

All About...

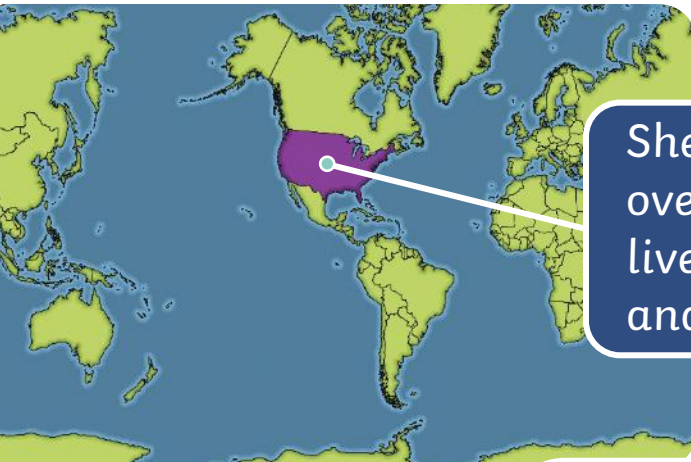
Alma Thomas

October
Artist of
the Month



Who Was Alma Thomas?

Alma Thomas was a famous artist.



She was born in the USA over 100 years ago and lived with her mum, dad and 3 sisters.

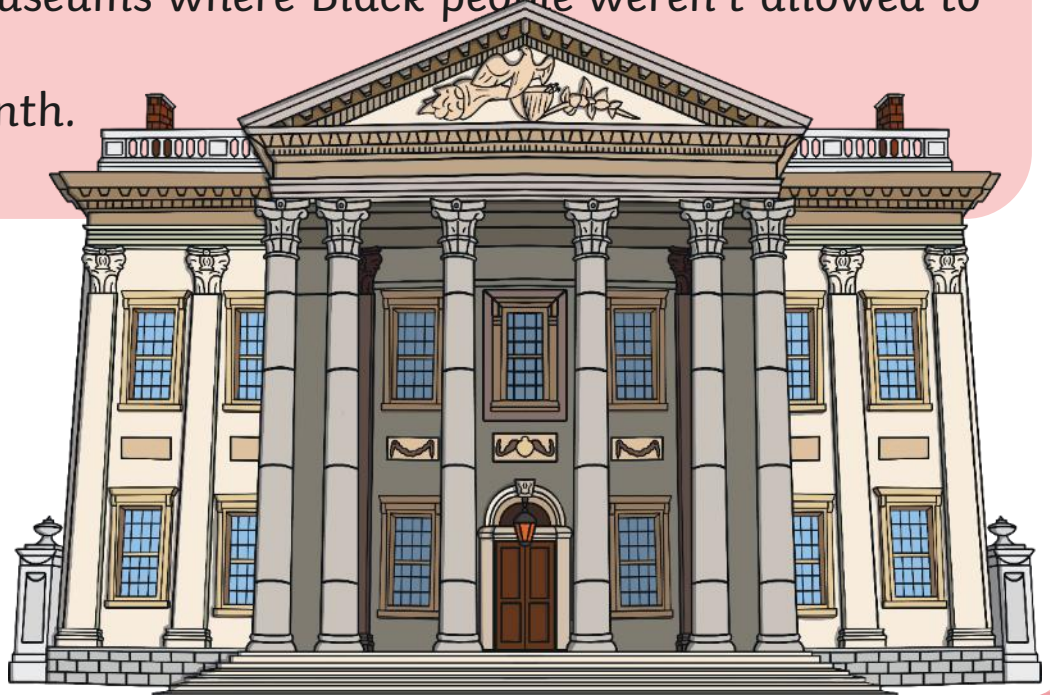
When Alma was little, she loved art and was always making things like puppets. When she was young, Alma enjoyed the colours and light of nature and the way the wind made leaves move.



Early Challenges

Although Alma loved art from an early age, she wasn't allowed to visit art galleries. This was because Alma was Black. Where Alma lived, Black people were often treated unfairly. They weren't allowed to sit in certain areas in parks and on buses and there were many places, such as restaurants, cinemas and museums where Black people weren't allowed to go at all.

October is Black History Month.



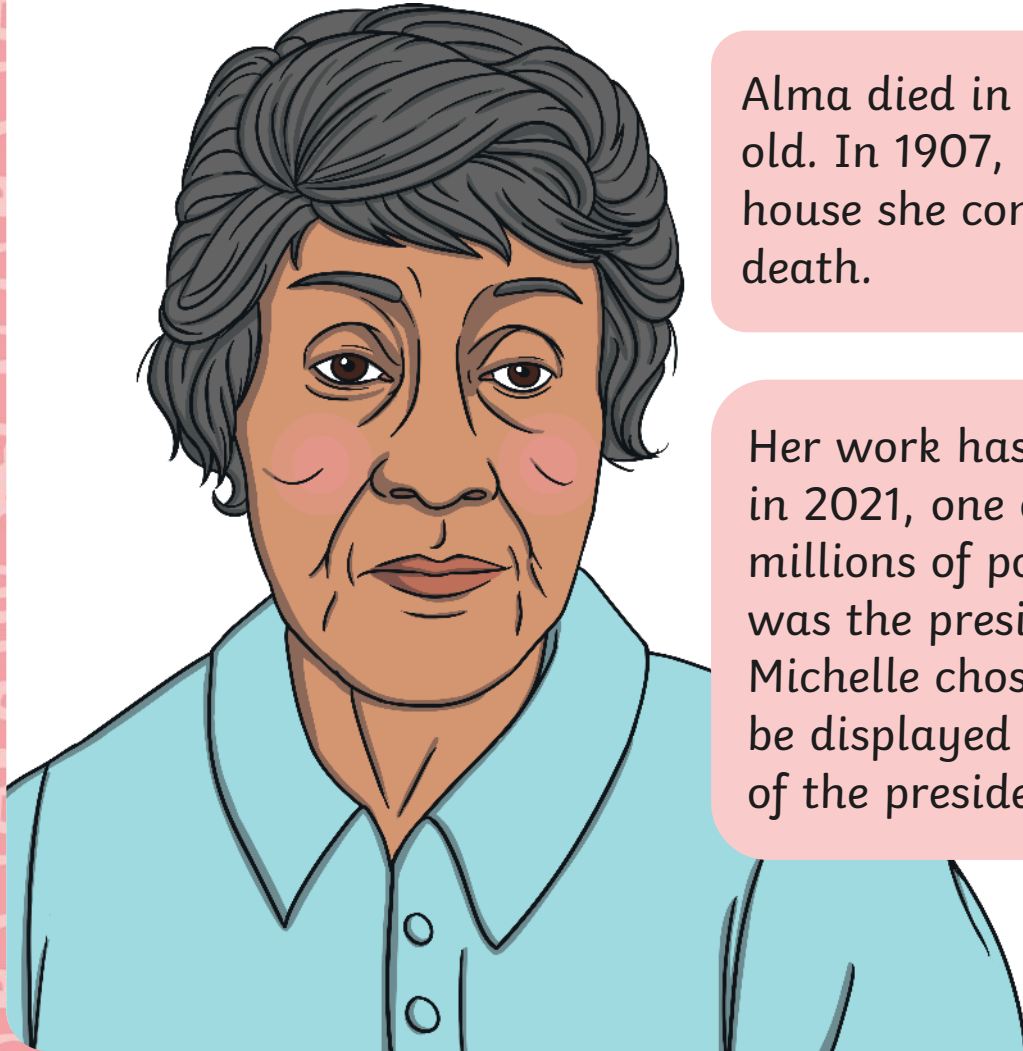
Teaching

After graduating from high school, Alma taught young children for seven years. When she was 30 years old, she decided to study at university. She started a **degree** in home economics but then later changed to art. It is thought that she was one of the first Black women to get a degree in art.

After university, Alma became an art teacher for 11 to 13 year olds. The school she taught at was only for Black pupils. Black and White children had to go to different schools. The White children got better school supplies like books. Alma had to try her best with school supplies that were not that good.



Alma Thomas



Alma died in 1978, when she was 86 years old. In 1907, her family had moved into the house she continued to live in until her death.

Her work has continued to be popular and in 2021, one of her paintings was sold for millions of pounds. When Barack Obama was the president of the USA, his wife Michelle chose two of Alma's paintings to be displayed in the White House, the home of the president and family.

What Materials Did Alma Use?

Alma painted using **watercolours**, a water-based paint that is easy to blend and dries quickly.

She also used **acrylics**, a paint which shows strong, bright colours and dries quickly.

Alma created art on large pieces of materials stretched over frames, called **canvasses**.

Let's have a look at some of Alma's paintings.



Abstract Art

What do you think the picture is trying to show?

What different colours can you see?

Can you name any shapes?

What could you use to create something like this?



Watusi (Hard Edge)



"Watusi (Hard Edge)" by Alma Thomas is licensed under Fair Use.

Nature-Inspired Art

What do you notice about this painting?

Do you think warm or cool colours have been used?

Can you spot any shapes you recognise?



Snoopy Sees Earth Wrapped In Sunset

Alma didn't give up. She tried painting in a different way. Can you see how she has used her paintbrush to dab rectangle shapes onto the canvas?



*"Snoopy Sees Earth Wrapped in Sunset" by Alma Thomas is licensed under Fair Use.

Nature-Inspired Art

What do you notice that is similar to the last painting we looked at?

What can we see?



Air View of a Spring Nursery



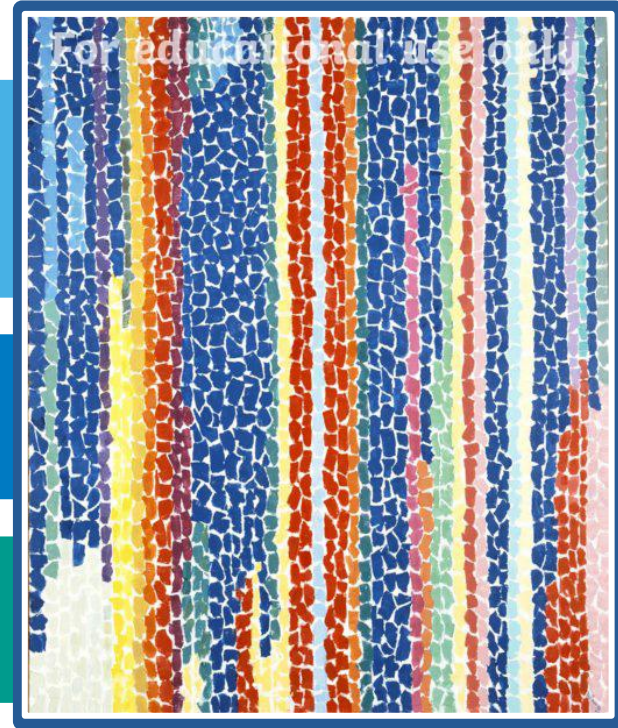
"Air View of a Spring Nursery" by Alma Thomas is licensed under Fair Use.

Your ARTY Task! Create a painting/ picture similar to Alma's.

This painting is called Iris, Tulips, Jonquils, and Crocuses. They are all names of spring flowers.

Think about the length of the coloured lines.

Alma loved nature and used it as an inspiration for her paintings.



"Iris, Tulips, Jonquils, and Crocuses" by Alma Thomas is licensed under Fair Use.

What colours and shapes will you choose? Can you use your paintbrush to paint in a similar way to Alma?

Become an artist and go on a nature hunt to inspire your own artwork.



