Irises
Kyra Ma, Grade 6

The sun shone over a field of colour like a blanket, as the bed of blossoms danced around. Yellow petals behind a row of blue. It was the late afternoon, with the blooming flowers pointing in different directions, sitting in a world of perfection. Just with this description, some might recognize it as *Irises*, a painting by the extraordinary painter, Vincent Van Gogh. One of his most famous paintings is called the *Starry Night*, with its yellows, greens, blues, greys, and other cooler shades. But some argue that another one of his paintings, *Irises*, is just as well done. It's on the list of the most expensive paintings ever sold at 55 million dollars, which in our current economy, would be worth 100 million dollars (1987).

Vincent Van Gogh was a talented Dutch artist. On May 8, 1889, after several incidents of hospitalization and self-mutilation, Vincent Van Gogh admitted himself to the asylum at Saint Paul-de-Mausole in Saint-Remy, in France. The asylum gave him isolation which is something he liked about it. During Van Gogh's stay, he painted around 130 paintings! Most of his paintings were inspired by nature and gardens, like his painting, *Irises*.

Irises was started on his first week of stay. Since there were no known drawings or rough sketches before he started the painting, many people think it's because Vincent considered it as a study, not a masterpiece (Van Gogh Gallery, paragraph 4). There are many theories that Irises was influenced by Japanese woodblock prints. Like many of his contemporaries, the Japanese works inspired Van Gogh. A typical element of Japanese woodblock prints is the use of black contours which was also seen in Irises (Van Gogh Gallery, paragraph 3). This technique helped bolster the painting's expressive power. *Irises* illustrates the life of a gardener's dream where all vegetation was brightly coloured and the grasses and leaves were pea green.

There was a gentle gust of wind that could make your loose hair unravel. Excitement rushed through your bones, and you could feel the warmth of the sun's rays beaming against your back as it emerged from the fluffy clouds just making the splendid scene in front of you even brighter. At first glance, you see rich crimson soil, a cozy bed for everything on top. You take in its earthy scent, it was fertile and could provide the best of nutrients. The air was moist and humid like a wet towel after taking a hot shower. You take a closer look at the blotch of citrusy orange and yellow marigolds peeping through the dense grass. In the distance, milky daisies with the mix of an assortment of blossoming flowers patiently waiting in the lush green fields. But what grabs your attention is the lonely, shy, white iris, fighting in a battle against the crowd of violet. Its delicate petals complement its flashy surroundings. The vibrant petals swaying in rhythm performing a furious dance. You could hear the subtle sound of chirping sparrows overpowered by the buzzing lawnmower sputtering into life. The fragrant floral scent rushed in as the buds of trees bloomed adding an extra splash of colour into the background. You stand up from the patch of now wilted grass you were resting upon and walk through the glistening flowers. You spread out your hands to weave through the fuzzy stems. This scene was soothing and something to look back for an escape into another world. You could see it every day, but never get bored. It was a colourful paradise that you have to cherish with all your heart.

Sadly, you can't stay here forever. You take one slow spin trying to remember every detail of this breathtaking landscape. All of a sudden, your eyelids start to feel heavier, as they droop down. The gentle breeze starts to pick up as it accelerates faster and faster until you feel like you can't breathe. After a few seconds of swarming motion, the mini-tornado comes to an abrupt halt. You blink to try to adjust to the yellow lighting and realize you arrived safely outside your bedroom door.

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Work Cited

"Irises, 1889 by Vincent Van Gogh." Vincent Van Gogh, 2009, https://www.vincentvangogh.org/irises.jsp

"Vincent Van Gogh: Irises." Van Gogh Gallery,
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