

# Man with Pipe Three Musicians Pablo Picasso

**Volunteer:**

**Date:**

**Grade Level:** 3rd Grade

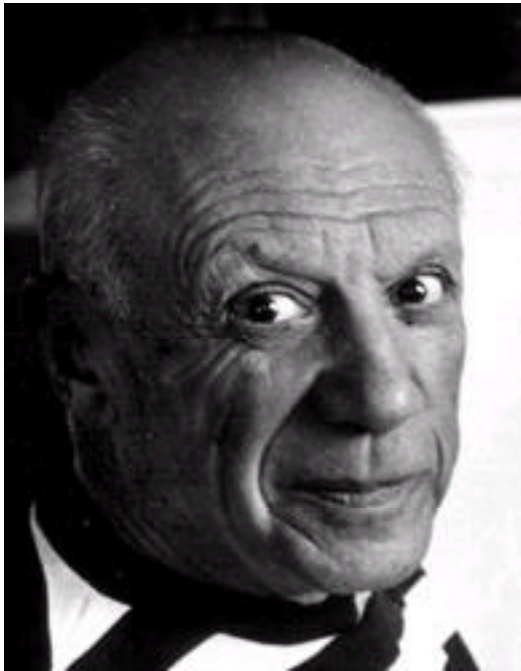
**Artist:** Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)

**Print/Sculpture:** Man With Pipe  
Three Musicians

**Art Vocabulary:** Cubism, Collage, Abstract,  
Modern

## I The Artist

Look at the pictures of Pablo Picasso. One of the first things people noticed about this man were his



eyes:  
Intense,  
black,  
penetrating  
eyes. He  
was  
vigorous  
and



energetic, a passionate man capable of exaltation and despair. He was very independent and yet needed the company of other people. His periods of depression are associated with moments when there was no woman he loved sharing his life with him. He had many friends and all of them raved about his intensity, charisma, radiance. He did not speak very much in a group, but he served as a sort of catalyst for other people's ideas and feelings. Among his friends were the best known painters, poets, and composers

of his time. He would listen to them intently, and then make some witty or perceptive remark. He loved a good joke, too, and could be very genial. He could also be unspeakably depressed and aloof when the mood came upon him. His paintings reflect the duality of his personality. Some are evidence of his warmth, tenderness and fantasy, and his compassion for suffering humanity; others are filled with violence, destructiveness, horror. Perhaps one of his most important qualities is that he was tenacious, unflinching, undaunted. He never gave up, he never rested satisfied.

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The most often-quoted saying of Picasso is: "I do not seek. I find."

It is wonderfully bold and sure, but can only be explained, if he really said it, by constant reference to its opposite: "One never stops searching because one never finds."

In reality, he finds constantly and seeks constantly. He has scarcely finished a canvas when he looks at it in search of the secrets he has himself just put into it. And he begins another, which takes him where he does not want to go when he takes it where it does not want to go. And so on.

*(Picasso says by H el ene Parmelin, translated from the French by Christine Trollope, A.S. Barnes and Company, New York, 1969, p. 38)*

Picasso was short, stockily built, thick-set. He had small but strong, well-shaped hands, the hands of a sculptor. He was a prolific painter and sculptor. He usually covered two or three canvases a day. Art was his life. He produced about 50,000 works of art in his long life. He died when he was 91-years-old.

He was a Spaniard by birth, but lived most of his existence in France, learning how to speak French very fluently, but never relinquishing his Spanish citizenship. He settled in Paris in his early 20s. For several years, he struggled to survive, but it never occurred to him to be anything else but a painter and the kind of painter he chose to be rather than one who could have earned an easy living by catering to popular taste. There were times when he was so poor he could not pay any rent or buy food. During one of those periods, he shared a miserable room with a French-Jewish poet, Max Jacob. The two men had to share a single bed and one hat.

When Max Jacob was working at a store, Picasso would sleep in their bed; when Jacob came home to

sleep, Picasso would don their common hat and roam the streets of Paris in search of ideas, and he would paint. "Picasso often painted at night by the light of an oil lamp hung above his head while he squatted on the floor in front of his canvas. When he could not afford to buy oil, he held a candle in his left hand and worked with the right." (**Picasso: His Life and Work**, by Roland Penrose, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1958)

Picasso achieved notoriety in his middle 20s. By the end of WWI, he was already a very famous painter. At the end of WWII, in 1945, his name was so well-known that it had become synonymous with modern art (and eccentric artistic misbehavior). American soldiers on leave in Paris asked to see two things: The Eiffel Tower and the studio of Pablo Picasso. The Red Cross had to



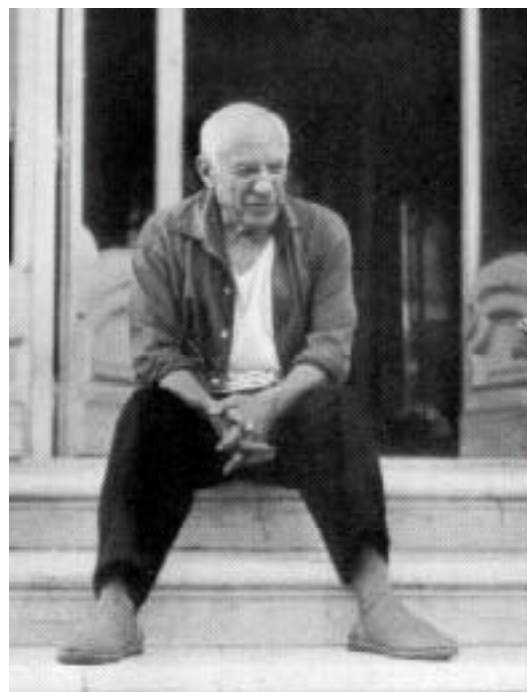
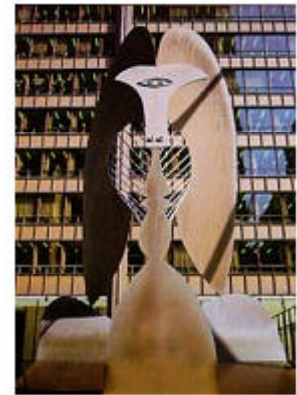


arrange tours of Picasso's studio. "Most Parisians agreed that Picasso was the most popular figure of liberated France. In the view of one news correspondent, the only person who compared with him as a subject of conversation was the war hero General Charles de Gaulle. Picasso responded to his celebrity with warmth of word and deed. He made everyone welcome at his apartment on the Rue des Grandes-Augustins – old friends, journalists and total strangers. Some were soldiers who arrived so tired that they dropped off to sleep; one visitor counted 20 slumbering men in the studio in a single day." (*The World of Picasso 1881 –*, by Lael Wertenbaker and the Editors of Time-Life Books, New York, 1967, p. 145)

In the wake of his incredible success came wealth. Picasso became a very rich artist. His paintings sold at auctions for record prices. They still do.

Why did Pablo Picasso achieve such preeminence? He was responsible for new revolutionary departures in the realm of art. He had a marvellous ability to absorb what other people had tried before him, soak it up, and proceed further along the same lines. He came after the Impressionists, built upon them, and went on his way to invent more unconventional means of artistic expression.

He could draw before he could speak. He also drew very realistically at an early age. Later, he recalled: "An odd thing is that I have never done children's drawings. Never. Even when I was very small. I remember one of my first drawings. I was perhaps six, or even less. In my father's house there was a statue of Hercules with his club in the corridor, and I drew Hercules with his club." (Picasso Says... p. 73) As a child, he used to play a game with his sister, Lolita, and his cousins. They would ask him to draw something: a dog, a horse,



anything, without breaking his line, without lifting his pencil. And he would. He was also proficient at cutting shapes out of paper. "Do you want a horse?" he would ask. "Here is a horse." His father, who was an art teacher and a mediocre painter of dining room still lifes, helped him develop his talents. In school, however, Picasso could not become interested. He hated mathematics and later used to say that he never learned to recite the alphabet properly.

When he was 15, he was admitted to the art school of Barcelona, Spain, after completing in one day a drawing assignment which it generally took other candidates a whole month to finish. A year later, he amazed the examiners at a bigger art school in Madrid by a similar exploit. But after a few months of formal study at the Madrid Institute of Art, he gave up going to classes. That was the end of his formal training.

Picasso was never satisfied with his work. He always tried to go further. He said once: "At 12, I could draw like Raphael. It took me a whole lifetime to learn how to paint like a child." Like Paul Klee, his ambition was to paint as simply and directly as a child.

He started by painting realistic pictures. His early paintings reflect the deprivations he had to endure and the suffering he witnessed around him. He painted beggars, madmen, poor mothers nursing their infants, all kinds of street people and street scenes. He was almost one of these street people himself. This is referred to as his **Blue Period** because his works are pervaded with a monochromatic blue that lends more sadness to already melancholy themes. A good example: **The Old Guitarist** (see images and next page), a painting which hangs at the Chicago Art Institute.

Picasso moved to his **Pink Period**. He was not richer, but he was in love, and had a companion who brought him joy and emotional stability. He also had many friends who made a continuous stream of visitors to his room. He painted people of the circus in bright colors at that time. There was still something melancholy and mysterious about his characters. But there was also more warmth in the colors he picked, and a dreamlike, eerie



**The Old Guitarist**

quality about the compositions of the pictures or the poses of the characters. Although the **Harlequin** picture of Picasso's son, Paolo, was painted some 20 years later, it does have some of the qualities of the pictures' characteristics of the Pink Period.

Picasso then invited **Cubism**, simultaneously with and then in collaboration with Georges **Braque**. They tried to render the many geometric planes of things in an effort to get to the core of things. Their landscapes looked like a world of little cubes. When painting a portrait, it was as if Picasso were cutting slices off the face of his model, scattering them all over the canvas, and trying to reassemble them into something coherent which would be the real person. It was necessary for him to destroy before he could create again. "Picasso broke every rule in the book: the perspective was flat, the bodies were fragmented into angular planes of color, and the faces seemed like barbaric masks. [Cubism] was a dynamic and revolutionary refutation of all that art had held sacred since the Renaissance." (**The World of Picasso**, p. 64)



**Portrait of D.H. Kahnweiler**



**Portrait of a Young Girl**

Many people were shocked, outraged. The collector Leo Stein could not refrain from scoffing: “You’ve been trying to pain the fourth dimension. How amusing!” (**The World of Picasso**, p. 54) Cubist paintings had nothing to do with what people thought they understood art to be. There was no depth, not even any resemblance with the models or the human figure. Facial features were almost unrecognizable. One had to guess at the shapes of eyes, a forehead, a nose, but even that nose had nothing to do with the one of the model. It was a stylized nose reminiscent of the wedges painted on African masks or carved on primitive statuettes. As an example, see **Portrait of D.H. Kahnweiler** (1910) with its monochromatic tones, its geometrical shapes, a bare suggestion of eyes, nose, mouth, forehead, and wavy hair parted in the middle, crossed hands. (See images, also)

Pretty soon, Picasso had exhausted the possibilities of this early form of Cubism and moved to something slightly different: a brighter, more colorful and cheerful kind of Cubism which incorporated more colors and recognizable elements from the real world, as well as different textures (leather, wallpaper, strings) or appearance of textures. Picasso’s paintings of that time either look like or are collages using scraps of different materials. Example: **Portrait of a Young Girl**, which still does not look anything like a person, but which shows many elements that young girls and their dreams are made of: pretty colors, bits of flowery wallpapers and materials, the leg of a piano, the curve of a shoulder, the outlines of a sensuous statue, clasping hands, joyful patterns.

Show **The Three Musicians** (1921)

Although Picasso still painted very realistic pictures after this period, he became more and more intent on destroying the heritage of traditional Western art. He went on merrily (on more often not so merrily at all) to dislocate the human form. Many of his works are too erotic or violent for presentation to children, but a selection from his linocuts can serve to illustrate some of the new things he was doing. Show for example, pictures from **Picasso Linocuts, 1958-1963** (by Donald H. Karshan, Tudor Publishing Company, New York, 1968). **Head of a Woman** (p. 1 and 95) shows one of Picasso’s characteristic tricks: the profile and front view of the woman are



**The Three Musicians**

shown at the same time. Draw a profile and a front view on the board to explain the meanings of the words to the children. The forms drawn by Picasso are very simple. Outlines alone are sufficient to suggest a whole face. Picasso wastes no details. Instead, he discovers one or two continuous lines which are enough to symbolize a whole being. Picasso calls what "NAMING." His heads do not always have two eyes, a nose, and a mouth, and they seldom have these attributes in the "correct" usual places. But, "the face is there. All it needs is a spectator, and it is there." (**Picasso Says...**, p. 26)

We are looking for a few slender strokes, close together in a great empty space, which were sufficient in themselves to make the two arms, and two hands with their ten fingers, the strength of their clasp, the weight of the hands on the knees, their shape, everything. Picasso said: 'What we have to do is to NAME things. They have to be called by their names, I NAME an eye. I NAME a foot. I NAME my dog's head on my knees. I NAME my knees....NAMING – that's all. That's enough.

He added, 'I don't know whether I make myself really clear when I talk about naming. I mean giving a name. Remember Eluard's poem? Liberty. To name you, Liberty. ...I am born to know you.

To name you

Liberty...

He named it. That's what you must do.'

## II Composition of Pictures

**Three Musicians:** Picasso painted 2 versions of this in 1921, when he was 40 (**show 2 versions**).

These paintings are over 6 feet square. Can you see the three musicians? Can you see what instruments they're playing? Each of the three musicians is a character from an old form of Italian comedy (commedia dell'arte). The first is a harlequin, which is a kind of clown that never speaks, and is always dressed in checks. He has a violin under his chin, and a bow in his hand (or guitar). The second is a pierrot, another clown who doesn't speak, and who is always in white and black. He is playing a clarinet, or recorder. The third is a monk. A monk is a religious man, like a nun, but he was also a character in this comedy. He is playing an accordion (or singing, depending on picture), and is dressed in a brown robe, with a white rope for a belt. This picture was considered the culmination of synthetic Cubism, which means it was as far as Picasso could go with this style. Synthetic Cubism was flatter than earlier Cubism, and more decorative. He's using colors and patterns. The pieces fit together like a jigsaw puzzle, and even though he's made it look flat, you still sense depth.

Picasso said about Cubism: "I knew we were painting strange things, but the world



**Man With a Pipe**

seemed a strange place to us.” He asked: “What can a picture be? That is, how can I show this? I can show a hill with cubes. I can show a face from all angles: front, back, side, all at the same time.” And, he asked: “What can be a picture? What materials and different methods can I use?” He wanted us to see differently.

**Man With Pipe:** Is an example of Cubism and Collage-style art.

### III Artist’s Materials or Techniques

Showed line drawing of man (in folder) and Cubist abstraction of same. Passed picture of works from other periods around.

### IV Students’ Self-Expression: Guided Activity

#### A Create a Cubist Portrait.

You need a glue stick. We will pass our cut-out shapes, and also copies of photos of faces. You will each get a face in profile, and some faces from the front. You may cut these up, and paste them together to make a Picasso face. Here are some of his portraits. **(show portraits)** Do you see how he would show the face from different angles? How he used lots of different colors, shapes, techniques, and materials? You each have a brown piece of paper to make your portrait on. Use your glue sticks, your scissors, and if you want, your markers, pencils and crayons.

#### B. Picasso Faces.

This activity was taken from the Internet: Making Picasso Faces. The children were given 2 pieces of drawing paper to make two very different faces on (perhaps one profile and one frontal view, one face per page). They colored them using crayons and markers. They cut out pieces and parts of these faces and then glued them onto a larger piece of paper to make a new Picasso face. They could mix and match and add any details they wanted, but they were to be creative and silly.