

Van Gogh *Alive* the experience



Easy Read Guide

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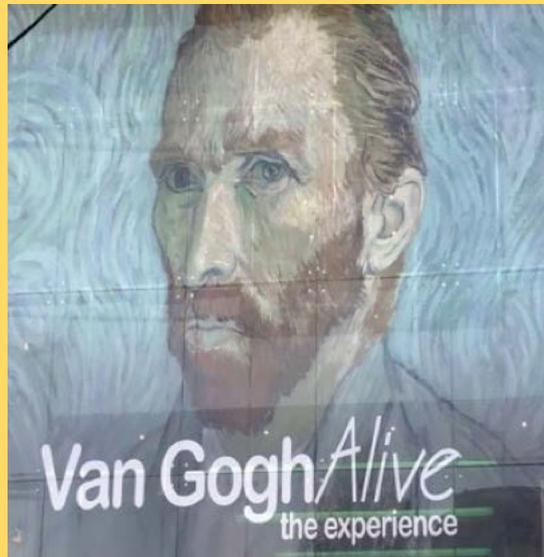
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Hello!

This is a guide to help you understand the Van Gogh Alive experience at Festival Square, Edinburgh. The guide is split into three parts:

1. Getting to the exhibition
2. The Story
3. Leaving the exhibition

There will be many pictures and photographs on the walls telling the story of Vincent Van Gogh's life. This is called an **exhibition**.





Hello!



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Part 1: Getting to the Exhibition



There are lots of ways you may be coming to Festival Square, Edinburgh.

By bus, train, car or even walking.



This is the front of the building.

The Van Gogh Alive experience is inside this specially built building.

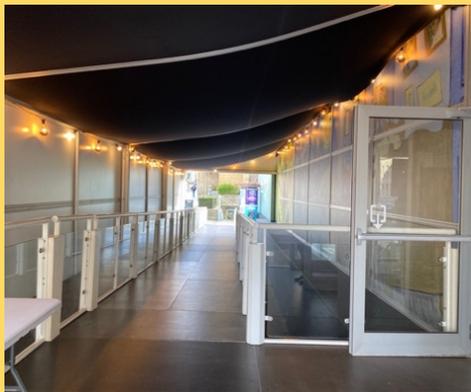


1. The Entrance



The entrance to the exhibition is by the ramp or the stairs.

You will be met by a guide in a sparkly hat who will lead you into the building. You can ask your guide any questions.



At the top of the ramp and the stairs, there is a door with the word 'ENTRY' above it.

There will be more staff members waiting to say hello.

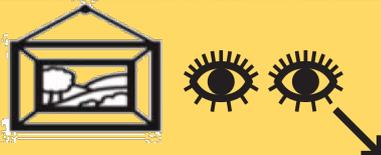
They will be wearing sparkly hats too.



Walk through the door and this is where we will check your tickets.

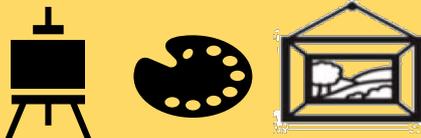


2. Inside the Gallery



This is where the first part of the exhibition starts.

This is called a **gallery**. This is a space where you can look at the paintings or posters on the walls.



These are some of the pictures that Vincent painted, that you will be able to see again in the main hall.

You can come back here whenever you want with a teacher.

It is a very peaceful place to sit if you need a break from the exhibition.



You can walk around the gallery and read more about why Vincent painted his pictures and where he was living at the time.

This one is called **Almond Blossom**



At the back of the gallery, there is a special treat.

Vincent's very famous painting of his bedroom has been made into his actual bedroom!

You can even go into this room and look at his bed!

I WANT TO TOUCH PEOPLE
WITH MY ART. I WANT THEM
TO SAY "HE FEELS DEEPLY,
HE FEELS TENDERLY".

VINCENT VAN GOGH

On the walls, there are lots of words written by Vincent about his paintings and his love of art.



Now it is time go into the main exhibition space.

Follow the yellow spots on the floor with another one of Vincent's famous paintings on the wall, Starry Night.

It will be quite dark along this corridor. But the stars, the spots and your guide will help you find your way.



3. Inside the Main Hall



This is what the main hall looks like when you come in. The lights are on.

Your teacher will be shown an area for your group to stay for the whole of the Experience by your group leader, who will be wearing a yellow t-shirt.



You may want to walk about or sit on the cushions in your space and look at the paintings.



There will also be a bucket which will have some clean fidget toys, in case you are feeling anxious. There is music playing all through the Experience. It is not too loud but you can wear our ear defenders or you can bring your own.

There will also be drawing books and crayons, so you can draw too.

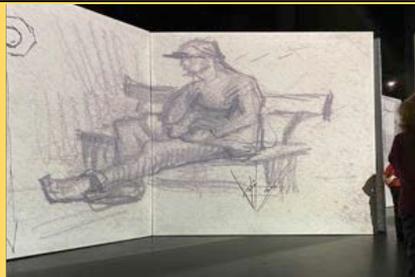


When the Experience starts, the hall will go quite dark and there will be music playing.

The pictures are very big and are all around you ...



... and some are even on the floor.



Some of the pictures are paintings and some are sketches...

You may want to sketch here too.



And now it is time to start the exhibition and learn about the life of Vincent Van Gogh.

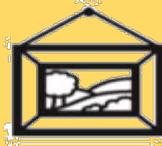
Part 2: The Story



This is the story of the artist, Vincent van Gogh. (*You pronounce his last name like 'Go' or Goff'.*)



*But we will call him **Vincent** in this guide)*



You can follow the story of his life through his paintings.



This guide will help you understand where he was living, what he was doing and how he was feeling at different times of his life.

When you look at the paintings you will be in a very large space, and they will be all around you – even on the floor.



There is music playing all the time. The music changes the mood and will make you think about how happy or sad Vincent was at that time. It may be a little loud and it is OK to wear your ear defenders.

You will know when he moves to different places:

... the room will go a bit darker ...

... the music gradually stops

... the places and dates will be written on the walls

... there will be Vincent's self-portraits (pictures he painted of himself)

.... and different music will start to play again

But remember, you can leave the large space any time you want. If you feel scared or worried, or just want a little peace. There are many places to chill out in, just ask someone in a sparkly hat to show you.



We first see maps of the Netherlands (where Vincent was born) and a map of France where he painted most of his paintings.



Red, white and blue are the colours of both the flags from the Netherlands and France.



It looks as if the colours are being painted on the walls and even the floor.



Then we are introduced to Vincent van Gogh, showing lots of pictures painted by himself. These are called self-portraits.

He would look at himself in a mirror and paint what he saw.

	The Netherlands	1880 – 1885
	Paris	1886 – 1888
	Arles	1888 – 1889
	Saint-Remy	1889 – 1890
	Auvers sur Oise	1890 – 1890

The Netherlands

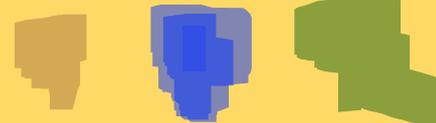
Vincent was born here and this is where his painting journey started.



These are pictures of Vincent's life in the Netherlands. There are a lot of windmills in the Netherlands.



The paintings are very dark – lots of browns, blues and greens. It may seem quite dark in this room.



He liked to paint pictures of his shoes and boots.



He painted pictures of fields and farm workers.



The colours in the Netherlands seem very dark and Vincent was not happy here. He wanted to be with other painters and learn new skills. So he moved to Paris.

Paris, France 1886 – 1888

Vincent was here for two years and met some famous painters and studied their style of painting.



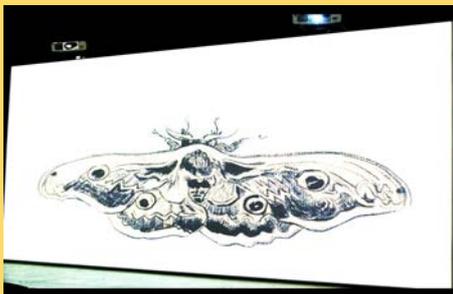
Vincent uses much brighter colours in his paintings and you can feel that Vincent was much happier in Paris.



Even the music sounds jollier.



He painted lots of pictures of Paris, the capital of France.



He liked to study everything in detail... even a moth!



Can you see how much brighter his paintings are when he lived in Paris? He uses lighter tones - blues and creams and yellows, as he is feeling more content.





He liked to paint fruit...



... trees



... and flowers.



Vincent loved Japanese art. This influenced some of his paintings.

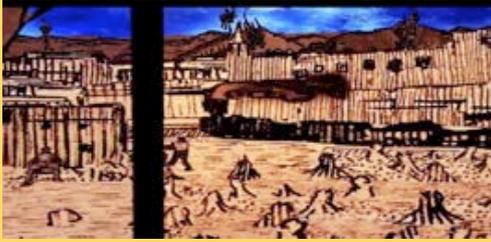
Watch the blossom falling from the trees, while you listen to the Japanese style music.

Vincent was finding it hard to carry on living in Paris as he started to disagree with some of the other artists. He felt he had learnt all he had to know from them. He had heard that the light was better in the South of France – so he followed the sun.

Arles 1888 – 1889



Vincent travelled by train to the South of France – where it is much hotter, and the sun shines more than in Paris.

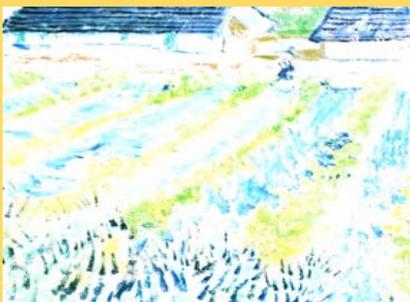


This section starts with Vincent's train journey - from Paris to Arles.

You can watch as the train travels around the screens.



There were lots of sunflowers growing in the fields here and Vincent liked to paint them.



There were also lots of other flowers growing in the fields... lavender and irises.

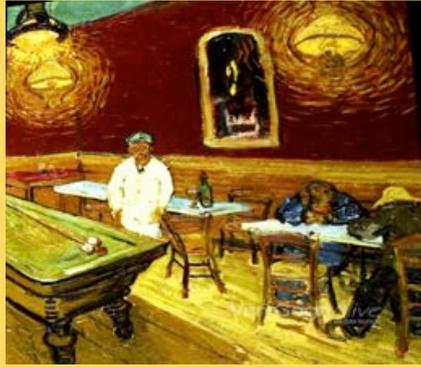


Vincent would spend time in the local cafés in the evening.

He painted this picture of a very starry night in Arles.



He painted the people inside the cafés too.



And even the games they played
... billiards and cards.



He painted lots of pictures of
people and families whom he
met when he lived in Arles.



Vincent painted pictures of
different things - even his
bedroom.

This is a very famous picture. Do
you recognise this picture?



Vincent loved the colour yellow
and even lived in this yellow
house.

He said...

'and all the ground is yellow, too'



Vincent would spend a lot of
time in the countryside painting.

He used light blue and yellow
paint in his pictures.



Vincent started to feel lonely after a while and felt people didn't understand him.

Warning: The music changes and everywhere seems to go a deep red colour.



He was very poorly and tried to cut off his ear.

This is a picture Vincent painted of himself after he tried to cut off his ear.



Through his life, Vincent wrote letters to his brother. The walls and the floor are covered with the letters he sent.

Saint-Remy 1889 – 1890

Vincent decided that he needed to go to hospital. He left Arles and his yellow house and went to a hospital in Saint-Remy.



Here Vincent sometimes felt calm and other times felt very sad.

This can be seen in the different colours he uses in his pictures whilst he was staying in the hospital.



Here are some pictures from the inside of the hospital. You can see some of the other patients if you look closely.



These are some of his paintings when he was feeling at peace.



And these paintings are when he was feeling frustrated and angry.



Look at the paintings and see how the colours make you feel.



Look out for the ripples of the river.

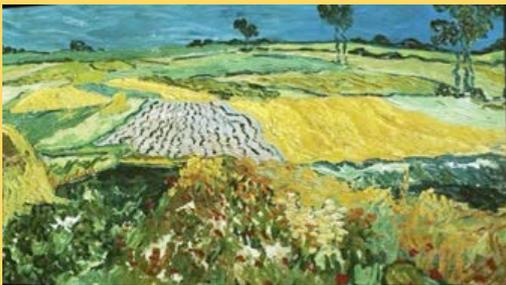
In the hospital, the doctors had done all they could to make Vincent feel better and so he left Saint-Remy and went to stay with his friend Doctor Gachet, in the north of France, to look after him.



Warning: This is the last part of Vincent's life. We know that he is still sad and feeling lonely and misunderstood.

The lights will start to get darker and the music becomes more and more dramatic.

You can use your ear defenders and even close your eyes if it gets to be a little scary now.

Auvers-sur-Oise 1890	This was the last place that Vincent lived.
	<p>Vincent went to stay with Doctor Gachet who was a family friend.</p> 
	<p>When he was staying here, he painted lots and lots of pictures. Almost one every day for a year!</p> 
	<p>But as the days went on, Vincent was becoming more depressed.</p>  <p>See how the skies are darker than before. They look very dark and stormy now.</p>



And the colours he uses to paint with are not as bright or cheerful as when he was living in Arles.



The paintings are also looking wilder. The skies look dark and a little frightening.



Poor Vincent must be feeling very sad now.



This is a picture of crows in a cornfield. It looks as if a storm is coming.



This is one of Vincent's last paintings before his life came to an end.



At the end of the exhibition, the crows will fly up and away.



The lights will go out for a very short time.



... and then you will hear more music and see some of Vincent's self-portraits again.



This will help you remember him as we have seen him in his story, sometimes happy and sometimes sad.

The lights will come back on.



You may need a little time just to think about what you have seen. Sitting or standing quietly or talking with your friends.

Everyone has a different way of showing their emotions and expressing how they feel. You can cry or laugh...

... or you may want to paint your own feelings, like Vincent.

And now it is time to see some more sunflowers.

Part 3: Leaving the Exhibition

1. The Sunflower Room



Before you leave, you can experience what it would be like to be in a field of sunflowers.

Your leader will show you this room.

You will walk down this passage.

It is quite dark but you will see orange glow of the sunflower





Vincent loved sunflowers, which is why the exhibition has a whole room full of them.



This is inside the Sunflower Room.

It is very beautiful in here.

You may just want to stand still and look around you.

2. Leaving the exhibition



When you leave the Sunflower Room, you will walk down another corridor.

Your guide will show you the way.



You will walk past this area.

You can come to this space anytime you like with your teacher if you need to chill out. Ask your guide to show you the way.



You will walk this way, past this wall, with more of Vincent's words.

It will take you back to where you came in.

toilets



You may need to visit the toilets before you leave.

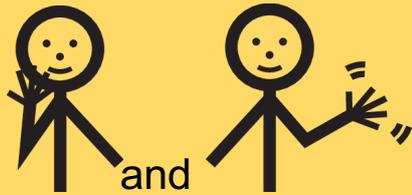
These are in the gallery area.

There is an accessible toilet.



It is time to go now. You can go out of these doors.

There will be more people coming in to see the exhibition.



Thank you for coming and goodbye.