

Talking Points: Wassily Kandinsky

A collection of imagery and sources designed to introduce children to the work of Russian artist Wassily Kandinsky.

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AGES 5-8

AGES 9-11

AGES 11-14

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Kandinsky and Responding to Music

Teacher's Notes

"Colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the harmonies, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another, to cause vibrations in the soul." – Vassily Kandinsky

Wassily Kandinsky was a Russian painter born in 1866. Kandinsky was gifted with the neurological phenomenon 'synesthesia' which allowed him to associate music with colours. Kandinsky is considered a pioneer of abstraction in western art.

Take a close look at these paintings, talking about them as a class, and using the questions to

help deepen looking.



Wassily Kandinsky, *Improvisation No. 30 (Cannons)*, 1913

Questions to Ask Children

Describe what you see.

What do you think could be happening in this

abstract painting?

What kind of music do you think that Kandinsky was listening to when he painted this?

What do you think the blue dashes represent?

How does the painting make you feel?

Watch this animation that brings elements of Kandinsky's paintings to life.

Questions to Ask Children

How do you feel watching the animation?

What colour would you associate with the music played by a saxophone? A drum?

If you could animate one of the paintings above or below, how would you bring it to life? What would you make it do?



Untitled (1916) by Wassily Kandinsky. Original from The Art Institute of Chicago.

Questions to Ask Children

How do you think Kandinsky was feeling when he painted this painting?

What genre of music do you think that Kandinsky might have been listening to while he was painting this?

Play a Kandinsky Painting in class with this [interactive Google Arts and Culture Activity](#).

Watch this video on how to paint like Kandinsky whilst putting your own experience at the centre of the painting.

Questions to Ask Children

Choose a colour and a shape to describe how you're feeling right now.

This Talking Points Is Used In...

Pathway: Music and art



[This is featured in the 'Music and Art' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



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