

## Glossary

**Impressionist:** a style of painting that developed in France in the nineteenth century and is based on the practice of painting out of doors rather than in a studio from sketches.

**Canvas:** A canvas is a piece of smooth linen or cotton fabric stretched over a wooden frame.

## Questions to ask:

What are the main colours you can see in this painting?

Do you think it is just starting to rain or has just finished?

Do you prefer the 'Impressionist' style of painting or the clearer style of painting?

What do you notice about the clothes people are wearing in the painting?

## About the painting:

This painting is set in a busy street in Paris, the capital city of France. Six people fill the front of the painting. On the right-hand side are a mother and her three daughters, on the left-hand side there is a man looking over the shoulder of a woman, who is carrying a bandbox. Bandboxes were used to carry hats and you can see some of the women in the painting wearing hats decorated with flowers and feathers.

A crowd of people behind them almost completely blocks out the view of the street beyond. The top quarter of the picture is mostly filled by a canopy of umbrellas.

Two people have been painted as if they are looking out of the painting at us. The young girl with her wooden hoop and the lady carrying the bandbox.

The artist – Pierre – painted these two figures at different times, his style as a painter changed over that period, which is why the people on the right look a little different to the people on the left.

The little girl and her family on the right have been painted in the 'Impressionist' style. Pierre used a brush to apply lots of little touches of bright colours to the canvas, to create a soft and feathery style. The lady on the left was painted about four years later, when Pierre has changed his style of painting to become more clear and precise. This lady has much more clearly defined edges to her face and dress, compared to the little girl.

After Pierre had started this painting in 1881, he went on a trip to Italy, where he looked at the paintings of other artists and was inspired by them to change his style of painting. This is perhaps why, when he returned from his journey, he re-painted part of this painting in his new style. He also wanted to finish it before a big exhibition in New York in 1886.

Artist:

**Pierre-Auguste Renoir**

Title:

**'The Umbrellas'**

When it was painted: **1881-6**

What is it made of:

**Oil paints on canvas.**

