Reading Comprehension：

**Starry Night**

Have you ever seen a real night sky that looks like Van Gogh’s Starry Night? I hope not! So, why would an artist paint the sky this way? Perhaps I can answer that with another question. When you’re happy, why do you sing instead of speaking? Or when you’re in love, why do you speak of roses and honey? When we do these things, we, too are artists. We’re using something that goes beyond a mere scientific description in order to communicate our feelings more powerfully than straightforward words can. So consider for a moment that Van Gogh might not have been hallucinating(产生幻觉的) on the night he painted this. Maybe he felt something so powerful that he had to go beyond the familiar to express it.

I hope I’m reminding you of something you already know as I describe the experience of being outside at night under a crystal clear sky that makes everything seem clean and refreshing. So you look up. And suddenly you see the sky that you’ve seldom seen before. It’s not just the same old dark night sky tonight. Instead, the blackness is a deep, rich blue that is more bottomless than any ocean. The starts are not spots of light but brilliant, magical diamonds that dance like tiny angels. In just this special moment, the sky is somehow alive, and it seems to speak to you silently about the meaning of infinity(无限).

Now look at the painting again. Can you see something of what makes this such a famous and well-loved image? But there’s more here than that. Van Gogh painted this while he was quite struck down by a mental disease. It is natural to imagine that he frequently battled the fear that he would never escape his prison to true freedom. It is natural for us to imagine this because each of us has faced our own personal prison, whether it be disease, the loss of a loved one, serious financial problems... In such moments it is tempting to give up to despair and collapse(崩溃) in hopelessness.

Looking at this painting. I imagine Van Gogh in just such a moment of despair, when he is struck by the memory of one of those amazing night skies. He recalls the sense that he is not alone, that there is a living, infinite world with rich colorful creatures and scenes all around. And so the sky flows across the canvas(画布) full of vitality(活力) and power. The stars don’t just sparkle; they explode. Looking closer, we notice that the earth itself seems to respond to the movement in the sky, forming its own living waves in the mountain and rolling trees. In the sleepy village, the windows of the houses glow(发光) with the same light that brightens the universe. The giant trees at the left seem to capture the joy by stretching upwards towards the sky.

What a tremendous message of hope there is in this masterpiece! Even if our troubles persist, the world around us assures us that life is worth living. That’s what the angels sing about. Doesn't it make you want to sing, too?

1. Looking at the painting Starry Night, we can see all the following **except** \_\_\_\_\_\_
2. The singing angels B. the giant trees C. the sleepy village D. the sparkling stars
3. Van Gogh does **Not** describe a feeling of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ through the Starry Night.
4. happiness B. vitality(活力) C. power D. despair
5. The underlined word “prison” in the 3rd paragraph probably means \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
6. Trouble in one’s life B. mental illness
7. control from the government D. a place where criminals are kept
8. What is the main purpose of this passage?
9. To explain how Van Gogh painted the Starry Night.
10. To tell us how to appreciate the Starry Night.
11. To prove Van Gogh was in hallucinating state of mind while painting the picture.
12. To show us the beauty of the sky on a starry night.

**请翻译从文中选出的六个句子：**

1. We’re using something that goes beyond a mere scientific description in order to communicate our feelings more powerfully than straightforward words can.

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