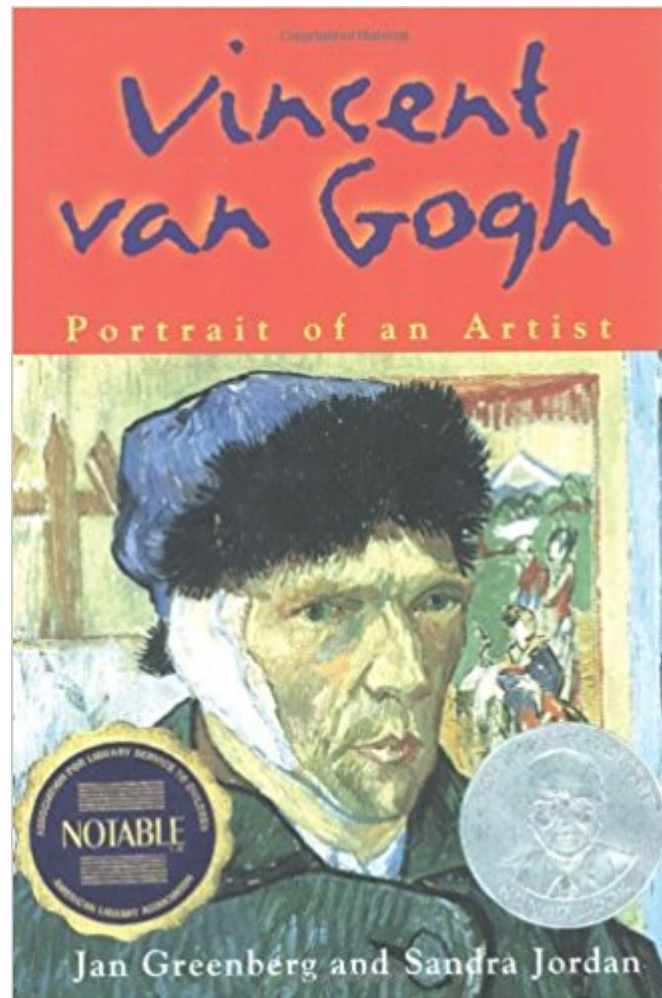




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Vincent Van Gogh: Portrait Of An Artist



Synopsis

This "lively, beautifully written biography" (Kirkus Reviews) of the famous Post-Impressionist artist who painted *Starry Night* and many other masterpieces is "fascinating reading" (School Library Journal, Starred Review). Vincent Van Gogh "one of the nineteenth century's most brilliant artists" will forever be remembered as the Dutchman who pioneered new techniques and styles and who, in a fit of passion, cut off his own ear. Whether painting a portrait, landscape, or still life, van Gogh sought to capture the vibrant spirit of his subject. Still, fame eluded him. This lack of recognition over a career spanning a mere decade (from ages twenty-seven to thirty-seven) fueled his lifelong self-doubt and bitter disappointments. Today, however, van Gogh's paintings are recognized as masterpieces, and the tormented Dutchman stands as a giant among artists. Vincent Van Gogh: Portrait of An Artist has been selected as a Common Core State Standards Text Exemplar (Grades 6-8, Historical/Social Studies) in Appendix B. It features a sixteen-page insert with family photographs and full-color painting reproductions and includes a glossary of artists and terms, a biographical time line, notes, a bibliography, and locations of museums that display Van Gogh's work. A ROBERT F. SILBERT HONOR BOOK AN ALA NOTABLE BOOK AN ALA BEST BOOK FOR YOUNG ADULTS A SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR A BOOKLIST CHILDREN'S EDITOR'S CHOICE

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Age Range: 10 and up

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

Gr 5 Up-This compelling book begins with van Gogh's boyhood and traces the various career paths (art dealer, missionary) he pursued before dedicating himself to painting. The authors draw on the artist's voluminous correspondence with his brother Theo to elicit his thoughts and feelings, providing glimpses inside the head of this most unusual person. The use of his own phrases enlivens the text: "The more I am spent, ill, a broken pitcher, the more I become an artist, creator-." His passionate dedication to his work-living on nothing but coffee and bread for days, sacrificing his physical and mental health for the sake of art-was extraordinary. Largely unappreciated in his own lifetime, he was certain of the value and importance of his work, yet still a bit apprehensive of even the slight bit of success that came near the end of his life. The infamous incident with the ear is included as part of an overall portrait, and varying theories as to his so-called madness (a rare form of epilepsy, psychological traumas from childhood) are presented. In addition to a few black-and-white family photographs, the volume has an eight-page insert of fine-quality, full-color reproductions of the artist's works. This outstanding, well-researched biography is fascinating reading.

Robin L. Gibson, Perry County District Library, New Lexington, OH
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Starred Review Gr. 7-12. Greenberg and Jordan, authors of titles such as *Chuck Close Up Close* (1998) and *Frank O'Gehry: Outside In* (2000), offer yet another outstanding artist's biography. In elegant, captivating language, they debunk myths about Van Gogh as lunatic and loner. Following his life story from birth to death, they describe the artist as an irascible, stubborn, and erratic member of a family that supported him through aborted attempts to become an art dealer and a preacher, before he finally settled on painting, a career fully supported by his brother Theo, with whom he lived in Paris. Also detailed are Van Gogh's years of drinking and schmoozing among the greats of the Montmartre art scene, organizing exhibitions, enjoying great friendships with other artists, and finally moving to the south of France, where he hoped to start an artist's collective. The authors do a remarkable job of presenting Van Gogh's complex personality (described by his brother as "gifted, delicate, and tender" and "cruel and hard-hearted"); his periods of manic energy; and the ear incident, in a straightforward, even understated way, showing that he was not "crazy," but rather suffered from epilepsy. They also help readers look at the painter's work, and at art in general, discuss the artist's motivations and techniques, and bring readers up-close with immediate, moving scenes of Van Gogh at work in the fields as he strove to paint his "high yellow note." An exceptional biography that reveals the humanity behind the myth. Reproductions, a glossary, and

other appended material will help this find cross-curricular support. Gillian EngbergCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Among the non fiction recommendations for the Common Core for Middle School, this book chronological follows the life of Vincent Van Gogh. Though aimed at young readers, the story is retold with truth and frankness. The author presents the life of Van Gogh from early childhood, emphasizing his emergence of an artist. Theo, Vincent's brother, demonstrates that through family, genius can survive. As an artist Van Gogh was prolific and instrumental in an artistic movement. The book is filled with information for the art student and for those who want to learn more about the artist.

Great book for any avid Van Gogh lover of his art, that being said there are alot more books out there with more information about van go. But still a good read.

A good overview of his life, well done.

My son used this book to help,with a 4th grade project/ report/performance. The book is nicely written, appears to be fairly comprehensive & isn't too complex. My son loved the fact that there was a timeline included, it helped him tremendously to simplify the information even further.

Interesting. I read it aloud to my kids 7,6,4 and the older two loved it and even the 4 yr old appreciated it.

Recommended to anyone who is intrigued by the famous artist, his life and his influences. A fascinating account of his life.

This book is written for young readers. I wanted a quick introduction to Van Gogh without having to read his 600 letters to his brother or a 1,000 page biography. Going to a Van Gogh exhibition this weekend, I got what I wanted as pre-reading. More than what is on Wikipedia, but not a two week reading project. But be warned, it is a short, young reader book.

Excellent! A good introduction to Van Gogh.

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