

Teacher Programs

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Title of Lesson: Picasso's Puzzlers	Grade/Age Level: Elementary
Teachers: Art/English/World Language	Time Required: 1 class period

Concept/Overview: This lesson plan offers students the opportunity to create and assemble a puzzle and then write a short story narrating the events within the image.

Objective(s): The student will:

- ◆ Learn about Picasso's different styles of creating art, specifically the Blue and Rose Period;
- ◆ Transform a famous work of Picasso's into a puzzle;
- ◆ Put together a peer's puzzle or assemble puzzles in small groups; and
- ◆ Write a short narrative on what is occurring in the puzzle they pieced together, followed by a class discussion about styles of art.

Standards of Learning Correlations:

Visual Arts: 2.14, 2.21, 3.5, 3.22

English: 2.3, 2.10, 2.11, 2.12, 3.1, 3.8, 3.9

History/Social Science:

Mathematics:

Science:

World Language: (This activity may be used to introduce and emphasize target language vocabulary words. It also relates to both French and Spanish culture.)

Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ reproductions of Picasso's works◆ scissors◆ pencils◆ glue◆ construction paper	Resources: <p>Picture books: Maltbie, P.I. <i>Picasso and Minou</i>. Charlesbridge, 2005</p> <p>Reference books: Warnecke, Carsten-Peter. <i>Pablo Picasso: 1881-1973</i>. Taschen, 1998</p>	Vocabulary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ warm colors◆ cool colors◆ style
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Background/Discussion:

In 1904, Picasso's style began to shift to a new—and sunnier phase. During his "Blue Period," which stretched from around 1901 and continued intermittently throughout 1904, he used dark, often blue, colors and focused on somber subjects. His new phase, known as the "Rose Period," was characterized by lighter, "rosier" colors and calm, peaceful subjects. This activity explores this transitional period.

Two notes to the teacher:

The children's book, *Picasso and Minou* by P.I. Maltbie, presents Picasso's Blue and Rose periods with insightful text and beautifully observed and executed illustrations. The book is perfect for talking about Paris, daily life in France in the early 1900s, and the neighborhood of Montmartre. For World language classes, the vocabulary suggested by the illustrations can be rich and engaging.

For older students, you might also mention that many scholars of Picasso's life and work also find a correlation between his stylistic shift during the Rose Period and his meeting with Fernande Olivier in 1904.

Lesson Procedure:

Introduce the lesson by asking whether or not the students have puzzles at home. What kind? Do they have pictures, cartoons, scenery on them?

Read the children's book *Picasso and Minou* by P.I. Maltbie and ask the following questions:

- ◆ What do we mean by "style"? (a different way of creating art, or a distinctive manner of expression in writing, speaking, art, music, etc.)
- ◆ What are the two different styles of Picasso's artwork discussed in this book? (*Blue Period and Rose Period*)
- ◆ How do we know the difference between the two?
- ◆ Can you think of some descriptive words (adjectives) for each of these styles?

Show the students selected images from both periods. Choose images that will fall into one of the two categories already discussed (Blue or Rose). Also discuss what artists mean by warm and cool colors. Ask students to determine the categories (Blue Period/cool colors; Rose Period/warm colors) to which each work of art belongs.

Give each student an image of a work by Picasso. Ask them to draw lightly with pencil on the backs of the images so that the works are completely divided into puzzle sections. Next, ask them to cut along the pencil lines and swap the puzzles with their neighbors.

After the students have assembled the puzzles they received from their neighbors, ask them to glue the finished puzzle to a sheet of construction paper and label the puzzle as "Blue Period" or Rose Period." They should add a sentence or two explaining the reason for their choices.

As a final challenge, ask them to write short narratives about what they think is occurring in their completed puzzles. Each student should read his explanation to the class.

(World Language students should work in groups to create and assemble puzzles. All of their discussions should be in the target language.)

Closure:

Hold a discussion about why an artist's style might change. Ask if the students have experienced changes in their artistic interests.