



# Georgia O'KEEFFE

## KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER



### Biography

- Georgia O'Keeffe was an American artist, who is often considered the mother of modernism.
- She painted nature in a way that showed her feelings. She particularly enjoyed painting flowers and desert landscapes.
- He is most famous for paintings such as *Jimson Weed*, *Black Mesa Landscape* and *Cow's Skull: Red, White and Blue*.
- She was the first female painter to gain respect in New York's art world in the 1920s.
- She created a unique way of painting nature, simplifying shapes and forms. This led many to call her a 'pioneer' of modern art.



-O'Keeffe lived between 1887 and 1986. She was born in Wisconsin, USA, and spent much of her life in New York and New Mexico, both USA.

### Significant Works

<b>Jimson Weed (1936)</b>		-O'Keeffe drew many images of flowers, and this was amongst her most famous. -It is a large painting, measuring 180cm x 212cm. -The painting shows four large jimson weed petals. The simplified colours, along with the use of light, makes the flowers seem fresh and playful. -Jimson Weed is actually also known as Devil's Snare, and has toxic qualities. This demonstrates O'Keeffe's unusual perspective on nature.
<b>Black Mesa Landscape (1930)</b>		- <i>Black Mesa Landscape, New Mexico, Out Back of Marie's II</i> shows the New Mexico desert landscape that O'Keeffe had a strong admiration for. She first visited New Mexico in 1916 and fell in love with the dramatic desert landscape with its rugged mountains. She has simplified the outline of the mountains, and used colour for effect, giving the landscape a powerful atmosphere.
<b>Cow's Skull: Red, White and Blue (1889)</b>		-The painting shows a cow skull centered in front of a cloth background. Down the centre is a vertical black stripe. On either side are vertical stripes of white, blue and red. At the time, American artists were interested in creating a uniquely American style for their work: the skull represents the enduring spirit of America.

### Key Vocabulary

- O'Keeffe
- USA
- New York
- New Mexico
- Modernism
- Landscape
- Desert
- Precisionism
- Jimson Weed
- Black Mesa Landscape
- Cow's Skull: Red, White and Blue
- Abstract

### Styles and Techniques

<b>Modernism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<u>Modernism</u> is the name given to an art movement that took place in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.</li> <li>-Modernism rejected the traditional way of doing things. In art, painters replaced the traditions of the past with experimentation and new ways of presenting things.</li> <li>-Modernism contains many different sub-categories.</li> <li>-Before modernism, classical painters were commissioned to create realistic images of famous scenes and stories 'exactly the way that they were.'</li> <li>-Modernism allowed artists to present their own individual view of ideas, including unique imagery, and adopting light, colour, form &amp; atmosphere to reach their own vision.</li> <li>-O'Keeffe maintained her own individual style, separate even from the other modernists. She was able to enlarge scenes from everyday life, turning them into something strange and unrecognizable.</li> </ul>	
<b>Precisionism</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-<u>Precisionism</u> was a style that focused on industrialisation and the modernisation of the American landscape. These ideas were often shown in sharp, geometric forms. Precisionist artists often adopted bold lines and strong colours, allowing an abstract, individualised view of landscapes to become clear. O'Keeffe is known as one of the foremost precisionist painters.</li> </ul>	

### How do I create art like O'Keeffe?

**Step 1:** Using pencil, sketch the outline of the mountains and hills. Some go in the foreground, whilst some are further behind in the background.

**Step 2:** Select which colour oil pastels you will use for each horizontal 'layer' of the mountains.

**Step 3:** Draw bold lines down the mountains in jagged lines (this creates the look of the ridges). Press firmly to achieve this.

**Step 4:** Around the ridge lines, colour firmly, to show shading in these areas. In the areas immediately around this, colour with a moderately firm grip, to show slightly lighter shading.

**Step 4:** Now, more lightly colour in the remaining white spaces, to complete your O'Keeffe style landscape!

**Things you'll need:** Drawing paper, oil pastels, pencil.

*A child's O'Keeffe-style landscape drawing.*

### Georgia O'Keeffe Timeline

<b>15<sup>th</sup> November 1887</b> Georgia Totto O'Keeffe is born in Wisconsin.	<b>1902</b> O'Keeffe enjoys art education as a child.	<b>1905</b> Graduates from High School and studies at Chicago Art Institute.	<b>1908</b> Wins first art award for an oil painting of a dead rabbit.	<b>1924</b> Marries art promoter Alfred Stieglitz in New York. She begins painting New York cityscapes.	<b>1928</b> Visits New Mexico for the first time. Visits every summer afterwards.	<b>1930</b> Produces <i>Black Mesa Landscape</i> ...	<b>1936</b> Completes <i>Jimson Weed</i> .	<b>1946</b> Stieglitz dies, and O'Keeffe moves to New Mexico.	<b>1971</b> Her eyesight fails, she can no longer paint.	<b>1<sup>st</sup> January 1986</b> She dies at the age of 98.
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