / Monet

Reflected vegetation makes the pond oscillate between surface and depth.



B / Van Gogh

Different blue stroke systems keep sky and river related but distinct.

Discussion

- What is directly visible in each crop?
- What relationship can be defended without guessing intention?
- What changes when this detail is returned to the complete painting?

Evidence pair 2: Color structure



A / Monet

Green differentiates foliage, shadow, water and reflected growth.



B / Van Gogh

Gold reflections turn distant lamps into paths toward the viewer.

Discussion

- What is directly visible in each crop?
- What relationship can be defended without guessing intention?
- What changes when this detail is returned to the complete painting?

Evidence pair 3: Human access



A / Monet

Dense vegetation closes the horizon and surrounds the viewer.



B / Van Gogh

A small foreground couple gives the river and sky a human scale.

Discussion

- What is directly visible in each crop?
- What relationship can be defended without guessing intention?
- What changes when this detail is returned to the complete painting?

Comparative analysis rubric

Criterion	Exceeds	Meets	Developing	Pts
Object accuracy	Titles, artists and dates are accurate; facts are separated from interpretation.	Minor errors or incomplete facts.	Major errors or facts treated as interpretation.	20
Paired visual evidence	Uses precise evidence from both works and locates it clearly.	Uses both works but evidence is general or uneven.	Summarizes works separately or relies on unsupported description.	30
Comparative reasoning	Explains what the relationship changes and why it matters.	Identifies similarity/difference with limited significance.	Lists similarities without analysis.	25
Thesis and organization	A focused, editable thesis controls the response.	A thesis is present but broad or only partly supported.	No comparative thesis or two disconnected mini-essays.	20
Sources and citation	Museum records and image/source information are retained.	Sources are incomplete or inconsistently formatted.	No traceable sources.	5

Score: _____ / 100 Feedback priority: _____

Research record and citation export

Claim log

Observed fact

Supported interpretation

Debated or unresolved question

Final comparative thesis

Source trail

- The National Gallery, London. The Water-Lily Pond by Claude Monet.
<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/claude-monet-the-water-lily-pond>
- Musée d'Orsay. La Nuit étoilée by Vincent van Gogh. <https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/artworks/la-nuit-etoilee-78696>
- Atlas of Paintings. Monet vs Van Gogh: Color, Brushwork and the Experience of Place.
</research/comparisons/monet-vs-van-gogh-color-brushwork>

Use the website citation generator to export MLA, Chicago or APA records for either artwork. Retain the holding institution record whenever facts or imagery are reused.