

# THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

### The Art of English

#### Upper Intermediate

#### I. Painting styles: Using adjectives to describe style

- Tip! The painting style the artist used often depended on the artistic *movement* he or she belonged to, e.g. Impressionism



la) Read these descriptions of paintings in the gallery. Can you find paintings that match the style described?

1. The painter uses **broad** brushstrokes to create a **sketchy** style.

Title:\_\_\_\_\_

Artist:\_\_\_\_\_

2. The painting seems to capture a **fleeting** moment in time; like a photograph, some things in the picture are **blurred**.

Title:\_\_\_\_\_

Artist:\_\_\_\_\_

3. The painter has used **simple** forms in this picture and **bold** blocks of colour to give the painting a **semi-abstract** feel.

Title:\_\_\_\_\_

Artist:\_\_\_\_\_

4. Colour is **smoothly blended** in this picture. The picture has an almost **photographic** quality; you feel you could reach out and touch the people and objects.

Title:\_\_\_\_\_

Artist:\_\_\_\_\_

5. The people seem to be **idealised** in the picture; you feel that the painter is flattering them.

Title:\_\_\_\_\_

Artist:\_\_\_\_\_

1b) Work in pairs. Discuss which style of painting you prefer and give reasons for your answer.

## 2. Focus on one painting: Speculating on events

2a) Look at this detail from a British painting, painted in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Can you find the painting in Gallery 2 that this detail comes from?

2b) Work in pairs. Read this poem about the painting and discuss questions 1-4 with your partner.



*E's [for] Mr. Elmore. She's tempted to sin;  
She's fair. Will the lily or the passion flower win?*

*Academy Alphabet, Punch, 13th May 1865.*

1. Who do you think Mr Elmore could be?

2. Why might the girl in the painting be tempted to sin?

Clue: what does the girl look as if she's been doing?

Does the purse in her hand look as though it's full or empty?

Does the dark figure talking to her look as if he's making her feel better?

Why might the dark figure want to talk to the girl?

3. Why might it be important that the girl is fair or beautiful?

4. The lily and the passion flower represent the two different outcomes of a decision that the girl has to make. Which flower do you think could represent the virtuous outcome?

2c) The painting captures the moment before the girl makes an important decision. Work in pairs. Use these expressions to discuss what you think is going to happen with your partner.

e.g. *it looks like she's on the verge of bursting into tears*

- She looks as if she's on the brink of + verb + *ing*
- It looks like she's on the verge of + verb + *ing*
- She looks as though she's about + infinitive with *to*

2d) This is a morality painting about women's role in Victorian society. If you were going to paint a morality painting about women's roles in 21<sup>st</sup> century society, what subject would you choose and why?

### 3. Medieval and Renaissance Art, Room 32 – Techniques of the trade

3a) Fill in the gaps in 1. and 2. with the words in brackets. Then match the sentences to objects in room 32.

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ frieze \_\_\_\_\_ carved in \_\_\_\_\_ relief (alabaster, skilfully, beautiful, high)
2. An \_\_\_\_\_ brooch, made from copper and set with \_\_\_\_\_ stones. (precious, filigree, intricate)

3b) Find objects which have been *illuminated*, *embroidered*, *engraved*, *enamelled*, *decorated*, and *chiselled*.

3c) Work in pairs. Choose one object. Don't tell other people which object you've chosen. Write a sentence describing the object, like the sentences in 3a). Read the sentence to another pair. The other pair finds the object you describe.

### 4. Pottery : Speculating about the past

4a) Work in pairs. Find the objects in **bold** in room 27 and 26, read the information cards displayed and answer questions 1-4.

1. What might the **owl with the removable head** have been used as? Who is said to have made it?

*(location: in front of you as you walk into room 27)*

2. Look carefully at an example of a **puzzle jug**. Why must people have been confused by it?

*(location: room 27, 4<sup>th</sup> cabinet on the left, 3<sup>rd</sup> shelf down)*

3. Look carefully at the **loving cup and think about its use**. Why do you think it might have needed more than one handle? *(location: room 27, 4<sup>th</sup> cabinet on left, 2<sup>nd</sup> shelf down)*

4. Why do you think the owner of a **Japanese leaping carp** can't have failed at school?

*(location: room 26, next to 3<sup>rd</sup> window on the right)*