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| Image: **“Still Life with Drawing Board, Pipe, Onions and Sealing-Wax” (1889 Oil on canvas, 50 cm x 64 cm** | **Artist: Vincent Van Gogh 1853-1890** | **Section 1 – Expressive Studies –** **Question 3 or 4** |
| **Background Information -** Dates – 1853-1890. Vincent Van Gogh was born in Groot-Zundert, Holland in 1853. Before he took up painting, he became a religious missionary in the coal-mining district of the Borinage in Belgium. After 1880, he taught himself to paint. He had a close relationship, with his brother THEO. Theo was a wealthy art dealer.After his arrival in Paris, in 1886, his style, colour and subject matter changed. He adopted the Impressionist painting technique. **(Post impressionism***– new generation of artists (Gaugin/Cezanne), using extremes of light and colour in their work. New, rawer subject matter and expression of emotion through their art).* By December 1888, his mental and physical well being had deteriorated to a very low level. His paintings became brighter in colour, his painting technique became wilder and full of mark making. His paintings from around that time are PORTRAITS, landscapes, his room and surroundings, which make use of intense, passionate expression of light and feeling.Between the years 1888-90, Van Gogh produced his largest number of paintings. Van Gogh suffered mental ill health and was eventually admitted to an asylum in Saint-Remy. He painted, and was still very productive. His paintings during this last period of his life at Saint-Remy and Auvers, are amongst the most expressive, and highly coloured. The brushstrokes in these paintings take on a swirling effect, with flame like forms, which reflect his tormented mental state.In July 1890, Van Gogh shot himself and later died of his injuries. | **Composition, including focal point**Shows perspective on the sloping line of the table and the line on the wall in the background • The focal point of the painting is the onions grouped together on the plate OR the darker objects of the candle or pot at the back of the painting.  | **Materials / Media Handling / Techniques**• Impasto paint • Very thickly applied • Dashes or swirls • Defined/ exaggerated outline • Exaggerated colour palette  |
| **Subject Matter / Description** Painted the objects in his home as he was not a wealthy artist.Everyday, mundane objects, room settings.As in title – drawing board, pipe, onions and sealing wax, plus a letter/envelope, wine bottle, kettle and candle sitting on a table in perhaps a kitchen setting.Painted during the period he was living in Arles, near the end of his life – bold colour pallette influenced by warm climate.  |
| **Viewpoint / Perspective / Scale**Worked very precisely, probably using a perspective frame.Viewpoint is slightly elevated as thought a person is looking down. This can be seen in the perspective of the table top and the view of the ellipses in the cylindrical objects – plate, bottle, kettle. | **Visual Impact**Bold, vibrant colour creating a warm feel.Very visible brushstrokes – applied in small dashes or swirling patterns • Well defined dark outline of objects • Bold colour palette much duller pallette.  |
| **Visual Elements** (SPLATT FC) |
| **Shape** | **Pattern**Very visible brushstrokes applied in small dashes or swirling patterns in the background and on the table top. | **Line**• Repeated line pattern in the background of contrasting colours. • Line used to show depth and perspective. • Line used to show texture on the objects.  | **Atmosphere (Mood)**A warm glow given by the candle and yellow colour palette.A homely feel due to the ordinary, everyday subject matter. |
| **Texture** • Impasto technique used to apply paint in such a thick way • Dashes of paint show the texture of the wooden table and the skin of the onion • Adds depth and form to the work  | **Tone**Large range of tonal contrast from white plate to almost black bottle.Contrasting tones from candle lit table top to the shadowy background.Darker objects of the candle, bottle and pot isolated.  | **Form** | **Colour**Bold, vibrant colour • Purplish blue used for shadows • Contrasting colours used in the background. The colours are orange and blue which sit opposite each other on the colour wheel. • Warm colours used for the table – creates feeling of warm glow from the candle. • MOSTLY cold colours used for the background – blue wall and green pot.  |
| **Cultural / Social / Other Influences (including inspiration and effect on work & practice)** |
| New advances in pigments for paints His move to Paris and inspiration from impressionismWorking with and meeting other artists Cezanne, Gaugin & Post Impressionism His mental and physical well being deterioration contributed to paintings becoming brighter in colour His painting technique became wilder and full of mark making, more expressionistAround 1888 he was admitted to an asylum which was his most prolific period of painting. |