

# The Battle of San Romano

c.1438-40

by Paolo Uccello

Term 6 Art project WEEK 3

# Hidden Symbols in Paintings



Paolo Uccello, *Niccolò Mauruzi da Tolentino at the Battle of San Romano*, c. 1438-40, Rm 59 The National Gallery, London





## Does this look like a real battle?

- Knowing who would be looking at the painting, the artist has carefully tailored it to suit his audience.
- The knights look more like the upper classes would expect them to - not at a battle, but at a parade or tournament.
- The helmets and clothing are more elaborate and not really practical.
- The battle shows no blood - it is more like a costume drama that has sanitised the conflict for its audience



# Hidden Symbols

Look for the hidden symbols....





# Possible Explanations for the Hidden Symbols

The hedgerow in the middle of the painting is laden with oranges, roses, and a few pomegranates (on the far right). It is likely symbolic, not something the soldiers would have fought alongside:



The orange was seen as a fruit of paradise



The rose was a symbol for martyrdom (dying for your faith)

All three add colour and decoration, but they may well also give deeper meaning to the battle scene.



The pomegranate often represented rebirth.

# Task 1: Thinking and reflecting:

Answer the following questions:

1. Now that you have looked closely at the painting and understand a bit more about it, has your opinion of it changed?
2. Do you like it more?
3. What is your favourite part of the painting?

# **TASK 2:** Create a piece of art about some fruit or foliage and flowers

1. Choose either to make a drawing, painting, photograph, collage, print or model of flowers, fruit and/or foliage.

## Ideas:

- Use images from the internet or newspapers and magazines to get creative.



- Look or work outside for inspiration



- Create a still life to draw from

