

**About the painting**

Full title: 'The Fighting Temeraire tugged to her last berth to be broken up', 1839. Turner’s painting pays tribute to the Temeraire’s heroic past. The gunship, painted delicately in light tones, seems to float effortlessly on calm waters, giving it a ghostly appearance. The glorious sunset behind is a fanfare in her honour.

Just as the day is drawing to a close, so too is the life of the Temeraire. The nostalgic and melancholic mood of the painting is emphasised by the fact that the ship can no longer travel by the power of her own sails; they have been furled for the last time and a steamboat tugs her into the shore. Turner paints the two boats in sharp contrast to each other – the steam boat moves ahead of the grand gunship: squat, dirty and ugly in comparison.

The Fighting Temeraire by Turner was chosen above names such as Van Gogh, Hogarth and Hockney to be named the greatest painting in Britain in a public vote in 2005, organised by BBC Radio 4's Today programme in association with the National Gallery, London.

**Below are some visual suggestions for your response:**







