English Painting

Painting in modern sense came late in history of Britain. There was no truly national school before the 18th century. The early period of painting in England was represented mostly by foreign artists. **Holbein, Antonio Mor, Rubens, Van Dyck** were almost all English painters during longer or shorter periods of their lives.

In the 16th century **Hans Holbein** the Younger, a well-known painter, was invited to London by the King Henry VIII. He played an important part in the development of English portrait art.

Later a new foreigner, the Flemish painter Van Dyck, founded a school of portrait painting. In 1641 another painter Peter Lely came from Holland. He became celebrated for portraits of higher classes.

The Flemish painter **Van Dyck** was really the father of English portrait School. The English king Karl I personally invited Van Dyck to London and during his first year in England the painter spent most of his time painting the King and the Queen. His most famous works are: his self-portrait, «Portrait of the Man» and «Karl I». Such prominent masters as Reynolds and Gainsborough were influenced by his works. He created a genre of aristocratic and intellectual portrait which influenced much the development of English painting.

The 18th century was the century during which a truly national painting school was created in England. Portrait art at that time was the main kind of painting. It depended upon the conditions under which the English painting school developed.

William Hogarth (1697-1764) was an English painter, printmaker, pictorial satirist, social critic and editorial cartoonist. He was the first great English painter who raised British pictorial art to a high level of importance. He wasn't a success as a portrait painter. But his pictures of social life which he called 'modern moral subject' brought him fame and position. He is famous for his satirical paintings and engravings, which often depicted the social issues and moral decay of his time. Hogarth's art is a window into the life of 18th-century England, especially in terms of class struggles, corruption, and hypocrisy.

Hogarth is perhaps best known for his series of paintings that tell moral stories through a number of related scenes, often featuring contrasting characters and situations that reveal the vices of society, providing moral lessons through visual storytelling. These series include:

- "A Harlot's Progress" (1732) – This series of paintings follows the life of a young woman, Moll Hackabout, who descends into a life of vice and corruption. Through this work, Hogarth critiques the exploitation of women and the dangers of urban life in London.
- "A Rake's Progress" (1735) – This is another moral series, but this time focusing on a young man, Tom Rakewell, whose reckless behavior and indulgence in pleasure lead him to ruin. This series offers a commentary on the consequences of moral weakness and unchecked behavior.
- "Marriage à-la-Mode" (1743) – In this series, Hogarth satirizes the idea of marriage for wealth and social status, showing the disastrous consequences of such unions. It reflects Hogarth's disdain for the pretensions and moral corruption of the upper classes.
- "The Four Stages of Cruelty" (1751) – This set of engravings critiques cruelty toward animals and its connection to human violence. It was part of Hogarth's moral campaign to highlight social injustices and bring attention to the treatment of animals.

Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792) was the most outstanding portraitist of the second half of 18th century. He was not only a painter but the founder of the academic principles of the "British school". In December 1768 the Royal Academy was founded and Reynolds became its first president. In 1784, he was appointed a principal painter of the King. He created a whole gallery of portraits of the most famous people of that period. He usually painted his characters in heroic sitter and showed them as the best people of the nation. His most famous works include the portraits of Dr. Johnson (his friend), David Garrick (the famous actor), Hon. Augustus Keppel (British Royal Navy officer and politician), William Robertsen (Principal of the University of Edinburgh), Mrs Sarah Siddons as the Tragic Muse (the famous Shakespearian actress) and others.

He was a highly-educated person, wonderful colourist. His colours are difficult to judge today, because they were not scientifically applied. That's why many of his paintings have cracked and faided.

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) is one of the greatest representatives of the English school, was a portraitist and a landscape painter. Gainsborough is noted for his portraits, but before he started doing portraits, he was a painter of landscapes. He still included landscapes even in his portrait painting. In the

LIVEWORKSHEETS

painting on the left of *Mr. and Mrs. Andrews* the landscape is as equally important as the subjects. Evidently, they are the landowners, but not the ones who work the land.

His manner of painting differed greatly from that of Reynolds. He was not interested in photographic likeness but rather in the poetic expression of individuality. Gainsborough was one of the first English landscape painters. In his landscapes he followed the Dutch masters, but contributed his own strong feeling for his native countryside. Gainsborough often represented his sitters out-of-doors, and thus united portraiture with landscape.

Gainsborough helped found the Royal Academy of Arts. He painted portraits of King George III and the royal family. He also painted portraits of leading aristocrats, politicians, writers, and actors of the day. «The Portrait of Duchess de Beaufort» («Woman in Blue»), «Mrs Siddons», «Two Daughters» are among his best works. One of his greatest friends was Richard Sheridan, the dramatist, whose portrait belongs to one of the best pictures of this painter. Gainsborough's most famous work is The Blue Boy, an elegant portrait completed in 1770.

He was a musician who played the viola. He once said, "I paint portraits to live, landscapes because I love them, and music because I can't leave it alone".

Thomas Gainsbourough greatly influenced the English school of landscape painting. He was one of the first English artists who painted his native land. His delicate understanding of nature is especially felt in the pictures where he showed peasants. The best landscapes of his are: «Watering Place» and «Harvest Wagon». Both of them are exhibited in the National Gallery. Among his other landscapes are: «The Sunset», «The Market Card» and «The Cottage Door».

Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough created a national type of the English portrait.

John Constable (1776—1837) is one of the most outstanding painters, who developed his own style of painting. He is the first landscape painter who considered that every painter should make his sketches directly from nature working in the open air. Constable ignored the rules established by Reynolds. He insisted that art should be based on observation of nature and feeling. He introduced green into his painting: the green of trees, the green of summer, all the greens which until then other painters had refused to see.

He made quick sketches based on his first impressions of natural beauties. John Constable used broken touches of colour. His work is important as the beginning of the impressionist school. In his paintings the artist showed a new attitude to nature. He refused to learn works of famous landscape painters and decided to go to the country and to paint nature as he saw it. His subjects were drawn from his native Suffolk which is known as 'the Constable country'.

Constable depicted nature in his own realistic way, he was the first artist who began to paint sketches which were as big as paintings. He was able to show the inside life of nature. John Constable's innovation influenced greatly the development of French landscape painting, particularly Camille Corot and the Barbizon School.

He was never financially successful and did not become a member of the establishment until he was elected to the Royal Academy at the age of 52. He sold more paintings in France than in his native England. In 1826, when he was 50, he showed a number of landscapes in the Paris salon. Among them was the famous «Hay Wain», painted in 1821, for which the painter was awarded the Gold Medal.

He was elected to the Royal Academy in 1829, but he felt that this honour had come too late in life to have much meaning. Among his best landscapes are: "The Flatford Mill", "Wivenhoe Park", "A Farm in the Valley", "The Corn Field", "Salisbury Cathedral", "The white horse", "Waterloo Bridge", etc.

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1831) was an English romantic painter, known especially for his dramatic landscapes and seascapes. Turner was particularly fond of painting sea scenes. To find out what it was like he once had himself tied to the mast of a ship during a storm at sea. His seascapes include 'The Shipwreck', 'The Calais Pier', 'Fishing Boats in a Squall' and others. He had a splendid visual memory. He painted waves and storms with such great mastery that critics said you could smell the spray and hear the noise of the water and the wail of the deafening wind. 'The Fighting Temeraire' (an old sailing ship) is one of his best-known paintings. He loved painting ships, men connected with the sea, fishermen and sailors at work.

William Turner was a son of a fashionable barber, started drawing and painting at his early age. His father used to sell the boy's drawings to his customers and in such a way he earned money for the boy's learning of art. At 14 he entered the Royal Academy School. His water-colours were exhibited at the Royal Academy when he was only 15. At 18 he started his own studio and received a commission to make drawings for magazines. For some years he tramped over Wales and Western England. As Turner never married, he

LIVEWORKSHEETS

devoted his life to art. Visitors were rarely admitted to his house and no one was allowed to see him at work. He loved his paintings as a man loves his children. At the age of 27 he was elected as a Royal Academician. From that time his paintings became at great demand and brought good money. In his fifties, Turner began to try to paint the different effects of light. Some of his later paintings are almost entirely abstract, such as «Rain, Steam and Speed», "Burning of the Houses of Parliament" and "Snow Storm", "Windsor", "The sun rising through vapor". In his late works he anticipated in some degree the practice of expressionists of the 20th.

He liked to watch the sunrise and sunset. And it is said that only an hour before his death he had his chair wheeled to the window, so that he might look for the last time at the sun shining upon the river. During his life Turner created some hundreds of paintings and some thousands of water-colours and drawings. After his death his own entire collection of paintings and drawings was willed to the nation. They are exhibited at the National and Tate Galleries in London.

Links to videos on this text:

1. Match the picture with its name and artist:

Thomas Gainsborough "Mr. and Mrs. Andrews"

William Hogarth "A Harlot's Progress" (Plate 2)

Sir Joshua Reynolds "The Portrait of William Robertsen"

Sir Joshua Reynolds "David Garrick between tragedy and comedy"

John Constable "Salisbury Cathedral"

Thomas Gainsborough "The Blue Boy"

William Hogarth "A Rake's Progress" ("The Gaming House")

Anthony van Dyck "Charles I at the Hunt"

John Constable "Wivenhoe Park"

William Turner "The Fighting Temeraire"

Sir Joshua Reynolds "Sarah Siddons as the Tragic Muse"

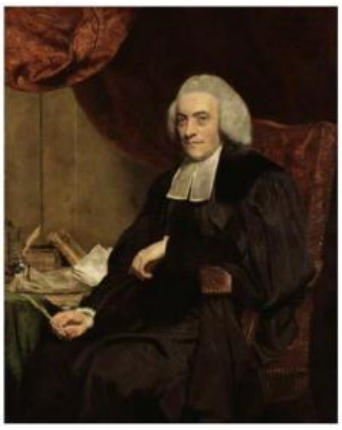
Thomas Gainsborough "Woman in Blue"

William Hogarth "Marriage A-la-Mode" ("The marriage contract")

John Constable "The Hay Wain"

William Turner "The Shipwreck"







LIVEWORKSHEETS













LIVEWORKSHEETS













LIVEWORKSHEETS

1. Read the text and decide if the statements are true or false based on the text. Tick the true sentences.

1. The history of painting in Britain began in the 18th century with the creation of a national school of painting.
2. The Flemish painter Van Dyck was the only foreign artist who contributed significantly to English portrait painting.
3. William Hogarth is known for his portraits of the English royal family.
4. Thomas Gainsborough was primarily known for his portraiture and not for landscapes.
5. John Constable painted mostly urban scenes rather than rural landscapes.
6. Artists such as Thomas Gainsborough and Joshua Reynolds became renowned for their portraiture and depictions of the British aristocracy.
7. The portraits of Thomas Gainsborough were influenced by the paintings of Sir Joshua Reynolds.
8. John Constable was financially successful and became a prominent figure in the Royal Academy in his early years.
9. Joseph Mallord William Turner was particularly fond of painting still-life scenes.
10. Turner's later works were more abstract, anticipating the style of 20th-century expressionists.

2. Choose the correct answer to the question. Circle the correct letter.

1. Which Flemish painter is considered the father of the English portrait school?

A) Peter Lely
B) Hans Holbein
C) Van Dyck
D) Rubens

2. What series by Hogarth critiques the exploitation of women and the dangers of urban life in London?

A) "The Four Stages of Cruelty"
B) "A Rake's Progress"
C) "A Harlot's Progress"
D) "Marriage à-la-Mode"

3. Which English painter combined portrait with landscape in his paintings?

A) William Hogarth
B) Joshua Reynolds
C) Thomas Gainsborough
D) John Constable

4. Which English painter was the first landscape painter to work directly from nature?

A) John Constable
B) Sir Joshua Reynolds
C) Thomas Gainsborough
D) William Turner

LIVEWORKSHEETS

5. Who was the greatest English romantic landscape and marine painter?

A) Van Dyck
B) Thomas Gainsborough
C) John Constable
D) William Turner

6. Which of the following did Thomas Gainsborough NOT do?

A) Paint portraits of aristocrats
B) Paint portraits and landscapes
C) Help found the Royal Academy of Arts
D) Become the principal painter of the King

7. Who liked to paint series and was the first English painter who brought painting closer to literature and theatre?

A) Thomas Gainsborough
B) William Hogarth
C) Joshua Reynolds
D) John Constable

8. What was John Constable's most famous painting, which earned him a gold medal at the Paris Salon in 1826?

A) "The Fighting Temeraire"
B) "The Hay Wain"
C) "The Blue Boy"
D) "The Sunset"

9. Who was the first president of the Royal Academy of Arts?

A) Thomas Gainsborough
B) Joshua Reynolds
C) John Constable
D) William Turner

10. How did Turner view his paintings?

A) As personal works that were only for him
B) As creations meant for commercial success
C) Like his children, deeply loved and cherished
D) As public property from the very beginning

LIVEWORKSHEETS