

# MONA LISA ATTACK

June 10th, 2022

**WARM-UP QUESTIONS:** *Discuss the following questions with your partner(s).*

1. What pieces of art are world famous? Do you like or dislike them? Why?
2. Read the headline above. Have you heard this news story? If so, say what you know. If not, can you guess what it is about?

**VOCABULARY:** *Match the following vocabulary words with a description. Use a dictionary if you need to.*

- |                |                                                   |
|----------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1. House       | a) to pretend to be                               |
| 2. Draw        | b) a painting or drawing of a person              |
| 3. Pose as     | c) relating to mental health                      |
| 4. Enigmatic   | d) to keep                                        |
| 5. Portrait    | e) judging something                              |
| 6. Tempting    | f) to attract, to pull in                         |
| 7. Attempted   | g) something that people want to have or do       |
| 8. Vandalism   | h) damaging other people's property               |
| 9. Psychiatric | i) mysterious, hard to understand                 |
| 10. Evaluation | j) something somebody tried to do without success |

---

**LISTEN:** *Listen to the audio track on [eslnewsstories.com](http://eslnewsstories.com) or to a reader of the text. Try to fill in the missing words. Then check your answers with the full text.*

One of the most famous artworks in the \_\_\_\_\_, the Mona Lisa, was recently attacked. Housed in the Louvre in Paris, the painting of a barely smiling woman draws thousands of visitors per day. One of those visitors, a man posing as an old \_\_\_\_\_ in a wheelchair, got close to the painting, stood up, and tried to rub a cake into it.

It is not the first time that the painting has been attacked. Over the years, acid, a rock, red paint, and a coffee cup have all been \_\_\_\_\_ at the piece of art. However, since 1956, none of the attacks have damaged the picture, thanks to protective bulletproof glass.

Why is the enigmatic \_\_\_\_\_ by Leonardo da Vinci such a popular target? The fame that brings in visitors also makes the painting a tempting target for protest. People know that they can get \_\_\_\_\_ by attacking such a well-known work of art.

In this recent case of attempted vandalism, based on his post-attack comments, the attacker seemed to be protesting environmental damage to our planet. He was \_\_\_\_\_ away by police for psychiatric evaluation.

**WORD FORMS:** Fill in different forms for the vocabulary from the article. Use a dictionary if you need to. Where there is an **x**, the word is unimportant for ESL students, has a different meaning, or doesn't exist. Sometimes there are multiple possible answers, and sometimes the adjective form is a past or present participle.

VERB	ADJECTIVE	ADVERB	NOUN
house		x	
draw		x	
x	enigmatic		
	x	x	portrait
	tempting		
	attempted	x	
		x	vandalism
		x	evaluation

One of the most famous artworks in the world, the Mona Lisa, was recently attacked. Housed in the Louvre in Paris, the painting of a barely smiling woman draws thousands of visitors per day. One of those visitors, a man posing as an old woman in a wheelchair, got close to the painting, stood up, and tried to rub a cake into it.

It is not the first time that the painting has been attacked. Over the years, acid, a rock, red paint, and a coffee cup have all been thrown at the piece of art. However, since 1956, none of the attacks have damaged the picture, thanks to protective bulletproof glass.

Why is the enigmatic portrait by Leonardo da Vinci such a popular target? The fame that brings in visitors also makes the painting a tempting target for protest. People know that they can get attention by attacking such a well-known work of art.

In this recent case of attempted vandalism, based on his post-attack comments, the attacker seemed to be protesting environmental damage to our planet. He was taken away by police for psychiatric evaluation.

Sources: cnet.com, wikipedia.org, cnn.com, npr.org  
For source links, see the article on [ESLNewsStories.com](http://ESLNewsStories.com)

**COMPREHENSION:** *Decide if the following are true (T) or false (F), and then discuss your answers with your partner(s).*

1. The Mona Lisa is kept in the Louvre. ( T / F )
2. A woman, dressed as a man, attacked the Mona Lisa. ( T / F )
3. The Mona Lisa is frequently damaged. ( T / F )
4. The Mona Lisa was painted by Leonardo da Vinci. ( T / F )

**COMPLETE:** *Re-order the following sentences. Capitalize certain words and add punctuation.*

1. has / mysterious / smile / mona lisa / the / a
- 

2. man / the / worried / environment / is / the / about
- 

**DISCUSSION:** *Discuss the following questions with your partner(s). Try to speak in sentences and ask follow-up questions.*

1. How easy is it for you to smile for a photograph? What is your smile like?
2. Have you been to Paris? If so, what did you see and do there? If not, are you interested in going to Paris? For what?
3. Do you like the Mona Lisa? Why is it or is it not a good painting, in your opinion?
4. Why else is Leonardo da Vinci famous?
5. Do you like to go to galleries and museums? Why or why not?
6. Have you tried painting? Was it enjoyable? How skillful are you?
7. Is there a lot of vandalism in your city or town? Why do people damage other people's property?
8. What are the pros and cons of this form of protest?
9. What issues should people be protesting about these days?
10. What could be thrown at the Mona Lisa that has not already been thrown?

**WRITING:** Write a paragraph that clearly states your opinion on the above news article. Give reasons for your opinion.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**ANSWERS**

VOCABULARY: 1-d, 2-f, 3-a, 4-i, 5-b, 6-g, 7-j, 8-h, 9-c, 10-e

WORD FORMS: housed, house, drawing, draw, enigmatically, enigma, portray, tempt, temptingly, temptation, attempt, attempt, vandalize, vandalized, evaluate, evaluated

COMPREHENSION: 1-T, 2-F, 3-F, 4-T

COMPLETE: 1. The Mona Lisa has a mysterious smile. 2. The man is worried about the environment.