



Vincent Van Gogh had a talent for taking the ordinary and making it extraordinary. This is the lesson I wanted my students to take away from the AwesomeStories feature about Vincent Van Gogh. The AwesomeStories narrative highlighted this idea in each chapter.

The students in my class were an intermediate/high ESL adult class (level 6/7). In addition, one third of the students were Deaf, or Hard of Hearing. Two were visually impaired.

Students were assigned three pages of reading a day over a period of one school week. Students also watched and listened to Don McClean's "*Starry Night*" song illustrated with Van Gogh paintings on youtube. Each day the students discussed how Vincent looked at ordinary events and objects in life and how, through his drawings, he made them come alive. In addition to the reading assignment, students had to find an example in the narrative that related to the theme and apply it to their own lives. They could write about it or draw it, or do both.

Day 1: Vincent drew about Miners going to work. The students wrote about people they saw going to work or how they felt when they were going to work.

Day 2: Vincent painted the "color of dusty potatoes." The students wrote about fruit and vegetables in the fields, items in the market stalls and produce at the local grocery store.

Day 3: Vincent painted blossoming orchard trees and women washing clothes at Langois Bridge. The students wrote about scenes they remember from their villages or the everyday sights in their neighborhoods.

Day 4: Vincent painted *Self-portrait with a Bandaged Ear*. Students discussed taking "selfies" of every day events and unusual events. Students took selfies and wrote about them.

Day 5: Vincent painted his bedroom in Arles. Students wrote about the arrangement of furniture in their bedrooms and how they felt about their rooms. Students drew pictures of their bedrooms to illustrate their paragraphs.

At the end of the week, students took a quiz about Vincent Van Gogh (open book - they could use the AwesomeStories narrative to search for answers). As this was an ESL class, students were required to answer the questions in complete sentences.

The students' work was put up on the front bulletin board of the classroom. Seeing a written and graphic response to the story of Vincent Van Gogh's life gave them a deeper connection to the troubled, but brilliant artist and a greater appreciation for the extraordinary items people can find in their ordinary lives.

Credits:

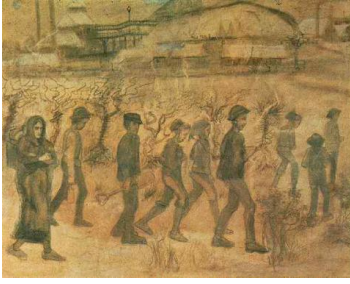
Sandie Linn, Feb. 28, 2015

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/Teaching-with-AwesomeStories-Vincent-Van-Gogh-Story-to-Deepen-Reading-Reflection-and-Writing-for-ESL-Students>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/Teaching-with-AwesomeStories-Vincent-Van-Gogh-Story-to-Deepen-Reading-Reflection-and-Writing-for-ESL-Students>



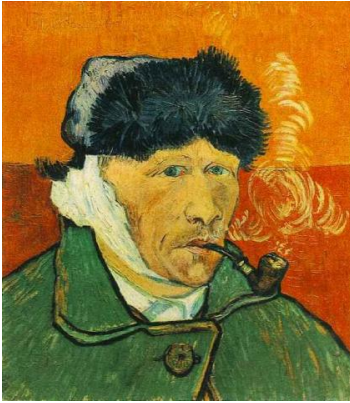
Vincent van Gogh - Drawing of Cuesmes Miners

Image online, courtesy Web Gallery of Art.

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View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Vincent-van-Gogh-Drawing-of-Cuesmes-Miners>



van Gogh - Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear and Pipe

Image online, courtesy Web Gallery of Art.

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Langlois Bridge at Arles

Image online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

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Study for The Potato Eaters

Image online, courtesy Web Gallery of Art.

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Vincent Van Gogh ESL Student Work #1

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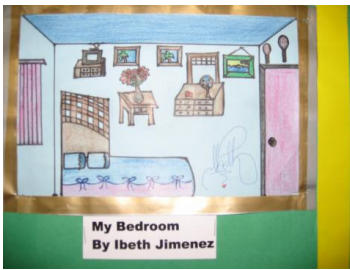
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Vincent Van Gogh ESL Student Work #2

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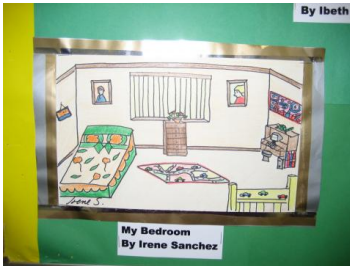
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Vincent Van Gogh ESL Student Work #3

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Vincent Van Gogh ESL Student Work #4

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Vincent Van Gogh ESL Student Work #5

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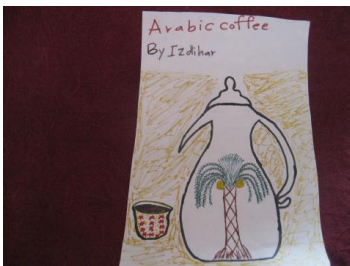
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Vincent Van Gogh ESL Student Work #6

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Vincent Van Gogh ESL Student Work #7

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Vincent Van Gogh Starry Night

The Starry Night is an oil on canvas by the Dutch post-impressionist painter Vincent van Gogh. Painted in June, 1889.

Vincent Van Gogh, *Starry Night*, Oil on canvas, 1889

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/-Vincent-Van-Gogh-Starry-Night>