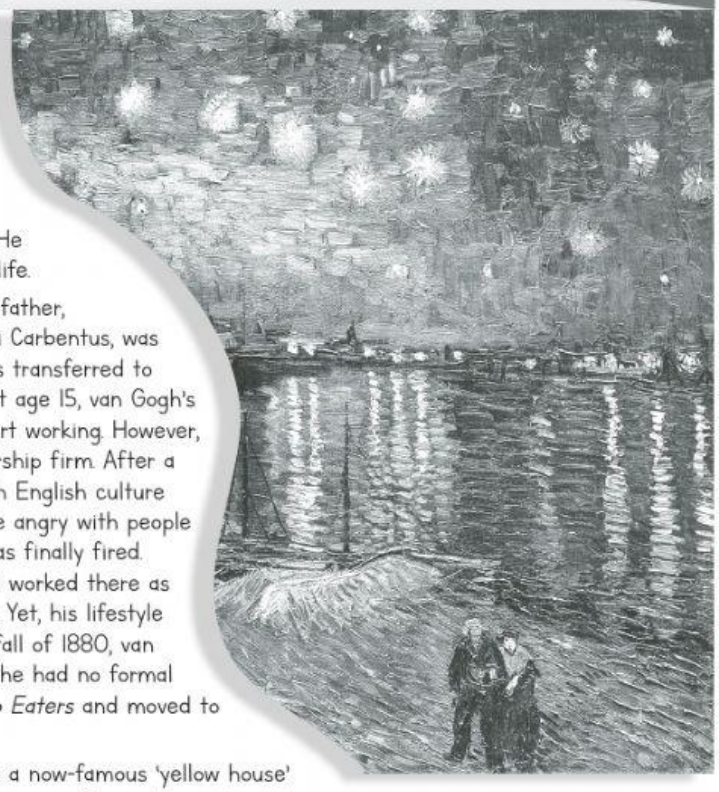
# VINCENT VAN GOGH



Vincent van Gogh was one of the world's greatest artists, with paintings such as *Starry Night* and *Sunflowers*, though not many people heard of him until after his death. His work—notable for its beauty, emotion and colour—highly influenced 20th-century art. He struggled with a mental illness and remained poor throughout his life.

Van Gogh was born on March 30, 1853 in Netherlands. Van Gogh's father, Theodorus van Gogh, was a minister, and his mother, Anna Cornelia Carbentus, was a moody artist whose love of nature, drawing and watercolours was transferred to her son. He had two younger brothers and three younger sisters. At age 15, van Gogh's family was struggling financially, so he had to leave school and start working. However, he never had a stable career. He got a job at his uncle's art dealership firm. After a short time, he was transferred to London where he fell in love with English culture and visited art galleries in his spare time. However, he also became angry with people at work there, told customers not to buy the 'worthless art' and was finally fired. Then, van Gogh moved to a coal mine in the south of Belgium and worked there as a preacher. He also drew pictures of the miners and their families. Yet, his lifestyle bothered some others, and they didn't renew his contract. In the fall of 1880, van Gogh decided to move to Brussels and become an artist although he had no formal training. In 1885, he began working on his first masterpiece *Potato Eaters* and moved to Paris where he stayed with his brother, Theo.

In 1888, he boarded a train to the south of France. He moved into a now-famous 'yellow house' and spent his money on paint rather than food. Van Gogh was living on coffee and bread, and he found himself feeling sick and strange. It was apparent that his psychological health was going worse as well as his physical well-being. One night, van Gogh and his friend were arguing. His friend walked out, and when he came back, he saw van Gogh holding a razor and his ear in his hand. After this event, van Gogh was alone and more depressed and decided to go into an asylum. He was allowed to paint in the hospital garden, and he painted one of his famous masterpieces *Starry Night* there. In 1890, van Gogh went out to paint in the morning carrying a loaded pistol and shot himself in the chest, but the bullet didn't kill him. Then, van Gogh asked Theo to take him home, and he died in his brother's arms at the age of 37.

Vincent van Gogh completed more than 2,100 works, including 860 oil paintings and more than 1,300 watercolours, drawings and sketches. Several of his paintings are now among the most expensive works of art in the world; *Irises* sold for a record $53.9 million, and his *Portrait of Dr. Gachet* sold for $82.5 million. His paintings are now displayed in different museums around the world.

**Read the text and decide if the sentences below are TRUE (T), FALSE (F) or NOT GIVEN (NG).**

1. Vincent van Gogh was unknown to many people before he died. T / F / NG
2. He dropped out of school because his family had financial problems. T / F / NG
3. Before he decided to become an artist, he worked in different jobs in different countries. T / F / NG
4. He got educated in arts and then became an artist. T / F / NG
5. Theo wanted van Gogh to move to Paris. T / F / NG
6. Van Gogh was extremely careful about his health. T / F / NG
7. His friend cut van Gogh's ear accidentally. T / F / NG
8. Van Gogh painted *Starry Night* while he was living in the asylum. T / F / NG
9. He stayed in the asylum for more than a year. T / F / NG
10. Some of his paintings are displayed in a museum in Tokyo. T / F / NG

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