



Sale of the *Portrait of Elisabeth Lederer* (November 24, 2025)

TEACHING GUIDE

What? A painting, *Portrait of Elisabeth Lederer*, which was sold at auction for 236.4 million US dollars, becoming the second most expensive work ever sold.

Who? Gustav Klimt (1862-1918), a famous Austrian painter, who is the author of the work. However, it is unknown who purchased the piece...

Where? In New York, at Sotheby's auction house.

When? This sale took place on November 18, 2025.

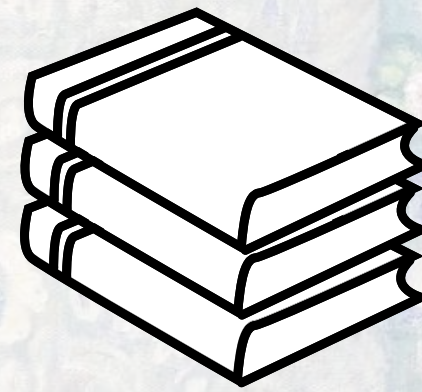
Why is it important? Because this painting is rare, highly sought-after, and has a strong history (created between 1914-1916, belonged to a Viennese family and was later resold after various events) — this explains the very high price.

For this activity, your goal will be to learn about this painting and its author, the painter Gustav Klimt.



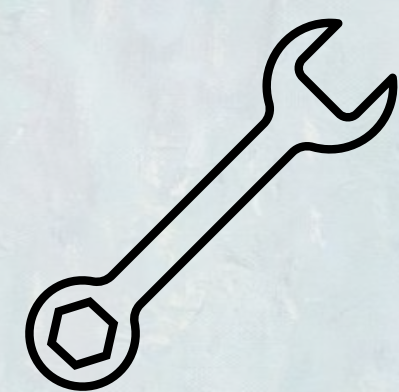
OBJECTIVES

- Understand how an auction works.
- Discover the artist Gustav Klimt and his style.
- Develop a sense of proportions and magnitudes based on a real amount.
- Enrich vocabulary related to art and economics.



SUBJECTS

- **Mathematics:** division, comparison of large sums.
- **Social Studies / Ethics:** value of art, money, societal choices.
- **French:** reading texts, comprehension, written responses.



COMPETENCIES

- Read and extract information from a text.
- Observe and describe a visual artwork.
- Perform simple calculations.
- Compare actual values.
- Develop critical thinking skills.



DURATION

- Around 60 minutes



GETTING STARTED

- Show the picture of the painting without giving its price.
- Ask the students: 'What do you see? What type of painting is this?'
- Invite the students to estimate its value by raising their hands.
- Write some guesses on the board (100,000 \$, 1M \$, 10M \$, etc.).
- Then announce the actual price to create a surprise effect.
- Explain that the activity will be about selling a painting for a very large amount.



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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STEP 1 — Behind the Sale. Reading of a newspaper article and three short texts about the sale and the artist. Answers to four comprehension questions.

Q1 — Her name is Elisabeth Lederer.

Q2 — Gustav Klimt was Austrian.

Q3 — A patron is a wealthy person who helps artists financially.

Q4 — At an auction, the person who offers the highest price wins the bid.

STEP 2 — Klimt: a unique style. Observation of three paintings by Gustav Klimt and personal answers to four questions about the artist's style.

Q5 — Spirals, circles, squares, and shapes that look like plants or jewelry.

Q6 — Lots of gold, yellow, red, black, and white.

Q7 — Their faces are realistic, but their clothes are very decorated, like magical costumes.

Q8 — A mix of decorative art and realism, rich in gold and symbolic patterns.

STEP 3 — The cost of art. Comparative mathematical calculations made using the number 236.4 (the sale amount of the painting).

Q9 — $236.4 \text{ M \$} \div 20 \text{ M \$} = 11.82 \text{ schools.}$

Q10 — $236.4 \text{ M \$} \div 150,000 \text{ \$ (or } 236,400,000 \text{ \$} \div 150,000 \text{ \$)} = 1,576 \text{ buses.}$

Q11 — $236.4 \text{ M \$} \div 400,000 \text{ \$ (or } 236,400,000 \text{ \$} \div 400,000 \text{ \$)} = 591 \text{ houses.}$

Q12 — "236.4 million dollars is 236.4 times greater than 1 million."

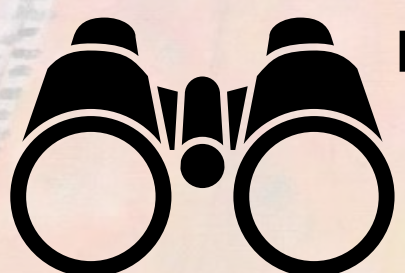
TO WRAP UP

Go back as a group to these three questions:

- "Why is this painting worth so much money, according to the students?"
- "What makes Klimt's style easy to recognize?"
- "What did they remember the most: the story of the sale, the artist, or the amounts of money?"

Ask a few students to summarize, each in one sentence:

- "What I learned about Klimt..."
- "What I understood about the value of art..."



FURTHER EXPLORATION

 Gustav Klimt Teaching Resources and Lesson Plans
<https://kidsartprojects101.com/gustav-klimt-teaching-resources-and-lesson-plans>

 Gustav Klimt for Kids!  | Art History for Kids
https://youtu.be/k7S6BwclRkw?si=THFwRCGTE5-__CTJ