

1. The words below appear in the text in Exercise 2. Find the words and guess their meanings in your own language. Use a dictionary to check your guesses.

1. sunset 3. dust
2. evidence 4. bright

2. Read the text. Then answer the questions.

Beautiful Landscapes – More Than Just a Painting

When most people look at a painting of a sunset, they see a beautiful work of art. When Professor Christos Zerefos looks at a painting of a sunset, he sees valuable scientific evidence. He believes that these paintings contain important information about the effect of volcanoes on the climate.

Scientists know that after a volcanic eruption, sunsets are very red. This is caused from the dust and ash that is sent into the sky. Volcanoes also lower the temperature of the Earth.

Professor Zerefos and his team decided to study paintings of sunsets before and after volcanic eruptions. Red sunsets are a sign of polluted skies, so the scientists believed that landscapes that were painted around the times of major volcanic eruptions would have bright red sunsets. They wanted to use the paintings to measure how the volcanoes had affected the climate in the past.

The team studied 554 watercolours and oils of sunsets that were painted between 1500 and 1900. The scientists used a computer to calculate the amount of red in each picture. They found that the sunsets that were painted after a volcanic eruption were bright red.

Many scientists are not convinced by this theory. According to them, it is impossible to make scientific conclusions based on art that was painted so long ago, because it is possible that the colours have changed since they were originally painted. What is more, artists often try to make something look very impressive when they paint. As a result, they may not always paint an accurate picture of nature.

Professor Zerefos disagrees. He is certain that artists accurately copy the actual colours of the sunsets they see. He is now studying paintings that were painted in the 20th century.

So the next time you look at a painting of a beautiful sunset, examine the colours more carefully.

1. Why did Professor Zerefos decide to study paintings of sunsets?
2. Why are sunsets very red after a volcanic eruption?
3. Why do some scientists disagree with this study?
4. Explain the meaning of the title.

5 Extension

3. Complete first part of the sentences using the appropriate passive form of the verb in brackets. Then complete the second part of the sentences according to the information found in the text.

1. The Earth's temperature (lower) by
2. In the past, bright red sunsets (paint)
3. In the study, a computer (use) to
4. According to some scientists, nature (not copy)

4. Describe a painting that you have seen. Explain why you like it and how it makes you feel.