

Exploring Perspectives: The Art of Pablo Picasso

Learning objective: To analyse the techniques of Cubism and evaluate how Pablo Picasso challenged traditional ways of representing the world through form and perspective.

Use your knowledge of Cubist techniques to analyse the following questions. Provide detailed justifications for your artistic interpretations.

Pablo Picasso, a pioneer of the 20th-century art movement known as Cubism, abandoned the idea that art should copy nature. Instead of painting a subject from one fixed viewpoint, he broke objects down into geometric shapes and reassembled them to show multiple perspectives simultaneously. By using fragmented forms and bold, contrasting colours, he invited the viewer to reconstruct the image in their own mind.

Word bank: Cubism · perspective · geometric · fragmentation · abstract · multi-dimensional · composition · avant-garde

1. Explain why Picasso chose to represent subjects using fragmented geometric shapes rather than painting them realistically. (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast a traditional landscape painting with a Cubist portrait. What is the fundamental difference in how they treat 'time' and 'space'? (3 marks)

3. Justify your answer: Does the use of abstract, non-naturalistic colours in a Cubist portrait change the emotional impact on the viewer? Explain how. (3 marks)

4. What might happen to the viewer's engagement with an artwork if the artist decides to show the front, side, and back of an object all on the same 2D canvas? (2 marks)

5. Critique the following statement: 'Picasso was not a skilled painter because his figures look distorted.' Use evidence from your knowledge of Cubism to support or refute this. (3 marks)

Draw: Zara the zebra is standing in the centre of your page. Using the principles of Cubism, draw Zara from three different angles at once. Break her stripes into geometric shapes, flatten the perspective, and use bold, clashing colours to create a multi-dimensional portrait.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are an art critic in the year 1910. Write a 100-word persuasive review defending Picasso's new 'Cubist' style against critics who claim it is too confusing. Use at least four words from the word bank in your argument.