

Joseph Mallord William Turner

Revolution and Restoration (The Romantic Age)



Self-portrait 1799

Joseph Mallord William Turner

- JMW Turner was born in London, England in 1775 (the same year George Washington was fighting the Revolutionary War in the United States).
- He was the son of a barber and wigmaker and started painting at a very young age. His dad would put his paintings in the window of the barbershop to sell!
- At the age of 15, Turner had his paintings shown at the Royal Academy of Art in England, which was a very big deal. He became a member of the Academy at 18 and later was “Professor of Perspective” there. Perspective is making a flat object look like it has depth (making 2-D look 3-D).
- His early works were traditional landscape paintings (paintings of outdoor scenery). Can you see how he used perspective here?



Tintern Abbey 1795

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- Turner painted during a time in art history known as the Romantic Period.
- During the Romantic Period, many artists painted landscapes that usually showed either nationalism (in painting and sketching the land near them) or the exoticism and adventure of far-away places.
- The awesome power of nature was a consistent theme in Turner's works. He often focused on the violent power of the sea and painted many paintings of storms and shipwrecks.



The Shipwreck 1805

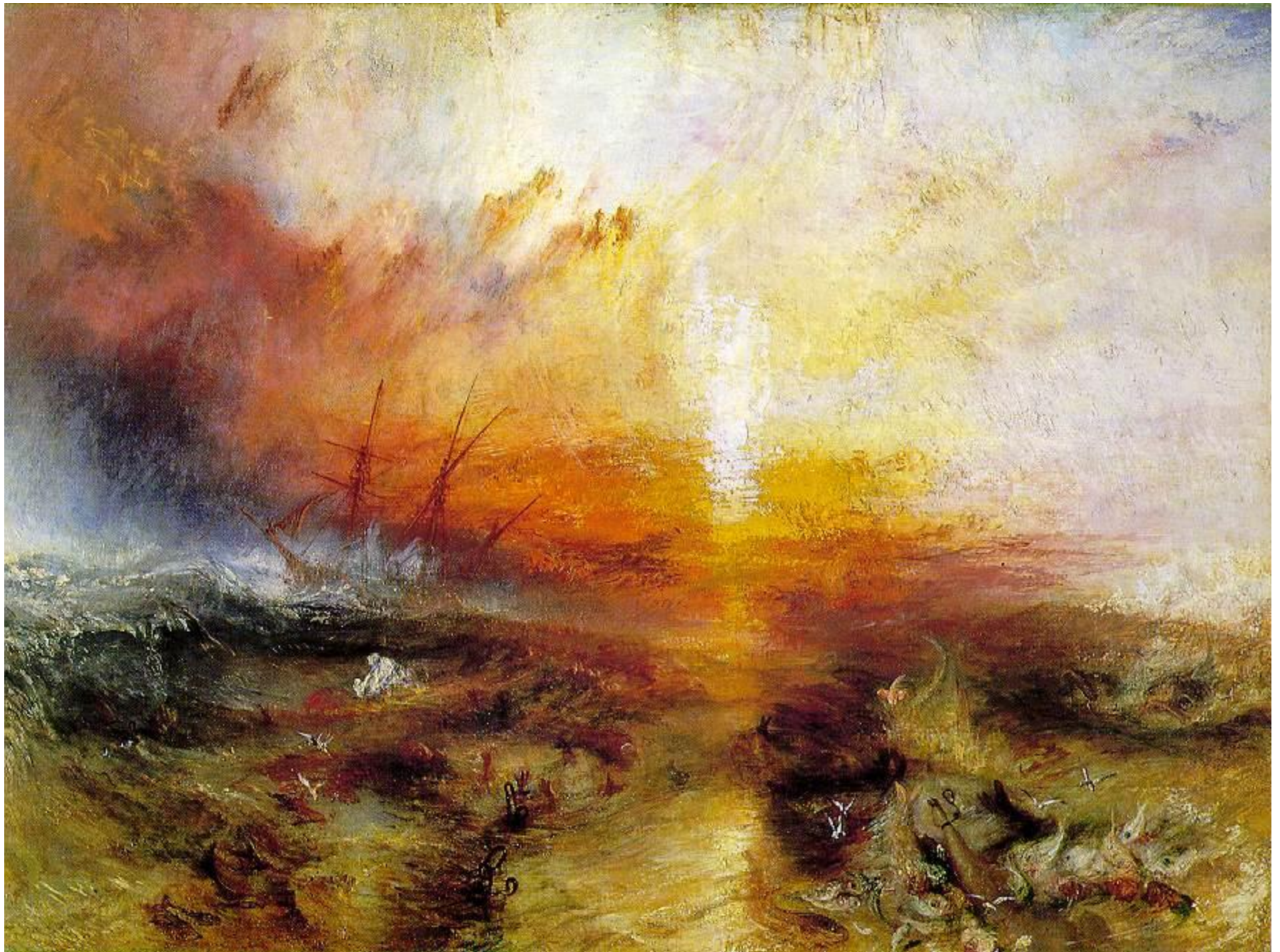
- How does Turner use perspective in this painting? Do you feel like you are looking sideways? How does this

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- Romantic artists often used nature to express emotions. The natural world was considered a source of mysterious powers.
- Turner liked to paint the destructive powers of nature. This painting is of a snowstorm.
- Does it make you think of a snowstorm? Why or why not? What emotions do you think the artist is expressing?
- The painting on the next slide is known by its short title, “The Slave Ship.” When you look at it, where do your eyes go first?



*Snow Storm: Hannibal and his Army
Crossing the Alps 1812*



Slavers Throwing Overboard the Dead and Dying - Typhoon Coming On ("The Slave Ship") 1840

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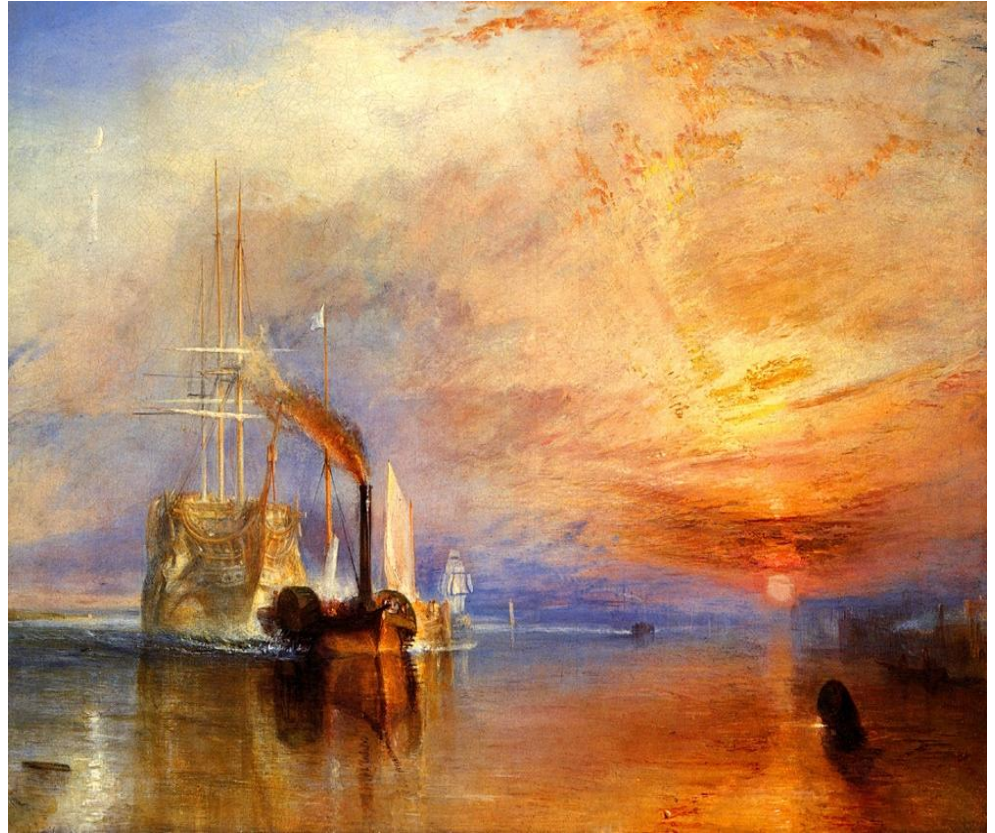
- Turner's distinctive style of painting, in which he used watercolor technique with oil paints, created lightness and atmospheric effects (like weather).
- This painting is known as "Rain, Steam and Speed." Can you see the train engine? What else can you see?
- Turner is reported to have put his head out a train window during a rainstorm and kept it there for 9 minutes! After, while dripping wet, he kept his eyes shut for 15 minutes. Do you think he was dreaming up this painting?



Rain, Steam and Speed – The Great Western Railway
1844

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- Turner is often known as the “painter of light.”
- How is light presented in this picture? Where is the light coming from?
- What different places does the light “hit”?



*The Fighting "Temeraire" Tugged to her
Last Berth to be Broken Up 1838*

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- What is the main source of light in this painting?
- Where is there other light?



Keelmen Heaving in Coals by Moonlight 1835

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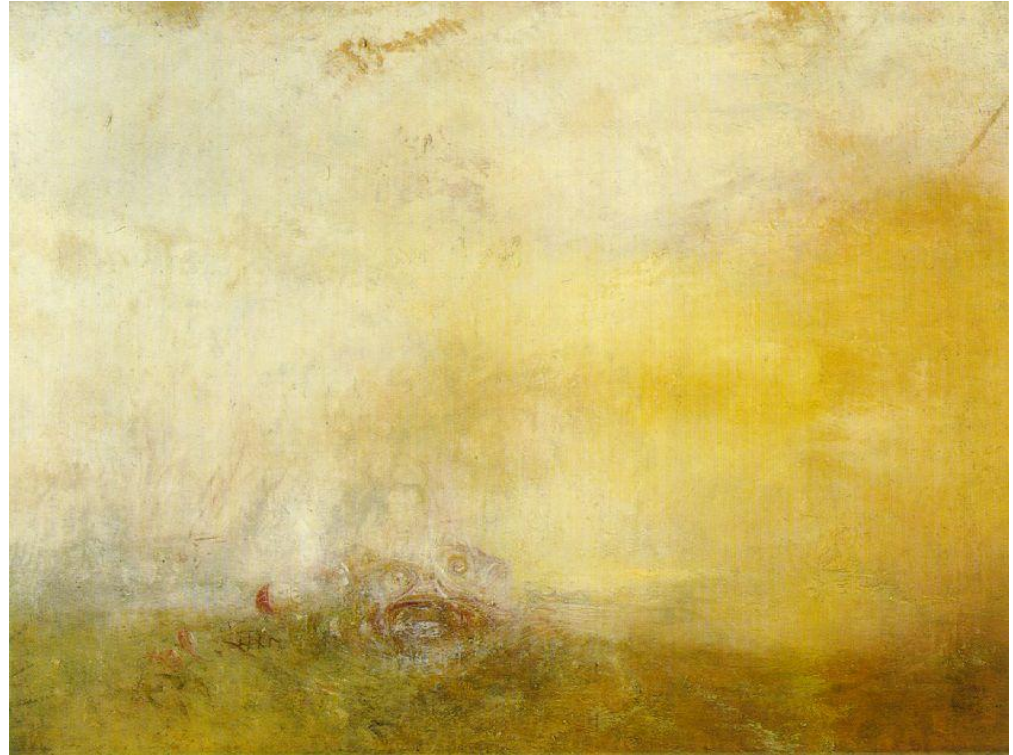
- One of Turner's unique qualities is that he did not try to paint exactly what he saw in detail, but rather he tried to paint what he *felt* about a scene. In this, he can be considered an early "Impressionist" painter.
- His best works exhibit a 'glorious, hazy wash of light,' with shapes just kind of *suggested* through the light, with not much detail.
- This is a painting he did after visiting Switzerland. Do you get the "impression" of a lake or mountains in this picture?



Der Lauerzer See mit dem Mythen 1848.

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- As he grew older Turner became eccentric (strange). Except for his father, who lived with him for 30 years, he had no close friends. He allowed no one to watch him while he painted. He gave up attending the meetings of the Academy. None of his acquaintances saw him for months at a time.
- He still held exhibitions to show his artwork, but he usually refused to sell his paintings. When he was persuaded to sell one, he was sad and depressed for days after.
- In 1850, he exhibited for the last time. One day, Turner disappeared from his house. His housekeeper, after a search of many months, found him hiding in a house in Chelsea, England. He had been ill for a long time. He died the very next day (Dec. 19, 1851).
- Turner was a brilliant and successful artist. In his lifetime, he created over 20,000 paintings and drawings! When he died, he left all his money to help other artists.



Sunrise with Sea Monsters 1845

JMW Turner – Art Response

Turner's Travels

Turner repeatedly traveled to Europe, touring Belgium, the Netherlands, Denmark, France, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy.

Inspired by these summertime trips, he filled his sketchbooks and then returned home to work on oil paintings during the winter, combining memory and imagination. In his luminous landscapes, Turner captures weather conditions as if he had made his oil paintings on the spot that very day.

Weather Report

Look carefully at these next 2 paintings made by Turner and then fill in the blanks to create a weather report for each city. *

(*National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., USA: <http://www.nga.gov/kids/scoop-turner.pdf>)

JMW Turner – Art Response

- Weather Report – Venice
- In this cityscape, Turner shows the bustling activity along the Grand Canal in Venice, Italy.
- Imagine you are sitting in the gondola (narrow boat) in the center of the painting.
- Today's forecast for Venice:
 - The sky is:
 - The water is:
 - The temperature is:



Dogano san Giorgio Citella

JMW Turner – Art Response

- Weather Report – Rotterdam
- In this seascape, Turner placed a small passenger ferry in the center of the canvas.
- Imagine you are riding in the ferry boat.
- Today's forecast for Rotterdam:
 - The clouds are:
 - The waves and wind are:
 - If you go sailing today, make sure you bring:



The Rotterdam Ferry Boat 1833

JMW Turner – Art Response

- Draw a picture of some kind of weather like Turner might paint.
- Draw a picture of what you feel like when there is a thunderstorm.
- Draw what a snowy day in Austin might feel like.
- Challenge! Draw a picture that uses perspective.