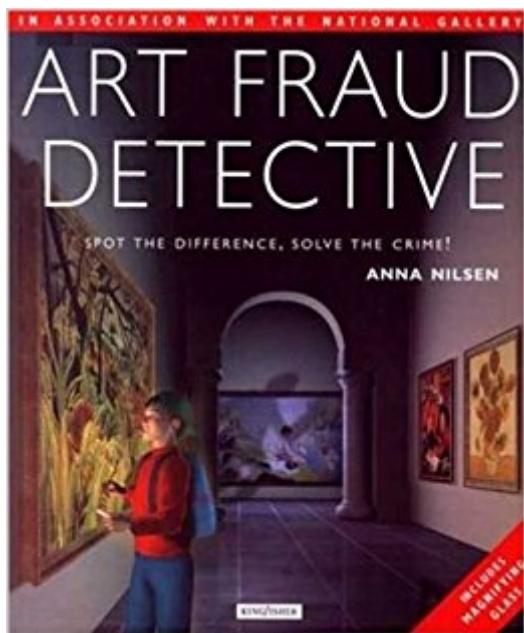


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# Art Fraud Detective: Spot The Difference, Solve The Crime!



## Synopsis

The Museum of Art has a big problem. Some of the museum's priceless masterpieces have been stolen and replaced by cunning forgeries! Are your eyes sharp enough to spot the differences between the fake and the real Rousseau? Hone your detective skills and find the tell-tale clues that will help the police track down the master forgers, and bring back the missing masterpieces. This one-of-a-kind book combines a mystery story, fun spot-the-difference puzzles, and a fantastic introduction to some of the world's greatest art. Guaranteed to enthrall children of all ages, *Art Fraud Detective* includes historical information on each painting, tips on the techniques of the Old Masters, and a glossary of art terms. Features art by: Rembrandt; Constable; Monet; Picasso; Raphael; Van Gogh; and more!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 4-8-A clever "spot the difference" book that also serves as a good introduction to art history. Using a comic-strip format, Nilsen alerts readers to the fact that 30 of these 34 paintings are fakes. A double spread identifies the 16 suspected forgers, the symbol their particular gang hides on each forgery, and the number of changes (one to four) they deliberately added to each painting. The premise is to figure out which character forged which classic piece, and to determine which one of them snatched. The paintings, which include Georges Seurat's *Bathers at Asnières* and Vincent van Gogh's *Sunflowers*, are ingeniously depicted in their original and altered forms on split pages featuring the forgeries above and the museum catalog below. Readers are supposed to match up the forger with the artwork (a magnifying glass enables them to verify their detective work). The

catalog pages briefly describe the artists' lives, their work, and the showcased piece. This approach should prove popular; it's something of a Where's Waldo (Candlewick) for older children. Although the paintings date from the 15th to the 20th century, no American artwork is presented. Carol Fazioli, formerly at The Brearley School, New York City Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 4-6. Children who like hunting for small differences in detailed pictures may enjoy this large-format book, produced in association with England's National Gallery. In the framework story, a security guard at "the Museum of Art," which happens to have a fine collection of 34 European masterpieces, asks young readers to play detective. He has just received a call telling him that 30 of these works are fakes. By closely comparing the museum's paintings with pictures of the originals, readers can discover which are real and (since each forger leaves a distinctive trademark) who made each forgery. The reproduction of the paintings is excellent, and the paragraphs of information about the paintings, by artists such as Botticelli, Holbein, da Vinci, Picasso, Turner, and van Gogh, are well-written and entertaining. It remains to be seen, though, whether children will have the patience to match both versions of the painting, search for the tiny clues, and draw conclusions about the forgers. Still, an original effort in art appreciation. Carolyn Phelan Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

OK, so this book wasn't at all what I expected. I suppose I thought it would best, filled with silly anecdotes about artists along with a few poorly drawn cartoons and a few easy paragraphs on art history. Not so! This is a book about art and great artists first and foremost. Then, there are a few quirky surprises. The book comes with an attached magnifier, so that you can review the works and the "fakes" up close. But this book also has beautifully printed informational pages "The Museum of Art Catalog," that details the works of some of the great masters. You'll find those you know (Botticelli, Degas, Monet, etc.), but also perhaps some lesser known artists (Hooch, Morisot, Uccello). All in all, it's a very fine book about art with an interesting twist. But don't buy it for your child, unless said child is +/- 15, or a budding art protege. Better still, buy it for yourself. If art is your thing, you'll be thrilled.

This book was a lot of fun for my son and I. Readers are told that four gangs of forgers have replaced most of an art museum's paintings, and only we can help figure out which are real and which are forged. Using a magnifying glass, you compare 8" by 5" four color paintings to 4" by 4" originals, looking for changes (such as missing items or objects with different coloration). This

allows you to fill in a chart which allows you to deduce the forgers, the snitch and the unchanged paintings, thereby saving the museum. 34 paintings are here, by Van Eyck, Piero, Uccello, Botticelli, Raphael, Leonardo, Gossaert, Massys, Holbein, Marinus, Brueghel, Avercamp, Brugghen, Rembrandt, Steenwyck, Velde, Hooch, Vermeer, Chardin, Perronneau, Gainsborough, Turner, Constable, Watteau, Os, Delaroche, Ingres, Morisot, Degas, Monet, Rousseau, Seurat, Van Gogh and Picasso. Each painting is accompanied by a couple of paragraphs about the artist and the painting. We both enjoyed finding the mistakes, filling out the chart and solving the puzzle; the game also stimulated a discussion of painting and artists. It took us a few sessions to solve everything, but it was an enjoyable time. I would buy other books by this author.

I bought up a bunch of puzzle books of all types to keep my mind active after having foot surgery. By far this is my favorite. I have never seen anything quite like it. If you like the games Clue or Masterpiece both of which I do then this is the book for you. You get to learn the history and facts of very famous works of art. You then become a detective and have to figure out which prints are fakes and which are real and who forged them. It comes with a plastic magnifying glass. You make a chart and head out to find who did it. It is challenging enough for an adult to have fun but I am sure very doable for children too. Adults don't think these are just for kids. Great for keeping your mind sharp.

I love the idea of this book. Looking for forgeries is a great combination of i spy and art history. Given the 7-10 age range I wish I had known it included Delaroche's The Execution of Lady Jane Grey. It depicts the blindfolded Lady Jane being helped to put her head on the block as the executioner stands nearby with his ax. If you have a younger/more sensitive child I would suggest previewing this painting to decide if it is something your child is ready for. Overall I think it is a lot of fun.

My 9 year old son would normally have no interest in these types of great art masterpieces. He is much more interested in cartoons and comic books! However, the premise of the book, being an art fraud detective searching for clues to solve a crime, made the whole book extremely appealing. (Well - not the whole book. He could hardly stand to look at "A Grotesque Old Woman," by Massys.) We spent many sessions over the course of about 4 months studying these paintings. It was easy enough for him to find clues that he felt encouraged, and hard enough that he/we had to really search for some of the clues, repeatedly. We studied the paintings enough that he developed strong opinions of what he liked and didn't like, and to my surprise he liked the Picasso the best. He could see a lot with his imagination in the Picasso. When we finished the book, he said that he'd like to go

to an art museum and see some real paintings like this. This is the first time I've been able to get him interested in this, and I'm an artist with a degree in fine arts, so I've tried other ways and this has worked the best.

Our kids love solving mystery games. They seem to be having a lot of fun with this book, but getting them started was a little slow: there is a clue-tracker sheet that one must create before moving on with the book and, for some reason, our girls (9 and 12) seemed a little put off by this task. But, now they have done that and seem very engrossed in the art scandal. My only recommendation is to 1. Maybe plan to help your kids create this clue-tracker sheet or, 2. The publisher should include it as a tear-out item in the book (which probably adds to production cost).

What a unique and interesting book. Great concept for the kids to learn about art in a different way.

I bought this book for my very bright 10 year old granddaughter's birthday. My friend who is a librarian had bought it for her 12 year old niece and said she loved it and has asked if there are anymore in the series which there are. My daughter taped the answer pages together so she couldn't look at the answers and says that my granddaughter can't put it down. She loves it and I am willing to bet she will ask for the next in the series when she finishes Art Fraud Detective. This book is a great way to foster interest in art and artists.

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