Pablo Picasso
1881-1973
Cubism

For this presentation you may choose some or all of the available reproductions

- *Portrait of Gustave Coquiot (1901)* (Portrait painting, early life works)
- *Pitcher, Candle and Enamel Pan (1945)* (Still life painting, Cubism)
- *Portrait of Sylvette David (1954)* (Portrait work, later life)

In the black cabinet you will find a white binder with 8.5 x 11 prints of the other paintings referenced in this presentation, a copy of the presentation and a laminated *Art Elements & Principles* poster.

In the plastic bin or next to it you will find the books *Picasso (Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists)*, *Picasso and the Girl with a Ponytail*, *When Pigasso Met Mootisse*
Personal Information

Name: Pablo Ruiz Picasso. People simply called him “Picasso”, but his birth name was Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los Remedios Cipriano de la Santísima Trinidad Ruiz y Picasso.

Show: 8.5x11 print of Picasso’s birth name
Ask: Who has the longest name in this class?

Nationality: Spanish
Born: October 25, 1881 Málaga, Spain
Died: April 8, 1973 (aged 91) Mougins, France
Lived: Spain and France
Family: Picasso was one of three children; he had two younger sisters, Lola and Conchita. Jose Ruiz Blasco was his father, an artist and an art teacher. His mother was Maria Picasso Lopez.

Artist Background

Pablo Picasso was a Spanish painter, sculptor, graphic artist, and ceramicist. Today he is known as the “father of modern art” and is one of the most famous and influential artists of the 20th century. Picasso’s training under his father began before he turned 9 years old. His father was a curator of a museum and painter as well, but when Picasso showed great talent at an early age, his father gave up his own painting to concentrate on teaching Picasso to draw and paint.

Much of Picasso’s early work is considered academic Realism, where he tried very hard to paint his subjects as accurately and naturally as they were in life.

Show: Portrait of the Artist's Mother
Ask: Guess how old Picasso was when he painted this? Answer: 15
Ask: What makes this painting look so real?

He showed incredible skill at this style of painting, and began to be noticed. As time went on more unique, bold colors began making their way into these realistic pieces.

At only 13 years old, his father persuaded the officials at the academy to allow his
son to take an entrance exam for the advanced class. This process often took students a month or more, but Picasso completed it in a week, and the jury admitted him to the School of Fine Arts in Barcelona Spain. As a young student he lacked discipline but made friendships that would last throughout his life.

In 1900 Picasso made his first trip to Paris France, the art capital of Europe. There, he met his first Parisian friend, Max, who helped him learn the language and its literature. Soon they shared an apartment; Max slept at night while Picasso slept during the day and worked at night. These were times of severe poverty, cold, and desperation. Much of his work was burned to keep the small room warm!

Over the years he became very popular, meeting many people who were interested in hiring him to paint for them. He became friends with other artists whose work would continually inspire him to try new techniques. He married twice and had 4 children.

Until his death at age 91, Picasso painted over 50,000 works of art, many of which have been sold for millions of dollars. Not surprisingly, more of his paintings have been stolen than any other artist and sadly about 550 of his works are listed as missing.

Picasso once said:

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up."

Ask: What do you think he means by that?

Elements of Art

When looking at Picasso’s work lets keep in mind the Elements of Art. This laminated print is available to bring into the classroom, it shows and describes all the things that go into making a work of art and can be shown to the children so that they may keep these things in mind as they look at the paintings.

Style and Technique

Throughout his long career, Picasso used many different styles of painting. He was never afraid to try something new and always looked for different ways to represent the subjects in his paintings. He spent stretches of time focused on using one particular style of painting; each showing different influences and personal interests he was exposed to. Once the style became well accepted, he would move on to something new.
These are the styles Picasso is known for; they are called *periods*:

**Blue Period**
He painted poor, sad people using nearly monochromatic blue and cobalt, only occasionally warmed by other colors. During this time Picasso was very sad and depressed over the death of a friend so he expressed his deep sadness through his painting.

*Show:* The Old Blind Guitarist and Mother and Child

*Ask:* Do you know what the word “*Monochromatic*” means? *Answer:* When one color is changed by adding different amounts of black or white to them to change them into other colors.

*Ask:* Artists often use color to show feeling. Do you think Picasso made a good choice using this color for these paintings? What are your feelings when you look at these paintings?

*Ask:* What color would you use to paint the opposite of sad? Why?

**Rose Period**
The Rose Period began when he settled in Paris and met his first love. This style used cheerful orange and pink colors and Harlequins, circus performers and clowns are painted frequently.

*Show:* Family of Saltimbanques (pronounced *Salt-im-banks*)

*Ask:* Can you guess what this family does for a living by looking at the painting? *Answer:* This French word *Saltimbanques* translates into acrobat, performer, and entertainer.

**African Period**
This was a time when Pablo Picasso painted in a style that was strongly influenced by African sculpture and primitive carvings.

*Show:* Head of a Man

*Ask:* What do you think makes this painting “primitive”? *Answer:* Flat color, not very realistic
Ask: Can you describe the shapes, lines and color in this painting?

Cubist Period  
Along with another famous painter named Georges Braque, Picasso helped invent the style of painting today known as Cubism. When you look at Cubist art it can be difficult to tell what the subject is because objects are analyzed and broken up into geometric shapes and cubes and then reassembled in an abstracted form. Instead of depicting objects from just the front, the artist depicts the subject from a multitude of viewpoints, including the sides, back and top.

Show: Musicians with Masks (also known as Three Musicians)

Ask: This is a Cubist painting of a Harlequin, a Pierrot (pronounced pee-air-o), and a Monk sitting together and playing music. Does anyone know what those are?  
Answer: *A Harlequin* is a type of clown traditionally presented in a mask and parti-colored tights. A *Pierrot* is a French pantomime actor, who pretends to be childish and trusting. He dresses in a loose white costume, with large pompoms, a pointed hat and white makeup on his face. *A Monk* is a religious character.

Ask: What shapes do you see making up the subjects in this painting?  
Ask: What do you think of the color of this painting compared to his others?  
Ask: These are musicians. What instruments do you think they are playing?  
Ask: There is an animal in the painting; does anyone see it? What do you think it is?

Neoclassicist & Surrealist Period  
A revival of the styles and spirit of classic antiquity inspired directly from the classical period when artists painted subjects in an idealized way and focused on order, symmetry, and simplicity of style.

Show: Paul as Harlequin  
Ask: Does the subject of this portrait look realistic?  
Ask: Does this painting look finished? Why or why not? What parts of the painting appear as if the Picasso had not gotten to them yet?
Featured Artwork
(Presenter may select from any or all of the featured works)

**Portrait of Gustave Coquiot (1901)** (pronounced *Goostav Coke-ee-o*)
(Portrait, oil on canvas) Post-Impressionism

Post-Impressionists extended Impressionism while rejecting its limitations: they continued using vivid colors, often thick application of paint, and real-life subject matter, but they were more inclined to emphasize geometric forms, to distort form for expressive effect, and to use unnatural color.

This is a portrait of a well-known French writer. It is said that he wrote the introduction to a catalog of Picasso’s first exhibition in Paris. He also wrote titles for all the works of art that were included in the show.

This painting shows how Picasso had taken the next step away from his early, more realistic, paintings to a more unique, bold style. Look at the blues, greens and yellows in the subject’s hands and face. See how Picasso blends the subjects’ sleeve into his jacket and pants—it is one big dark shape with a hand sitting on it.

**Ask:** Does the paint look like it was put on thickly or thinly? If you to touched this painting how do you think that shirt would feel?

**Ask:** Does this painting look real to you? Why or Why not?

**Pitcher, Candle and Enamel Pan (1945)**
(Still Life, oil on canvas)

This painting is a good example of Synthetic Cubism, one of the 2 types of Cubism invented by Picasso and Georges Braque. The other is Analytical Cubism and it came first. In Analytical Cubism the artist would take a good look at all the angles and different views of his subject and then paint characteristic details that would represent the subject, but with muted tones where black and grey have been added.

*Synthetic Cubism* was more extreme with the subjects less recognizable and colors brighter. This style of painting was more about how the artist broke down the image into simple planes and facets, with less detail, showing an object from several angles at once.

**Ask:** What geometric shapes do you see? **Answer:** Circles, triangles, polygons
**Ask:** What lines do you see? **Answer:** diagonal curved, straight, a figure 8!
**Ask:** This painting is not a portrait or a landscape. Do you know what it is called? **Answer:** Still Life: A work of art depicting non-moving objects. It may be either natural (food, flowers, plants, rocks, or shells) or man-made (drinking glasses, books, vases, jewelry, coins, pipes, and so on).
Ask: Does this picture look realistic? Why or why not?
Ask: What textures do you see in this painting? Answer: The pan looks rough and the candle looks bumpy and the pitcher looks very rough.
Ask: What colors do you see in this painting? How do these color make you feel?

**Portrait of Sylvette David 23 (1954)**
(Portrait, charcoal and oil on canvas)

Sylvette was an extremely shy, and beautiful, 19 year old blonde Parisian girl who was Picasso’s neighbor. When Picasso saw her he was stunned by her fascinating features and was inspired to make over 40 paintings and drawings of her in only 30 days! She became his *Muse*. A muse is a person — especially a woman — who is a source of artistic inspiration.

Show: Photo of Picasso with Sylvette. This is how Picasso would paint: with Sylvette sitting in a chair and he with his brushes.

In all the paintings and drawings Sylvette wears a high ponytail with thick bangs, a style that her father saw on a ballet dancer and told her she would look nice in. When Picasso saw her ponytail he was charmed by it and said it reminded him of an ancient soldier’s helmet. This defining hairstyle became very popular and many women copied it.

In the later years Picasso’s final works were a mixture of styles until the end of his life. Devoting his full energies to his work, Picasso became more daring, his works more colorful and expressive.

Show: Here are 4 other renderings of Sylvette:

| Portrait of Sylvette David 05 | Portrait of Sylvette David 07 | Portrait of Sylvette David | Portrait of Sylvette David |

Ask: What style did he paint these paintings in? How are they different from each other?
Ask: Are there any you prefer? Why?
Activities

Reading options:

* Picasso and the Girl with a Ponytail by Laurence Anholt
* When Pigasso Met Mootisse Hardcover by Nina Laden

Try at Home:

Find an object or subject for your paintings or drawings. Plan to make 3 different pictures of the same thing, but try using different techniques or styles like Picasso did.

Resources

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pablo_Picasso
http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/pablo-picasso
Pablo Picasso Breaking all the Rules by True Kelley