

# 46) A painting



The painting *Bathers at Asnières* by Georges Seurat shows a typical scene of nineteenth-century leisure and the developing **industry** in this suburb of Paris. In the **foreground**, we see a group of workmen on their **day off**, having an enjoyable afternoon on the **bank** of the river. In the **distance**, you can just see the factory where they probably work. Everyone is looking out at the river and **ignoring** each other, even the little dog. We can **sense** the **heat** of the summer's day: the **bright** sunshine, bright colours and pale sky, and the general **impression** is one of almost silent and peaceful **relaxation**.

*Bathers* was painted in the 1880s, but up to then, most paintings were either historical and religious, or portraits of famous **ladies** and **gentlemen**. Ordinary people were not shown in art, so this painting was very original and quite **shocking**. It was painted outside, not in a **studio**, which was also unusual at that time.

## GLOSSARY

<b>scene</b>	a picture of a place and the things that are happening there	<b>ignore</b>	pay no attention to sb/sth
<b>leisure</b>	the time when you do not have to work	<b>sense</b>	get a feeling about sth that you can't directly see or hear
<b>industry</b>	the production of goods in factories	<b>heat</b> [U, sing]	the feeling of sth hot OPP <b>cold</b>
<b>industrial</b> adj		<b>bright</b>	having a lot of light OPP <b>dark</b> ; <b>brightness</b> n
<b>foreground</b>	the part of a picture that seems nearest to you OPP <b>background</b> : <i>in the foreground/ background</i>	<b>impression</b>	feelings or thoughts that you have about sth/sb
<b>off</b>	not at work or school: <i>have a day/week/ month off</i>	<b>silent</b>	with nobody speaking
<b>bank</b>	the land along the side of a river	<b>peaceful</b>	quiet and calm <b>peace</b> n
<b>in the distance</b>	far away from you	<b>relaxation</b>	time spent resting and being calm <b>relaxing</b> adj
<b>just</b>	If you can <b>just</b> see sth, you can only see it with difficulty.	<b>ordinary</b>	not special or unusual ALSO <b>normal</b>
		<b>shocking</b>	making you feel upset, angry or surprised in a very bad way
		<b>studio</b>	a room in which an artist, photographer, etc. works

## SPOTLIGHT: *lady* and *gentleman*

**Lady** is a polite way of saying 'woman'; **gentleman** is a polite way of saying 'man'. It is more polite to say 'an old **lady/gentleman**' than to say 'an old woman/man'.

**Lady** and **gentleman** also describe a man or woman who is polite, well-educated and kind:

▪ *She's a real lady. He's a perfect gentleman.*

You may also see **ladies** and **gents** on the doors of public toilets.

1 Look at the underlined sounds. Cross out the word in each group which is different.

► dark / shocking / <u>peace</u>	4 brightness / impression / <u>peaceful</u>
1 just / ignore / <u>gentleman</u>	5 <u>peaceful</u> / sense / scene
2 scene / <u>sense</u> / leisure	6 shocking / <u>ordinary</u> / ignore
3 relaxation / lady / <u>relaxing</u>	7 industry / <u>industrial</u> / distance

2 Look at the picture on page 98. Write your answers.

► Where are the industrial buildings? In the distance.  
1 How many people are there in the foreground?  
2 Where are the boats?  
3 Where are the men sitting?  
4 Are they ignoring each other?  
5 Are the colours dark or bright?  
6 Is the scene busy or peaceful?  
7 Are the people ordinary or famous?  
8 Can you see any ladies?

3 Cover the glossary on page 98. Complete the definitions.

► ordinary = not special or unusual  
1 leisure = time when you don't have to .....  
2 sense = have a ..... about sth that you can't see or hear  
3 a morning off = a morning when you ..... have to go to work or school  
4 scene = a ..... of a place and the things that are happening there  
5 brightness = the fact of having a lot of .....  
6 industry = the production of goods made in .....  
7 studio = a room or rooms where an ..... works  
8 silent = with ..... talking

4 Complete the sentences with one word from each pair.

peaceful / peace	impression / scene	bright ✓ / brightness	just / even	heat / brightness
industry / industrial	lady / gentleman	shocking / relaxing	background / foreground	

► The painter Whistler often uses dark colours, not bright ones.  
1 LS Lowry painted many ..... scenes of factories and factory workers.  
2 The people in the ..... of the painting must be about five kilometres away.  
3 It was dark, but we could still feel the ..... – it was 30 degrees at midnight.  
4 I need some ..... and quiet to finish this book – please don't interrupt me.  
5 In the picture it's foggy, but you can ..... see the animals in the field.  
6 The painting tries to create the ..... of light and heat.  
7 A ..... asked me where the Picasso room was. I told him it was upstairs.  
8 It's ..... that so many people don't have a home and sleep on the streets.

5 Complete the text.

This painting by an Italian artist shows a ► scene ..... of happiness and (1) p ..... . There is a mother playing with her small daughter in the (2) f ..... , and in the (3) b ..... , an older woman is watching them. Behind her, and a long way in the (4) d ..... , you can (5) j ..... see an old house, perhaps where they all live. It's obviously a warm day, and they are playing in the sunshine. On the right of the painting, there is a man who is (6) i ..... the mother and daughter; he seems much more interested in the dog in front of him. They are an (7) o ..... working family, and he's probably looking forward to some (8) r ..... during his day (9) o ..... .

6 ABOUT YOU Think about a painting you know and like. Write your answers, or ask another student.

- 1 Who painted it, and do you know when? .....
- 2 What does it show? .....
- 3 What do you like about it? .....

