

Students will ...

- * learn about the Spanish artist, Joan Miro and his art.
- * learn about and create their own abstract art.
- * learn and apply drawing techniques.
- * create abstract art from their imaginations.

Joan Miro's name is pronounced **hoän mro**.

Joan Miró Ferrà was born in Montroig, near Barcelona, in 1893. His father was a goldsmith and watchmaker. **(Gold and Watch)**

Miró began taking drawing classes when he was seven years old, but pressed by his parents who wanted him to have a “decent profession” he took business classes and became a bookkeeper. **(Calculator)**

Disappointed with his business profession he started to study painting in Barcelona at art school and then he went to study at the private academy of Francisco Galí Fabra. **(Art Book)**

In 1918, Miró and some friends who were artists founded a group called the “Agrupacio Courbet”. They were against the traditional Spanish art forms. **(Sign: We want to be different)**

During this period, known as his poetic realism phase, he painted several landscapes in Montroig, where he used to spend the summer with his parents. Many of his works before 1920 seem to be influenced by the artist we studied last month: Paul Cézanne **(Show print of Paul Cezanne)**. His first art show was at the Dalmau Gallery in 1918; when he was 24 years old.

Miró moved to Paris which (was the center of the art world) in 1920 where he met several surrealist and abstract painters including Pablo Picasso **(show Picasso print)**. Picasso’s style is very different from the normal. His influence helped him develop a very unique and personal style. He often used fantasy.

Like so many other Spanish artists and intellectuals, Miró went into voluntary exile in France at the outbreak of the Spanish civil war. He stayed in France until 1940, when he chose to return to Spain because of WWII. **(Show soldier)**

Miro's works were often playful, spontaneous, and dreamlike. His surrealistic pictures often consisted of large areas of bright colors, and contained many elements, including simple representations of everyday objects, abstract symbols, and vivid imagery. His pictures are full of images that remind us of everyday objects, yet they are not things we see in real life. Miro usually gave his works interesting titles. **(Show Abstract Art)**

Miró excelled in several other forms of art including etchings, lithographs, watercolors, pastels, collages, mosaics, illustrated over 300 books, and painted on copper and masonry. (Miro made over **2,000** oil paintings, **500** sculptures, **400** ceramic objects, and **5,000** drawings and collages – write the numbers on the board)

Miró did not want his paintings to make logical sense. Besides creating abstract images, he merely titled many of his works “painting.” By giving his works indefinite titles, he did not provide the viewer with any clues about a painting’s meaning or content. It is up to each viewer to try to figure out what the images are and what the scene or story is. Different viewers can bring their own interpretations to paintings like this and come up with different meanings for what they see.

The Fundació Joan Miró was opened at the Centre d’Estudis d’Art Contemporani, Barcelona in 1975. His studio in Palma de Majorca has been converted into a museum. In 1956 he settled in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, where he built a beautiful villa with a studio designed by his architect friend Josep Luis Sert. He died in Majorca in 1983, at the age of 90.



Young children love to use their imaginations. They find things in the shapes, colors and patterns of abstract art.

I like to show the students the print and not tell them the name. Get their thoughts and ideas.

In order to understand abstract art and to know what the artist is trying to say about his artwork, you must read the title. Now tell them the name of his painting: People and Dog in Sun. Point out where the dog, sun and people are in this picture. They all have different ideas about where things are located. Quite often, they see many more things in this picture than what they read in the title. Discuss how and why the black lines stand out in Miró's painting. Finally, we discuss the spaces, colors and patterns.

As you look at these art objects, take time to notice details.

How do I feel looking at the object?

Why did the artist choose to make this artwork in this manner?

If I had to do that, what would I do differently?

After this discussion, the students are ready to produce their own abstract artwork.

There are more questions in the file.

I have 2 project ideas on the next pages.

Watercolor Paper
Black Marker or sharpie
Water

List the shapes seen in his work on the board. Circles, ovals, triangles, squares, rectangles, stars, crescent moon shapes, and of course his signature line with a dot on the end.

We then list the 5 main colors Miro used: red, yellow, blue, green and black. I take the time to point out that red, yellow and blue are the primary group of colors.

Students use pencil to create an abstract piece using these shapes. They outline with black sharpie and use markers or watercolors and add brilliant color.

Students love to talk about their "creatures" and name them.



Take a Line for a walk

White paper

Pencil

Black markers

Any medium: watercolors, markers, etc.

Place paper LANDSCAPE or HORIZONTAL

With your pencil, draw a small x on the left part of your paper – this is your starting point

Get ready – now close your eyes (please note: you can change these instructions to fit the classroom you are using).

- a. Straight line to the window
- b. Go to the teacher's desk
- c. Squiggle line to the door
- d. Go to the sink
- e. Pick up your pencil and take a breath
- f. Close your eyes
- g. Draw a small circle
- h. Draw a large circle
- i. Draw a square
- j. Finally a triangle

Now take a look at your paper and create things out of your shapes.

Can you make a person? Can you make an animal? What about a sun or a moon?

Use your imagination.

Go over line with black marker

Finally color and name your artwork