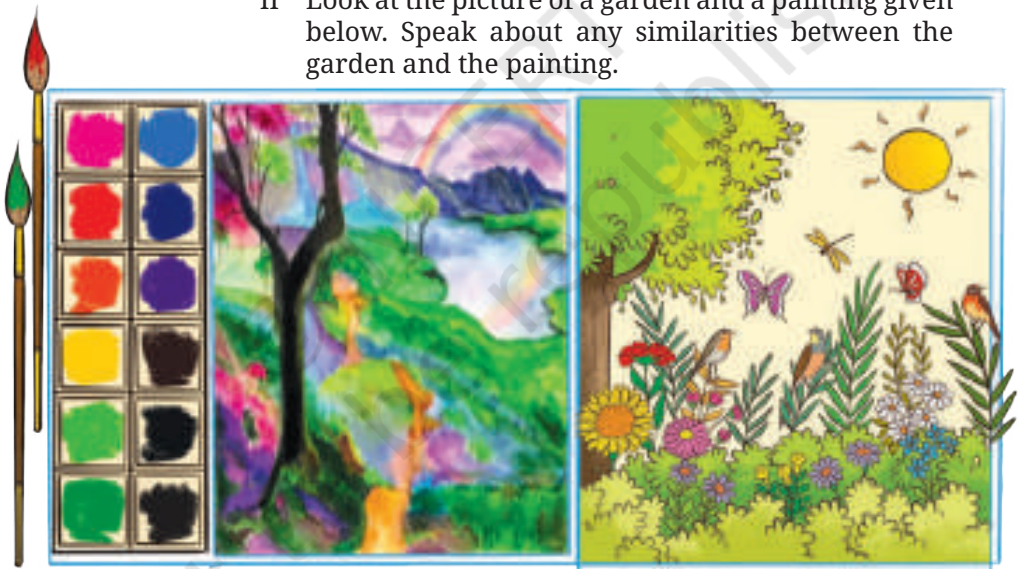


# Canvas of Soil



## Reflect and Respond

- I Work in pairs. Discuss what all you see in a garden. Think of the colours you see and where you see them. Share your responses with your teacher.
- II Look at the picture of a garden and a painting given below. Speak about any similarities between the garden and the painting.



Speak using the following:

- ✿ Just as a garden \_\_\_\_\_, similarly, a painting \_\_\_\_\_
- ✿ A garden and a painting, both \_\_\_\_\_.
- ✿ \_\_\_\_\_ is common to both a garden and a painting.
- ✿ Like a garden, a painting too \_\_\_\_\_.



III Let us acquaint ourselves with the meanings of palette, hue, and canvas.

1. **Palette:** a thin oval or rectangular board or tablet that a painter holds and mixes colours on.
2. **Hue:** shade of a colour
3. **Canvas:** (here) painting

Now, look at the painting given above and identify palette, canvas, and select a hue.



### Reading for Appreciation

Palette of earth, rich and deep,  
Where dreams of gardeners seep.  
Brushstrokes of seeds, planted true,  
Awaiting spring's vibrant hue.

Blossoms bloom, a painted sight,  
Dancing in the morning light.  
Shades of green, red, and blue,  
Nature's artwork, ever new.

Each plot, a canvas wide,  
Where art and life coincide.  
In the hands of those who till,  
Gardens become paintings still.

MAYA ANTHONY



### Check Your Understanding

I Read the poem again and complete the summary of each stanza by filling in the blanks.

1. The \_\_\_\_\_ is portrayed as a rich palette where gardeners' \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ flourish in the form of \_\_\_\_\_, awaiting spring.



2. The garden flowers \_\_\_\_\_ into a beautiful display of different b \_\_\_\_\_ m s, resembling a \_\_\_\_\_ by Mother Nature, in the light of morning.

3. Each garden is likened to a wide \_\_\_\_\_ n \_\_\_\_\_ s, integrating art and \_\_\_\_\_. Through the efforts of gardeners, gardens transform into still-life \_\_\_\_\_.

II Select the appropriate title for each stanza from those given below. There are two extra titles.

1. Nature's Work of Art
2. Sweet-smelling Blossoms
3. Gardens as Living Canvases
4. Earth and Possibilities
5. The Painter's Canvas

III Match the poetic devices in Column 1 to the examples in Column 2. Discuss your responses in pairs. Then share the responses with your classmates and teacher.

Column 1	Column 2
1. Imagery [mind pictures]	(i) appreciative
2. Metaphor [comparison without use of 'like' or 'as']	(ii) AABB
3. Rhyme Scheme	(iii) 'Blossoms bloom'
4. Tone [what the poet feels]	(iv) colours, brushstrokes, blossoms, shades of green
5. Mood [what the reader feels]	(v) a gardener



6. Speaker	(vi) garden as a painting, plot as canvas, seeds as brushstrokes
7. Alliteration [same consonant sound]	(vii) joyful

The poem may be interpreted as an **allegory**.

An allegory is a literary device used to express larger ideas than those presented without explicitly stating them. Allegory operates on two levels—the surface meaning and the deeper meaning.

Upon considering this poem as an allegory, the garden could symbolise various aspects of life or nature.

- ✿ Life's journey and growth—The garden, with its changing seasons and blooming flowers, could represent the journey of life, growth, and the cyclical nature of existence.
- ✿ Harmony and diversity—The interaction of different colours in the garden could symbolise the beauty and importance of diversity and harmony in our world.



### Critical Reflection

I Read the given extracts from the poem and answer the questions that follow.

1. *Brushstrokes of seeds, planted true,  
Awaiting spring's vibrant hue.*

(i) The poet has used a metaphor in 'Brushstrokes of seeds'. Which option from those given below uses a metaphor?

- A. Her mother's heart heard her heartfelt request with kindness.
- B. She has a heart of gold.



C. Her heart did a dance of joy on seeing the new doll.

D. She has a very kind heart.

(ii) Complete the sentence appropriately.

The phrase 'planted true' is significant because it implies \_\_\_\_\_.

(iii) Why has the poet used the word 'hue' instead of 'colours' in the extract?

(iv) Complete the following analogy correctly with a word from the extract.

Summer: hot :: Spring : \_\_\_\_\_

(v) Read the Assertion (A) and the Reason (R) and select the option that is correctly suited.

(A): Gardeners wait for Spring.

(R): Gardens are worth painting in Spring.

A. Both (A) and (R) are true and (R) is the correct explanation of (A).

B. Both (A) and (R) are true but (R) is not the correct explanation of (A).

C. (A) is true but (R) is false.

D. (A) is false but (R) is true.

2. *Each plot, a canvas wide,  
Where art and life coincide.*

(i) What does 'Each plot' refer to in this extract?

(ii) Select which option imitates the rhyme scheme of the extract.

A. beautiful and clear  
laughter and cheer

B. beautiful and clear  
laughter and tears

(iii) Select the line from the extract that conveys that gardening blends aesthetic beauty with natural growth.



(iv) Complete the following sentence appropriately.

The plot is likened to a canvas suggesting that \_\_\_\_\_.

(v) Why has the poet most likely used the word 'wide' instead of 'long' in 'canvas wide'?

II Give reasons for the comparisons made by the poet in the poem.

1. A painter is compared to a gardener because \_\_\_\_\_.

2. A palette is like earth as \_\_\_\_\_.

3. The brushstrokes are like seeds because \_\_\_\_\_.

4. A canvas is similar to a garden plot as \_\_\_\_\_.

III Answer the following questions.

1. How does the metaphor 'Brushstrokes of seeds', enhance the understanding of gardening as an art form?

2. What can you infer about the poet's perspective on the relationship between nature and creativity from the following lines?

'Each plot, a canvas wide,/Where art and life coincide.'

3. Do you think the imagery in the poem successfully paints a vivid picture in the reader's mind? If yes, why? If no, why not?

4. Support the view that the poet's mention of the colour yellow, besides red, blue and green, would have lent effectively to the imagery.

5. Considering the line 'Gardens become paintings still', what can you interpret about the poet's view on the timelessness of nature's beauty?

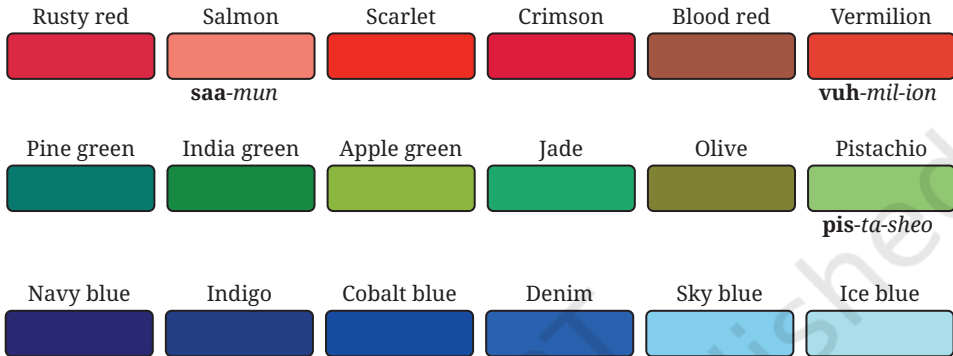
6. Justify the title of the poem, 'Canvas of Soil'.





## Vocabulary in Context

- I The poet refers to the shades of **green**, **red**, and **blue** in the poem. Let us read some of the names of different shades of these colours.



Now, Discuss in pairs, any two things that you can associate with these colours.

- II You have studied painting-related words like palette, brushstrokes, shades, hue, colours, and canvas. Now, read the following paragraph and discuss in pairs what the underlined painting-related words might mean. Discuss this way:

I think \_\_\_\_\_ means \_\_\_\_\_ because the passage talks about \_\_\_\_\_.

Example: I think portrait means a picture of someone's face because the passage talks about capturing a friend's features.

In the art studio, young painters eagerly approached their easels, each framing a canvas that they had to work on. The teacher encouraged them to experiment with a diverse tonal range, playing with shades and hues to bring their paintings to life. One student focused on a detailed portrait, capturing his friend's features, first with careful underpainting and then filling the final colours. Another student worked on a mural, depicting a Spring Day on the right wall of the classroom. The room continued to buzz with artistic energy.





## Listen and Respond

- I You will listen to a young girl describe her school garden. As you listen identify which of the following 1–3, she **does not** talk about. (Transcript for teacher on page 264)



1.

2.

3.

- II You will once again listen to the young girl. As you listen, circle the correct answer from the options given below.

Statements	Options		
1. The colour of flowers in the first row	white	red	pink
2. The type of flowers in the second row	marigold	jasmine	rose
3. Position of the type of the useful plants	left corners	right corners	left and right corners
4. The number of potted evergreen plants	15	20	25
5. The paint colour on the bricks bordering the garden	black and white	red and black	white and red



6. Type of tree in the centre of the garden	neem	peepal	banyan
7. Things created with waste material	dustbins	plant name boards	bird houses



## Speaking Activity

- I People wish to have a garden at home. Some like a flower garden and some a vegetable garden. Think and note some advantages of both these types, as gardens for homes.
- II Would you like to have a flower garden or a vegetable garden at home? Why?

Take turns with your partner and speak your points aloud, one by one, by using the given sentence prompts to express your preference, with reasons.

- ☀ I prefer \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ because ...
- ☀ For me , it is a \_\_\_\_\_ instead of a \_\_\_\_\_ due to ...
- ☀ If I had a choice I'd rather have a \_\_\_\_\_ than a \_\_\_\_\_ as ...
- ☀ I would prefer \_\_\_\_\_ rather than \_\_\_\_\_ since ...



## Writing Task

- I Write a descriptive piece of two to three paragraphs describing the details and colours in the garden you have visited.
- ☀ Focus on how different shades of blue, red, and green interact, create contrast, and bring the garden to life.
  - ☀ Pay attention to details like the texture of petals, the varying greens of leaves, and the way light affects the colours.





## Learning Beyond the Text

### I Mini-Project

**Objective:** Explore the multifaceted world of gardens—their design, cultural significance, artistic inspiration, and the art of gardening itself.

**Duration:** This project can span over a few weeks, allowing students adequate time for research and creative processes.

Select any TWO assignments. Any one from 1 or 2, and any one from 3 or 4

(1)

- ✿ Do research and collect information on any FIVE famous gardens of India, such as Amrit Udyan, Brindavan Gardens, and many others.
- ✿ Focus on history, design elements, and cultural significance.
- ✿ Prepare a short report and make a presentation.

(2)

- ✿ Explore various art forms (painting, sculpture) inspired by gardens. Select an art piece and analyse how the garden is represented.
- ✿ Create a visual or written response inspired by the garden.

(3)

### Design your own garden

- ✿ Design a garden on paper or using digital tools.
- ✿ Incorporate elements and artistic inspirations learned from parts (1)/(2).
- ✿ Present your choices in design and artistic influences to the class.



(4)

### Interview with a Gardener or Landscaping Expert

- ✿ Approach a local gardener or a landscaping expert for an interview.
  - ✿ Prepare questions focussed on understanding the practical aspects of gardening/landscaping.
  - ✿ Write a summary of your experience.
- II You must have read poems and songs about beauty of nature and different seasons in English and in your own language. Now, read and enjoy the poem given below.

## A Sea of Foliage Girds Our Garden Round

A sea of foliage girds our garden round,  
But not a sea of dull unvaried green,  
Sharp contrasts of all colours here are seen;  
The light-green graceful tamarinds abound  
Amid the mango clumps of green profound,  
And palms arise, like pillars gray, between;  
And o'er the quiet pools the seemuls lean,  
Red-red, and startling like a trumpet's sound.  
But nothing can be lovelier than the ranges  
Of bamboos to the eastward, when the moon  
Looks through their gaps, and the white lotus  
changes  
Into a cup of silver. One might swoon  
Drunken with beauty then, or gaze and gaze  
On a primeval Eden, in amaze.

TORU DUTT

