

Who is JMW Turner? – Who Are They?

Turner was a **landscape** painter, traveller, poet and teacher. Many people consider him the first modern painter! The art critic John Ruskin said he was 'the greatest of the age'.

Let's see what you think!

J.M.W Turner (the J.M.W stands for **Joseph Mallard William** by the way), was born in London in 1775. His dad was a barber, but Turner always knew he wanted to be an artist. When he was just 14 years old he became a student at the Royal Academy of Art in London.

One of the reasons that Turner was so extraordinary was because he liked to draw and paint 'en plein air', which means **out in the open**. This was unusual in Turner's day as most artists painted in their studios. Turner took his sketchbooks, canvases and his paints out with him every day and painted what he saw. (He got through hundreds of sketchbooks – and created over 30,000 artworks altogether!!). **The picture above is a page from one of his sketchbooks. It is a painting of London Bridge...do you think it looks like that now? No.**

Copy and paste a picture of London Bridge from today in the space below:



Turner drew and painted at different times of the day and in all weathers. He painted sunrises, sunsets, mist, rain and snow; which is why he is sometimes called 'the painter of light'.

Turner also painted great moments in history and fantastic stories, which often challenged the styles of older painters.

Although lots of his paintings are full of light and look dream-like, he also made dark, epic paintings, which had great atmosphere, like the *Snow Storm: Hannibal and his Army Crossing the Alps*. Do you prefer his light or dark paintings?

I prefer... the light paintings.

I like The Bridge At Sevres.

I also like the Fishermen at Sea however it's darker than The Bridge At Sevres.

The Bridge At Sevres is brighter and "more" relaxing to view.

Even when he was older, Turner was a radical artist. He was interested in new technology— like steam ships and trains (which were exciting and new in the middle of the nineteenth century). What do you think he would paint today to show new technology?

I think he would paint... A crowd of humans walking or standing in a busy street, all holding their mobile phones. I think he'd show us an image of what's inside each person's brain. He could draw what website they're on, in the space where their thoughts are, i.e. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Sky News, Times Table Rockstars, Morrisons Online Shopping etc. I think the idea of seeing people eating their phones would be good, as people's lives nowadays, are consumed by technology.

Brad