
Masterpiece: *People and Dog in Sun*, 1949 by Joan Miro

Pronounced: Hwan Mee-RO

Keywords: Color, Line, Shape, Contrast,
Surreal, Abstract

Grade: 1st Grade

Month: March/April

Activity: Miro Look-A-Likes

Time: 1.25 Hours

Meet the Artist:

- He was born in Spain in 1893 and grew up in Barcelona where his father worked as a goldsmith.
- When he was a young man, he worked as a bookkeeper at the desire of his father but was very unhappy. Eventually his father sent him to art school in Barcelona.
- After he finished art school at age 26, he moved to Paris, France where he was introduced to other modern artists by his famous Spanish friend, Pablo Picasso.
- His works began in a style called Surreal, but became more abstract over time.
- He loved to paint and draw in many mediums. He also had a sharp eye for all types of shapes and how they were arranged in space. Even household items gave him ideas for art. His last name -Miro- literally means "he looked".
- His later years were devoted to making large scaled mythical ceramic sculptures, including a sea goddess which he installed in a grotto at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea.
- He lived a long, prosperous life. He died at the age of 90 in 1983.

Definitions:

Surrealism- "Sur" means beyond, so surrealism means "beyond realism". Artwork that is very dreamlike in appearance. These paintings are often filled with recognizable objects that are arranged in unexpected and disjointed manner.



Abstract- This kind of artwork has objects that are mostly unrecognizable. Abstract paintings rely on color and shapes.

Possible Questions:

- What colors do you see? Are they mainly primary colors (red, yellow, blue) or secondary colors (purple, orange, green)
- Where is the contrast? (the background has light colors, not bold like the foreground).
- Describe what you see. Turn the painting upside down and sideways. See which way the kids like it best.
- Do you see people? Do they look like kids or adults?
- Where is the dog? Where is the sun?
- One dot is half red and half black, who can find it?
- Did Miro have a good imagination?
- What would you title this painting?

Materials Needed: 9"x12" white drawing or construction paper, colored markers, black markers, broken crayons that are stripped of outer paper, student's own pencils, surface textures (i.e. screens) for background rubbing, objects to be used for visuals* and 12"x18" black construction paper (to use as a mat for the items)

***Note to Grade Coordinator or Art Guide:** It is best to have the students sitting at their circle time area for the lesson so their workstation can be set up with the objects by the second art guide. A bag of small, unusual items are located in the special bin labeled "1st Grade" to use on each workstation. You may also bring in things from your home like old tools, interesting shaped vases or jars, household items with unusual but simple shapes.

Activity: Miro-Look-A-Likes

Process:

1. When students return to their desk, the objects should be arranged in the middle of each workstation and each student should have a white paper. Have them use their own pencil to label back of paper with their name.
2. Have students pretend they are a bird, looking down on the objects and quickly sketch an outline of the objects with their pencil. Please stress that the details are not important!! This step should only take about 5-7 minutes.
3. After they have collectively finished drawing the objects, have them turn their paper 90⁰ and draw the outline the objects again so they appear to float. Some of the objects will overlap the previously drawn objects and that is OK....Encourage them to overlap!! (Try to keep them from tracing, but if they are frustrated with it, it is ok). This step should also take about 5-7 minutes.

4. When finished round 2, they may add circles, lines, stars, and crescents in the background....just like Miro.
5. Using the black marker, have them outline over all the pencil lines....including the overlapped lines.
6. With the colored markers, color in the spaces in between the black lines. Each touching space should be a different color.
7. If time permits, place the drawing on top of the rough surface and rub with side of a light colored crayon to create a background texture, like Miro's painting. Use two colors for added interest.

Photograph of Joan Miro and other Works

