

ART CHAT

LOOKING AT AND
CHATTING ABOUT ART

About this book

colophon

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Picture this: you're a work of art in a museum. All day long, people shuffle past, staring at you. Perhaps they point at you and murmur 'wonderful', or sniff 'Pffff' and say: 'I could do that too if I wanted.' Or maybe they barely look at you at all, snapping a quick selfie before moving on.

But art is about so much more than a quick glance and a comment about how beautiful or ugly something is. Art is also about exploring, using your imagination, looking with your heart, empathising with the artist, colouring or messing about yourself, laughing... and lots of chatter!

This book is **FULL** of art, and assignments to do, involving that art.

On behalf of the creators and all the artworks, we hope you have fun!

Choose one of the tasks. It doesn't matter which order you do them in. Fill the book with your own art too! Draw or colour directly in the book, or create your own art on a separate sheet of paper. Fold it up and stick it in the book, or take a photo of it and stick that in.

Art is everywhere! In museums, in this book, as well as in the streets and in your home. Sometimes you'll use the art in this book, and other times you'll find and create art yourself. You can do the assignments at home on your couch, or you can take the book outside or to a museum.

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Where can you hide an elephant?










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date: - -

Where would you hide an elephant in this painting?

Draw an on that spot. 

And where can you hide these objects? Point and explain.

- balloon 
- treasure chest 
- cap 
- rooster 
- egg 
- key 
- dog poop 
- telephone 
- toddler 
-

Think of an item you want to get rid of.



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Share
this
activity.

Taste

- Read question 1. Think for a moment and then choose either artwork **A** or **B**.
- Once you know your answer, touch your nose with your finger.
- Once everyone is touching their nose, then count down - 3, 2, 1 - and point to artwork **A** or **B**. Tell each other why you chose that artwork.
- Do the same with question 2, and with all the other questions!

Which do you like better, an apple or a pear? Some will say apple, others will say pear, because everyone has their own taste.

And it's the same with art: what one person likes, another might not. And that's great!

1

Which colours do you like best?

2

Which is better made?

3

Which artwork do you think is the ugliest?

4

Which is more original?

5

Which artwork makes you feel happy?

6

Which artist would you like to know more about?

7

Which artwork do you look at longer?

8

Which artwork do you like better?

9

Which artwork makes you think: yes, I can do that too.

10

Which artwork would you NEVER want to have in your home?



The Milkmaid, Johannes Vermeer 12

A



The Frame, Frida Kahlo 13

B

filled in by:

date: - -

Petal art

This artwork is made from tulip petals.
Jennifer Tee collects the petals and turns them into a collage.

*A collage is a type of art that you create by
gluing pieces of a material onto something.*



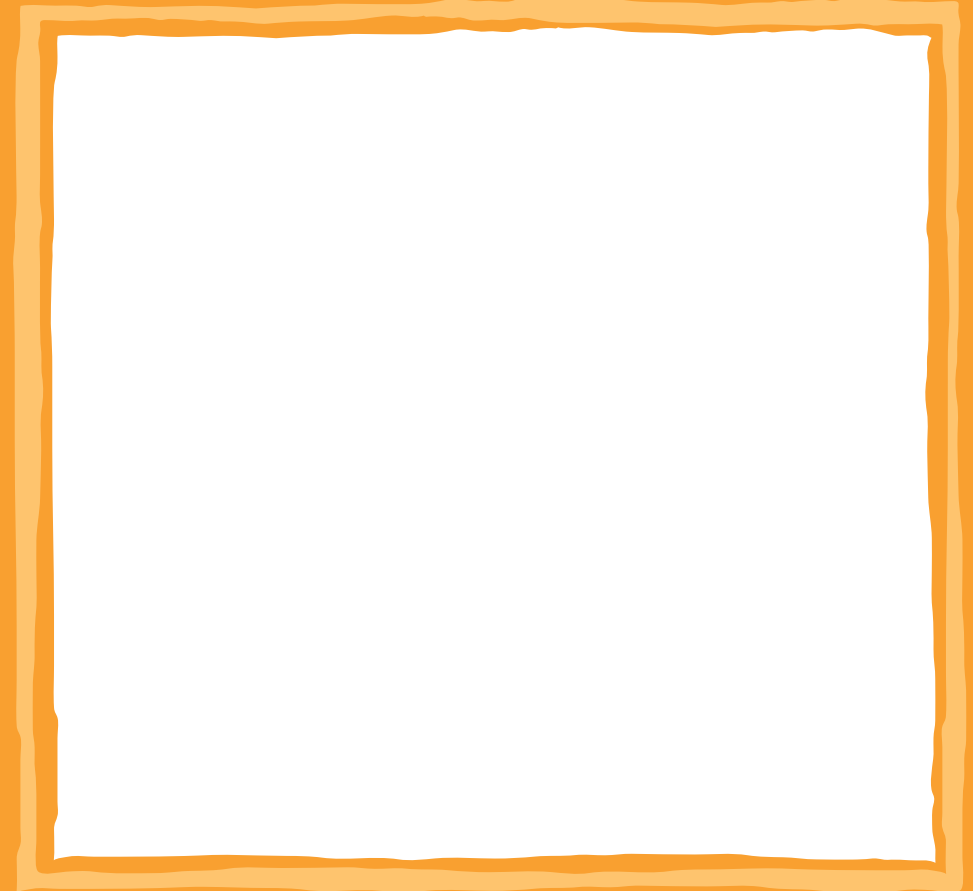
Tampan Mirrored Figures, Jennifer Tee 18

- How many red petals are there in this work of art? Don't count them yet!

I think there are

- Count the petals and check whether you got it right. There are

Draw or paste your artwork (or a photo of it) here.



Your turn!

Use nature to create art.

Step 1

Collect some materials from nature: petals, leaves, twigs, flowers, grass, shells, pine cones. Choose items that you find lying on the ground. Don't take things that are still growing.

Step 2

Use your materials to create a beautiful pattern. Lay everything out on the floor or on a piece of paper.

Step 3

Once you are satisfied, glue the materials in place. Finish your artwork by adding colour. You can use paints, coloured pencils or markers.

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The Blue Dress,
Kees van Dongen

37



Amy Blue,
Marlene Dumas

38



Detail from the
Night Watch,
Rembrandt van Rijn

39



Julie Manet on the
Balcony, Berthe Morisot

40



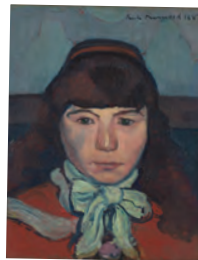
Portrait of Salomon Beffie,
Jan Sluijters

41



Mona Lisa,
Leonardo da Vinci

42



Portrait of a young
woman, Emile Bernard

43



Portrait of Camille Roulin,
Vincent van Gogh

44



Self-portrait,
Thérèse Schwartze

45



Self-portrait,
Gesina ter Borch

46



High voltage painting,
Martial Raysse

47



Portrait of Gerard Andriesz
Bicker, Bartholomeus van
der Helst

48

Guess who's celebrating!

Share
this
activity.

PLAYER 1:

Choose one face; the person celebrating their birthday. Don't say who it is.

You will need:

- pebbles

PLAYER 2:

Ask questions to guess the identity of the person celebrating. You can only ask questions with a **yes** or **no** answer. Once you're sure that someone is **not** who you are looking for, place a pebble on that person's face.

PLAYER 1:

If the other player guessed correctly, tell them the person's name (think of a good party name!) and say:

- which birthday they are celebrating
- what they have on their wish list
- what kind of party they are throwing

(you can make it all up!)

tip

Switch
roles and play
it again!

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date: - -

Calm your mind

Struggling to relax?

Choose an assignment and look at the painting.

Assignment 1

Look at the painting.
Take calming breaths.

In your mind, name
everything you see. There
will be no space left for
your worries!

Assignment 2

Look at the painting.
Focus your attention
on one part of it and
imagine that it is
moving.

Assignment 3

Look at the lines in
the painting. Follow them
with your eyes as if you
were a pencil. Are they
straight, crooked or
wiggling in all
directions?

Assignment 4

Look at the painting and
find a colour that you like.
Look at it, close your eyes and
try to see that colour with
your mind's eye. Repeat,
choosing a different
colour each time.

Assignment 5

Take a deep breath and
look at the most restful
spot in the painting.
Imagine that you are there.
How does it feel to be
there? Stay there for a
while in your mind.

Assignment 6

Look at the painting
and find a shape that you
like. Keep looking at it for
a moment and imagine
drawing that shape in the air
with your finger. How
does that feel?



Detail from *Landscape at Twilight*, Vincent van Gogh 68

- 53 *Still Life with Flowers in a Glass Vase*, Rachel Ruysch, **painting**, ca. 1690-1720, Rijksmuseum
- 54 *Questioning Children*, Karel Appel, **painting**, 1949, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2025
- 55 *In the world but don't know the world*, El Anatsui, **wall sculpture**, 2009, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam
- 56 *Children of the Sea*, Jozef Israëls, **painting**, 1872, Rijksmuseum; J.B.A.M. Westerwoudt Bequest, Haarlem
- 57 *Fishing boats on the Beach at Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer*, Vincent van Gogh, **painting**, 1888, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)
- 58 *Jip en Janneke in a field of tulips*, Fiep Westendorp, **illustration**, 1979, From: 'Jip en Janneke', Uitgeverij Querido ©Fiep Amsterdam bv; Fiep Westendorp Illustrations
- 59 *View on Houses in Delft, known as 'The little street'*, Johannes Vermeer, **painting**, ca. 1658, Rijksmuseum; Gift of H.W.A. Deterding, London
- 60 *Illustration from 'Ik blijf altijd bij je'*, Marit Törnqvist, **illustration**, 2008, From: Ik blijf altijd bij je, Em. Querido's Uitgeverij
- 61 *Field with Poppies*, Vincent van Gogh, **painting**, 1888, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)
- 62 *Illustration from 'Poesje mauw'*, Mies van Hout, **illustration**, 2014, From: Poesje mauw, Lemniscaat ©Mies van Hout
- 63 *Entrelacement de fleurs / Woven Flowers*, Corneille, **painting**, 1948, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2025
- 64 *Composition*, Bart van der Leek, **painting**, 1918-1920, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2025
- 65 *Banquet Still Life*, Adriaen van Utrecht, **painting**, 1644, Rijksmuseum; On loan from the City of Amsterdam (A. van der Hoop Bequest)
- 66 *The Potato Eaters*, Vincent van Gogh, **painting**, 1885, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)
- 67 *Montauk IV*, Willem de Kooning, **painting**, 1969, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2025
- 68 *Landscape at Twilight*, Vincent van Gogh, **painting**, 1890, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)

- 69 *Monkey*, Meissen, **porcelain figure**, ca. 1731, Rijksmuseum
- 70 *Overhand Knot*, Shinkichi Tajiri, **sculpture**, 1971, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2025
- 71 *Women in a Mosque from the series Constantinople*, Emile Bernard, **drawing**, 1893, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (State of the Netherlands)
- 72 *Almond Blossom*, Vincent van Gogh, **painting**, 1890, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)
- 73 *La perruche et la sirène / The Parakeet and the Mermaid*, Henri Matisse, **paper cutting**, 1952-1953, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam
- 74 *Portrait of Moses ter Borch as a Two-Year-Old*, Gesina ter Borch, **painting**, in or after 1667, Rijksmuseum; Purchased with the support of the Women of the Rijksmuseum Fund
- 75 *Composition No. IV, with Red, Blue, and Yellow*, Piet Mondriaan, **painting**, 1929, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam
- 76 *The Bedroom*, Vincent van Gogh, **painting**, 1888, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam (Vincent van Gogh Foundation)
- 77 *Dog*, anonymous, **miniature**, 960-1279, Rijksmuseum; On loan from the Royal Asian Art Society in The Netherlands (gift of dr. K. de Jong and I. de Roode, 2021)
- 78 *Nightlight in the form of a cat*, anonymous, **painted porcelain**, ca. 1760-1770, Rijksmuseum
- 79 *Figure of a shishi with its paw on a pierced ball*, anonymous, **statue/figure**, ca. 1800-1899, Rijksmuseum
- 80 *Blue Parrot*, Meissen, **porcelain figure**, 1731, Rijksmuseum
- 81 *Kendi from the Wreck of the Witte Leeuw*, anonymous, **kendi**, 1613, Rijksmuseum
- 82 *Children Teaching a Cat to Dance, Known as The Dancing Lesson*, Jan Havicksz Steen, **painting**, 1660-1679, Rijksmuseum; Jonkheer J.S.H. van de Poll Bequest, Amsterdam
- 83 *Cathedra*, Barnett Newman, **painting**, 1951, Collection Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam c/o Pictoright Amsterdam 2025
- 84 *One Hundred Children*, Xu Yanghong, **scroll painting**, ca. 1700-ca. 1799, Rijksmuseum; Purchased with the support of Rituals
- 85 *Mural Diamantbuurt*, Hedy Tjin, **mural**, 2024, Smaragdplein, Amsterdam

About the creators

Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam ← Van Gogh Museum → Rijksmuseum



Jazzy Taihuttu
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Educator, Rijksmuseum

Sarah Broekhoven
Educator,
Van Gogh Museum

'It was incredibly inspiring to work on this book together! We developed it as a way of showing how much fun it can be to look at art together, and that it's something you can do at a museum, as well as at home or in your neighbourhood. Trying out the assignments together and talking about them not only taught us to see the artworks in a new light, it also gave us the opportunity to get to know each other better.'



Michal Janssen
Author of the chat series

'The great thing about writing a book is that you learn along the way yourself! I learned that art is about much more than just "beautiful" or "not beautiful", or "well executed" and "I could have done that myself". Art is everywhere and is for everyone, and instead of just staring earnestly at it, you can have enormous fun with it.'



Juliette Verberne
Graphic designer

'I love going to art museums - the combinations of materials and colours inspire me. I also enjoy looking at the world around me whenever I'm on the street or out in nature, however. I see fantastic shapes and colour combinations everywhere. So of course, designing this book made me really happy!'



Rianne van Essen
Owner, Gezinnig

'The most enjoyable thing about creating this book was the abundance of interesting art, and alongside that, the educators' passionate stories. We could easily have filled 300 pages - some artists inspired us enough that we could have devoted a whole Chatbook just to them!'