

AUDIO SCRIPT

[F1= Female Teacher; M1= Male Guest Speaker; F2= Female Student; M2= Male Student]

F1: Good morning, students. This week, we're discussing the business of art. Now, most artworks are copyrighted. An artist owns his or her work. We can't publish a photo of an artwork without the permission of the artist or the artist's representative. That's equivalent to stealing. Today, I've invited Dr. Louis Arnold, the Director of the City Art Gallery, to chat about forgery. He'll explain what that means. Dr. Arnold, welcome.

M1: Thank you. Since many of you will be working artists, this is an important topic to be aware of. In the art world, sometimes we see artworks in the style of a famous artist, but the artist didn't make them. Someone copies the famous artist and sells the work as the real thing. The paintings are fakes. This is called *forgery*. Now, many forgers, as we call the people who produce these works ...

F2: Excuse me, Dr. Arnold. What's the difference between a forger and a plagiarist?

M1: Well, plagiarists copy a work and call it their own. Forgers copy a work and pretend someone else did it. Can you see the difference? I'm sure all of you have at some time copied the style of an artist you admire, and that's fine. But forgers go one step further. They have realized it is difficult to make a living as an artist, so they start producing artworks in the style of a famous artist and selling the work at very high prices. The artists are typically dead, so they aren't around to say they didn't paint it.

F2: Do you mean someone like Van Gogh or Vermeer?

M1: Yes, exactly. The 17th-century Dutch painter Vermeer is an excellent example. A well-known forger was Han van Meegeren. In the 1930s, Van Meegeren painted six fake Vermeers and sold them for \$60 million. Another question?

M2: Do you mean that the people who bought the paintings really thought they were by Vermeer?

M1: That's right.

M2: But couldn't they see that the paintings were new?

M1: Well, forgers are very clever. They use techniques to make the paintings look old. Van Meegeren used 17th-century formulas to mix his own paints.

M2: What do you mean by *formulas*?

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M1: Well, a formula is like a recipe. Artists in the 17th century made their own paints because paints weren't available in stores. After finishing a painting, Van Meegeren baked it in an oven to harden the paint. Then he rolled over the painting with a device to cause old-looking cracks. He then filled the cracks with black ink. These techniques made the paintings look hundreds of years old. That's why people who sell art must guarantee that a painting is authentic, or real, and not a fake. In 1947, Van Meegeren was discovered to be a forger and arrested. Now, another famous forger was Elmyr de Hory, who forged 1,000 paintings and sold them to art galleries all over the world ...