

Artists

Henri Rousseau

W/C: 4th May 2020



Henri Rousseau was a famous French painter. At school, he won prizes for drawing and music. He had several jobs and taught himself to paint in his spare time before displaying his work in galleries in 1866. He is best known for his jungle scenes.

Subject: Art

Activity Outcome: Reflect on a piece of art, commenting on the style and technique.

Explain: Henri Rousseau started painting seriously in his early forties; by age 49, he retired from his job to work on his art full-time. However, not everyone admired his art work. He was ridiculed during his lifetime by critics because they thought his paintings were not very clever. On the other hand, many other artists (such as Picasso and Jean Hugo) admired his work and he was recognised as a self-taught genius whose works were of high artistic quality. On the following page, you will have two tasks to complete to gain an understanding of how Rousseau was influential to some and reflect on his art work.

Subject: Art

Activity Outcome: Sketch and complete an image in the style of Rousseau.

Explain: Henri's art was called 'post-impressionism.' This is an abstract style of art, which means that he didn't try to paint things exactly as they look in real life. His best-known paintings depict jungle scenes (even though he never left France or saw a jungle). He also claimed to have invented a new genre of 'portrait landscape,' where he began by painting a specific view, and then depicting a person in the foreground. We would like you to sketch and colour (crayons, felts or paints) in the style of Rousseau. This could be an abstract jungle scene or his genre or portrait landscape (examples on pages 5 & 6).

Subject: History

Activity Outcome: Create a timeline of Rousseau's life.

Explain: Rousseau experienced several jobs throughout his lifetime and experienced many events which were significant to him. As it is artist's week, we would like you to produce a creative timeline as opposed to the standard timeline. For example, your timeline of Rousseau's life could nurture a collage approach (see page 8). Think of all the key events featured in your own research (and the facts you can find on page 7). If you can, carry out your own research to add to the timeline, that would be fantastic. You could print images of his artwork or challenge yourself to draw pictures of the main events instead.

Subject: Spanish

Activity Outcome: Using the Spanish animal names, create your own Spanish game. In your game, there should be some opportunity to practise your pronunciation of the animals in Spanish.

Explain: On page 9 and 10, we have explained the focus of your Spanish and the reasons behind it (relating to Rousseau's work). Have a go at trying to pronounce the name of each animal on the list. There will be a YouTube video which you could use to support your pronunciation.

Task 1 – Using the information provided on the first page and your own research, answer the following questions:

1. How was Henri influential in society?
2. How was Rousseau influential to other artists (legacy might also help you with your research)?
3. Think of another artist you have looked at or know of. How is the work of Rousseau both similar and different?

Task 2 – Choose a piece of artwork that interests you (you can find some examples on the next few pages). Answer the following questions:

1. What colours are used? Are they bold and bright? Are they dull? Why do you think he has chosen that colour palette?

2. What brush/stroke techniques has he used? What effects has he managed to create?

3. How would you describe this painting to a person who hasn't seen it before?

4. How is this picture similar and different from real life?

5. How do you think this artist made this work of art?

6. What title would you give this painting? Why?

7. Do you like this painting? Why? How does it make you feel?

Tiger in a Tropical Storm (Surprised!), 1891



Bouquet of Flowers with an Ivy Branch, 1909



A Lion Devouring its Prey, 1905



Exotic Landscape, 1910



Examples of Rousseau's well-known paintings





Henri Julien Félix Rousseau was born into a middle-class family in the town of Laval in northwest France on May 21, 1844. Rousseau attended school in Laval until 1860. In his late teens, he worked for a lawyer and then enlisted in the army although he never saw combat. In 1868, Rousseau left the army and moved to Paris, where he began working as a toll collector at the entrance to the city.

Meanwhile, Rousseau had begun to paint in his spare time. He never had a formal art education; instead, he taught himself by copying paintings in the art museums of Paris and by sketching in the city's botanical gardens and natural history museums.

Perhaps because he had not studied art according to any prescribed method or under any teacher's supervision, Rousseau developed a highly personal style. His portraits and landscapes often had a childlike or "naïve" quality, since he had not learned anatomy or perspective; their vivid colors, ambiguous spaces, non-realistic scale and dramatic intensity gave them a dreamlike quality. Sometimes Rousseau incorporated details inspired by paintings he had viewed at museums or images he had seen in books and magazines, transforming them into elements of his own visions.

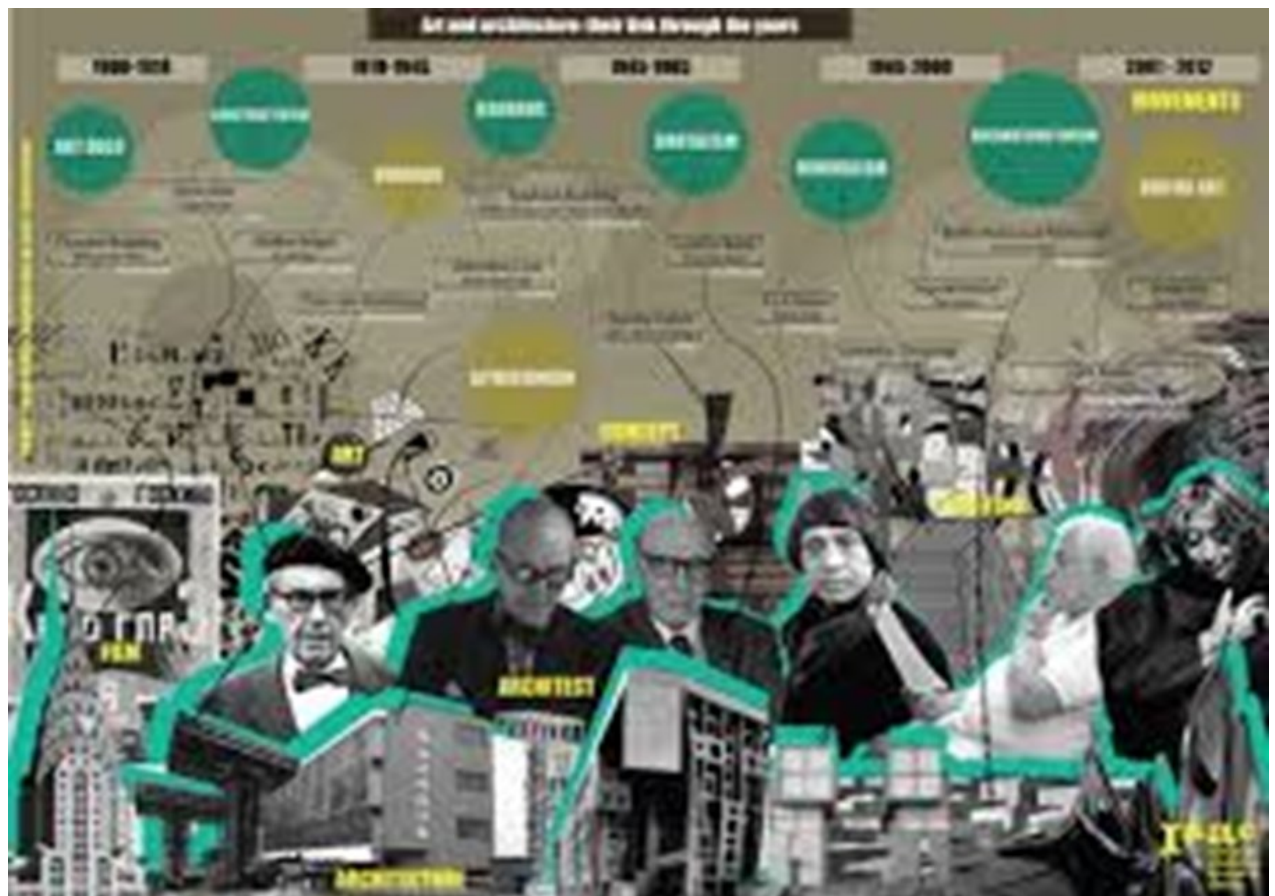
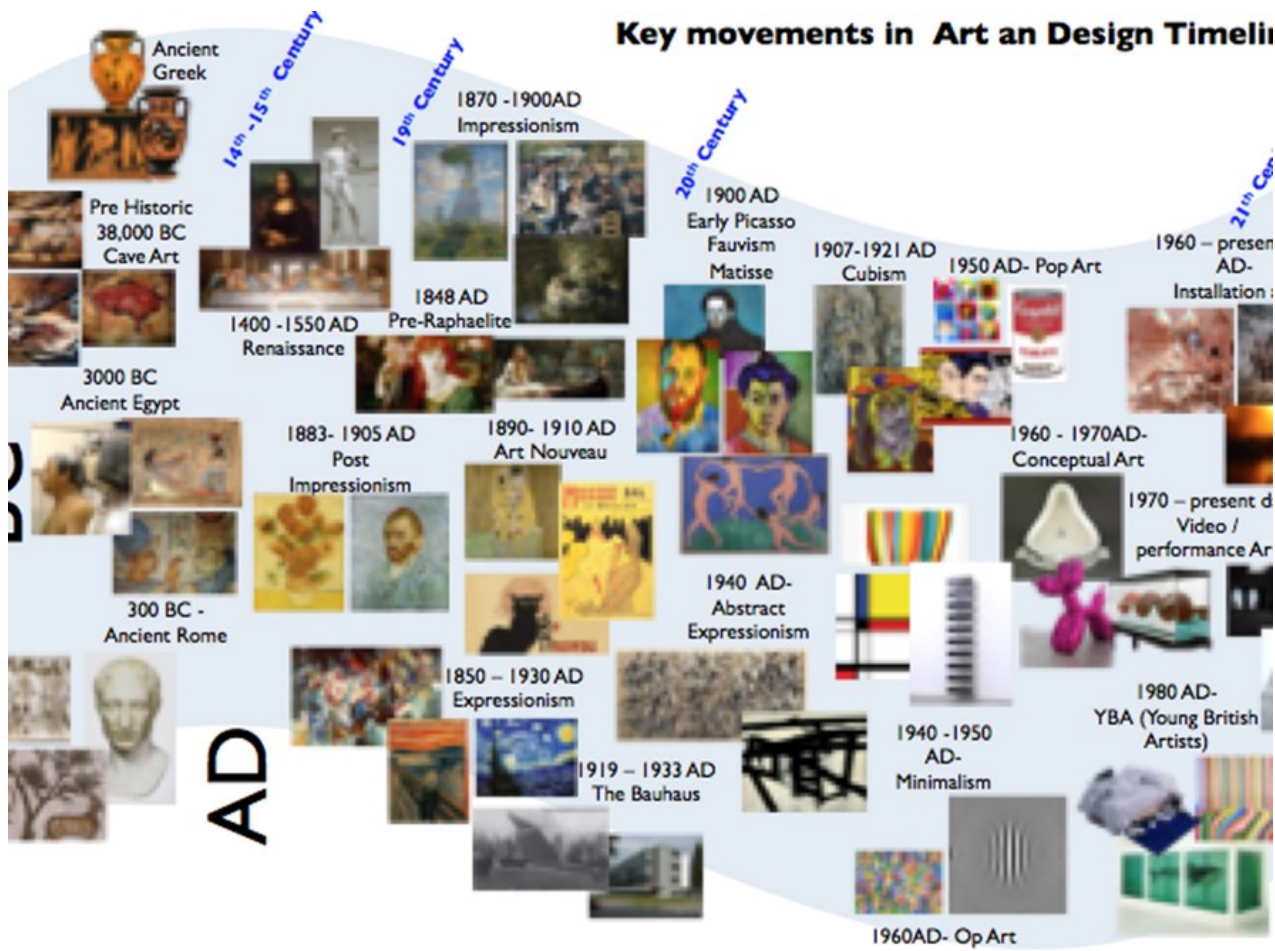
Many of Rousseau's signature paintings depicted human figures or wild animals in jungle-like settings. The first of these works was "Tiger in a Tropical Storm" of 1891 (now at the National Gallery in London).

Although Rousseau's art was not understood or accepted by the conservative, official art world of Paris, he was able to show his work in annual exhibitions organized by the Société des Artistes Indépendants. He submitted works to these open, un-juried shows from 1886 until the end of his life. His art was seen and appreciated by established artists such as Camille Pissarro and Paul Signac, who praised his direct, emotional approach to his subject matter.

In 1893, at the age of 49, Rousseau retired from his work as a toll collector and dedicated himself to his art. That year he met the writer Alfred Jarry, who gave him the nickname "Le Douanier" ("the customs officer"). Jarry introduced Rousseau to members of the Parisian artistic and literary avant-garde, including Pablo Picasso, Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob and Marie Laurencin, all of whom became admirers of his art. Rousseau also formed business relationships with important dealers; however, despite these connections, he made very little money from his art.

Rousseau died on September 2, 1910, in Paris. His work continued to influence other artists, from his friend Picasso to Fernand Léger, Max Ernst and the Surrealists. His paintings are held in museum collections around the world. The Museum of Modern Art in New York owns two of his most famous works, "The Sleeping Gypsy" (1897) and "The Dream" (1910). Other works belong to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia; and the Beyeler Foundation in Basel, Switzerland, among many other institutions.

Key movements in Art and Design Timeline



Henri Rousseau's art tend to take the theme of nature and wildlife. As this is the case, our Spanish lesson this week is going to based on names of animals.



Remember from some of our Spanish lessons in school nouns in Spanish can be either feminine or masculine, and this distinction For instance, a table (*la mesa*) is feminine, while a desk (*el escritorio*) is masculine.



Most animal names have a female and a male form, but not all do. For instance, a cat can be *el gato* (masculine) or *la gata* (feminine), but a hamster will always be *el hámster* (masculine). The list on the next page is the generic form that you would use if you didn't know the gender of the animal.

Have a go at trying to pronounce the names of each animal on the list. To help you this YouTube video can support pronunciation.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdtTuu2WLv0>

Your task

Using the Spanish animal names, we would like you to create your own Spanish game. In your game, there should be some opportunity to practise your pronunciation of the animals in Spanish.

For example – you could make your own Snap game using the Spanish animals but instead of saying snap you could say the Spanish to the matching animal.

Be as creative and adventurous with making your games as you like.

English	Spanish
Dog	El perro
Puppy	El cachorro
Cat	El gato
Fish	El pez
Bird	El pajaró
Snake	La serpiente
Rabbit	El conejo
Cow	La vaca
Horse	El caballo
Donkey	El burro
Mouse	El ratón
Fox	El Zorro
Wolf	El Lobo
Bear	El oso
Penguin	EL pinguino
Shark	El tiburón
Elephant	EL elefante
Rhinoceros	El rinoceronte
Hippopotamus	El hipopotamo
Lion	El León
Tiger	El tigre
Giraffe	La jirafa
Zebra	La cebra
Monkey	El mono
Kangaroo	El canguro
Crocodile	EL cocodrilo