

FAMOUS ARTISTS SERIES: PABLO PICASSO (1881 - 1973)**Supplies Needed:****ART BIN:**

- Mr. Potato Head toy
- Project sample & different head shape examples for project

CFA CLOSET:

- White 8 ½" x 11" paper for portrait.

OTHER:

- Crayons and markers (classroom supplies)
- **Optional prop for project:** Mr. Potato Head toy brought from home
- Online images to be pulled up before lesson, Slideshow  **PABLO PICASSO pictures**

AHEAD OF TIME NOTE:

- Copy examples of different head shapes for the project.

PRESENTATION

Today we are going to talk about Pablo Picasso who was one of the most famous and versatile artists of our time. He was every kind of "artist": painter, sculptor, potter, graphic artist and poet. Picasso produced works that created new ways of looking at reality and changed the course of painting in the 20th century (ie: the 1900's). Through his art, he campaigned for peace and cultural harmony.

Present SLIDE #2 [photo of Picasso](#)

- *Notice all the different types of art surrounding him in his studio: Paintings, drawings, ceramics, pottery, sculpture.*
- Picasso was born in Spain in 1881. Both his father and mother were artists.
- When Picasso was just thirteen years old he attended the School of Fine Arts in the city of Barcelona where his father taught.

Present SLIDE #3 ["Altar Boy", 1896](#)

- *Picasso painted this when he was just 15 years old!*
- *Discuss the realistic style: Shading in the folds of fabric, highlights on the face & shoes, dark colors were used.*

After completing art school, 20 year old Pablo moved to Paris to live amongst the famous artists there. After a short time in Paris, his best friend died and he was very sad and lonely. The next few years (1901-1904) are often called his "Blue Period". His sad mood was reflected in the cool color of blue in all of his paintings.

Present SLIDE #4 ["The Old Guitarist" 1903](#) & SLIDE #5 ["The Tragedy" 1903](#)

- *Point out the many shades of blue.*
- *Ask the students how they feel when they look at these paintings. Why?*
- *Look at the postures and expressions of the people in these paintings.*
(*"The Old Guitarist" painting is owned & displayed by the Art Institute of Chicago*)

After a few years, Picasso fell in love and began to make new friends. He was fascinated with the circus, especially the clowns. He painted many pictures of circus people. Happier, warmer colors showed up in these paintings. This time was called his "Rose Period" (1904-1906).

Present SLIDE #6 "[Family of Acrobats with Ape](#)", 1905.

- *How does this differ from his Blue period paintings?*
- *Do the subjects look happier?*
- *Ask the students about the colors they see and how this picture makes them feel.*

Two strong foreign influences drove Picasso toward a new style of painting: When Picasso was 26 years old he became friends with an artist named Henri Matisse who had traveled to Africa and collected several African tribal masks. Picasso was fascinated with the faces on the primitive masks, which looked like they were shaped with flat planes of triangles and circles. Picasso was also influenced by ancient Iberian sculpture from his native country Spain.

Present SLIDE #7 [African masks](#)

Picasso began painting faces that looked like African masks.

Present SLIDE #8 "[Les Desmoiselles D'Avignon](#)", 1907

- *Compare the faces in Picasso's painting with the African Masks*
- *Do you see the flat triangle and circle shapes in the faces?*
- When Picasso was about 30 years old, he and another artist named Braque began to develop a new, very different style of painting called *Cubism*. In these works, basic shapes such as triangles and circles make up the body of what we see. Things also look as if they were being seen from different viewpoints at the same time; as if the picture was broken into pieces and put back together in an unusual way. The *Cubist* pictures were not realistic, they were abstract.
- *"realistic": picture represents a form/object*
- *"abstract": doesn't look real; little or not attempt to represent a form/object*

Present SLIDE #9 "[Portrait of D.H. Kahnweiler](#)", 1910

- *Do you see the man? What other features or body parts can you recognize?*
- *Does it look like a reflection in a broken mirror?*

Cubism became one of the most important periods in the history of modern art. At the time, it was so radically different from anything any artist had done before! Some people thought it was brilliant and new. Others thought that *Cubism* was confusing and shocking because they couldn't see realistic people or objects in the paintings!

Present SLIDE #10 "[Three Musicians](#)", 1921

- *This is another example of Picasso's Cubism. The images in this painting are a different style. Notice the flat areas of color. The geometric shapes almost fit like a jigsaw puzzle.*
- *Are the images easier to recognize than the images in the portrait we just saw?*
- *Look for the three musicians. What instruments they are playing? (Clarinet and guitar)*

- Remember Picasso's circus days? The characters are actually two clowns and a monk. The monk's face is painted like a mask. Notice the circus-like costumes.

After developing the concept of *Cubism*, Picasso continued to create abstract art throughout his life. He continued to simplify things into basic shapes.

Present SLIDE #11 "[Mother & Child](#)", est 1923

- This painting is from a short period in the early 1920's when Picasso took a departure from cubism. At this time his wife had just had their first baby and the work shows the tenderness of the subject matter.
- While this painting is more representational than his cubist works, it is still abstracted. Note the large simplified forms of the bodies.

As Picasso developed his "abstract eye", he often used black outlines and filled them in with bright colors. He displayed subjects from many viewpoints, combining a straight-on view of a face with a profile (explain that this is a side view of a face). He continued to show the influence of African masks. Some of his best known portraits of people are done in bright colors and abstract shapes. Although Picasso's people do not always look realistic, his paintings are very *expressive* – they show the subjects' emotions and actions.

Present SLIDE #12 "[Weeping Woman](#)", 1937 & SLIDE #13 "[Portrait of Dora Maar](#)", 1937

- What is each woman doing? How is she feeling?
- Where are her eyes? Mouth? Nose? Ears? Hair?
- Discuss the style of these portraits, using black outlines and bright colors

Picasso spent his entire life creating new forms and techniques of art. Not only did he paint, but he made sculpture, pottery, prints and collages – he even wrote poetry!

Present SLIDE #14 [Sculpture](#)

- In August, 1967 (Picasso was 85 years old) this 50-foot-high steel sculpture was erected at the Daley Center in Chicago. Picasso donated the sculpture to the city of Chicago.
- Has anyone seen this huge sculpture outside the Daley Center in Chicago?
- The abstract design of this sculpture has puzzled many people. Picasso does not like to explain his work and so he has never defined this sculpture!
- What do you think it is?
- Do you see the influence of African Masks?

Pablo Picasso lived to be an old man of 92 years! His love of art dominated his life and it is said that he painted until dawn the night before he died.

SUGGESTED PROJECT:

Today we are going to draw a self-portrait (a picture of yourself), only we are going to try doing it the abstract *Cubist* way Picasso would have employed.

- Show project examples and display SLIDE 12 "[Weeping Woman](#)" to emphasize the concept of *Cubism*.
- Using a Mr. Potato Head, ask for a volunteer to put the arms, mouth, eyes, etc. in unusual spots. This will demonstrate the idea that things don't have to go in their usual place.
- Have students choose from a blank piece of white paper or one with a pre-drawn "head". Remind students to draw it large—fill the page!

- Using black marker, ask students to outline an irregular head shape, then draw a loose line down the center of the blank “face”.
- With black marker, draw abstract facial features. *Discuss the Cubist concept of seeing a face from different angles: draw half of face straight-on, and other half with face turned to side (nose sticking out the side)*
- Encourage students to color-in portraits using bold colors and patterns.
- Have students sign the front of their portrait.