

Zara's Cubist Challenge: Deconstructing Reality

Learning objective: To analyse and apply the techniques of Cubism, as pioneered by Pablo Picasso, by reinterpreting a subject from multiple viewpoints simultaneously.

Zara the Zebra has been studying Pablo Picasso's revolutionary style. Cubism involves breaking down objects and reassembling them in an abstract form to show several viewpoints at once. Using the grid provided or your own paper, choose an object from your pencil case. Draw it from three different angles (front, side, and top) and then overlap these shapes to create a 'Cubist' portrait of your object. Use geometric shapes and bold lines to connect the different parts.

Word bank: Cubism · Abstract · Geometric · Perspective · Fragmented · Composition · Viewpoint · Distortion

1. Explain why Picasso chose to paint objects from multiple viewpoints rather than using traditional realistic perspective. How does this change the viewer's experience? (3 marks)

2. Compare and contrast a portrait painted in a realistic style with a portrait painted in a Cubist style. What features remain and what features are altered? (3 marks)

3. Justify your choice of colours in your Cubist design. How do the colours you selected help to show the 'fragmented' nature of the object? (2 marks)

4. What might happen if a painter tried to combine Cubism with a very limited, monochromatic colour palette? Would it make the shapes stand out more or less? (2 marks)

5. If you were to create a Cubist portrait of Max the monkey, which specific geometric shapes would you use to represent his face and why? (2 marks)

6. Critique your own work: Which part of your drawing successfully shows two perspectives at once, and which part could be further simplified into a geometric form? (2 marks)

Draw: Create a Cubist self-portrait. Instead of drawing your face realistically, break your features (eyes, nose, mouth) into triangles, rectangles, and circles. Place one eye in profile and one from the front, creating a unique, fragmented composition.



Extension challenge: Research the 'Blue Period' of Picasso. Write a short paragraph explaining how his mood and life experiences influenced his colour choices during this time, and speculate how his style might have changed if he had been feeling joyous instead of melancholy.