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## Masterpiece: *Don Quixote*, 1955

By Pablo Picasso

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**Keywords:** line, shape, pen & ink

**Grade:** 5th

**Month:** May

**Activity:** The Mighty Pen (and Ink)

### Meet the Artist:

- Picasso was born in Spain in 1881.
- His father was an artist who taught at a local university and he encouraged Pablo at an early age to pursue his artistic talents.
- At the age of 11, Pablo and was sent to art.
- Picasso's artworks changed significantly through his career and he created hundreds of paintings and sculptures.
- He married and had 4 children. When they were younger, he was a fantastically fun dad. He would draw on tablecloths, did magic tricks and would prepare birthday dinner celebrations made up entirely of chocolate.
- He became most well known for his Cubist paintings. Cubism emphasized line, shape and color. It was a modern art style that is not realistic in nature, but based geometric shapes. It started out with neutral colors, but eventually became a very colorful style.
- Picasso was very outspoken, opinionated and eccentric. He never threw anything out, hated the telephone, and refused to dust his studio. He loved keeping an odd assortment of pets, including goats, reptiles, a monkey and always some Afghan Hounds. He loved any publicity and made sure he was always reading something about himself.
- He was a prolific painter, and even in his 90<sup>th</sup> year, he painted 200 paintings. He was still working on the day he died, at 92, of heart failure.



*Don Quixote* is a 1955 sketch by Pablo Picasso of the Spanish literary hero and his sidekick, Sancho Panza.

**About Don Quixote (*Man from La Mancha*, by Miguel de Cervantes):**

Don Quixote is a middle-aged gentleman from the region of La Mancha in central Spain. Obsessed with the chivalrous ideals touted in books he has read, he decides to take up his lance and sword to defend the helpless and destroy the wicked.

After a first failed adventure, he sets out on a second one with a somewhat befuddled laborer named Sancho Panza, whom he has persuaded to accompany him as his faithful squire. In return for Sancho's services, Don Quixote promises to make Sancho the wealthy governor of an isle. On his horse, Rocinante, a barn nag well past his prime, Don Quixote rides the roads of Spain in search of glory and grand adventure. He gives up food, shelter, and comfort, all in the name of a peasant woman, Dulcinea del Toboso, whom he envisions as a princess. Along the way, the simple Sancho plays the straight man to Don Quixote, trying his best to correct his master's outlandish fantasies.

One famous scene from the novel depicts Don Quixote dreaming he is battling a giant that he perceives as a threat to his knighthood and the world—in reality he is dueling with the blades of a windmill.

In the end, the beaten and battered Don Quixote forswears all the chivalric truths he followed so fervently and dies from a fever. With his death, knights-errant become extinct. Benengeli, the narrator, returns at the end of the novel to tell us that illustrating the demise of chivalry was his main purpose in writing the history of Don Quixote

**Possible Questions:**

- Is this an abstract or realistic sketch?
- Do you think Picasso spent a lot of time on this drawing?
- Artists use spots of color to move our eye around a painting, or draw attention to a particular feature. What is the main focus of the painting? By using all black, how do we know?
- Would we understand this drawing without the background?
- Would this "story" be better told with color?
- What colors would you add?
- Does the drawing want to make you know more about Don Quixote?
- Picasso was notorious for signing his work with a large flourish. Can you see the artist's signature on the print? (Picasso did not consider this one of his "collection" and did not sign it. It was more of "doodle")

## Activity: The Mighty Pen (and Ink):

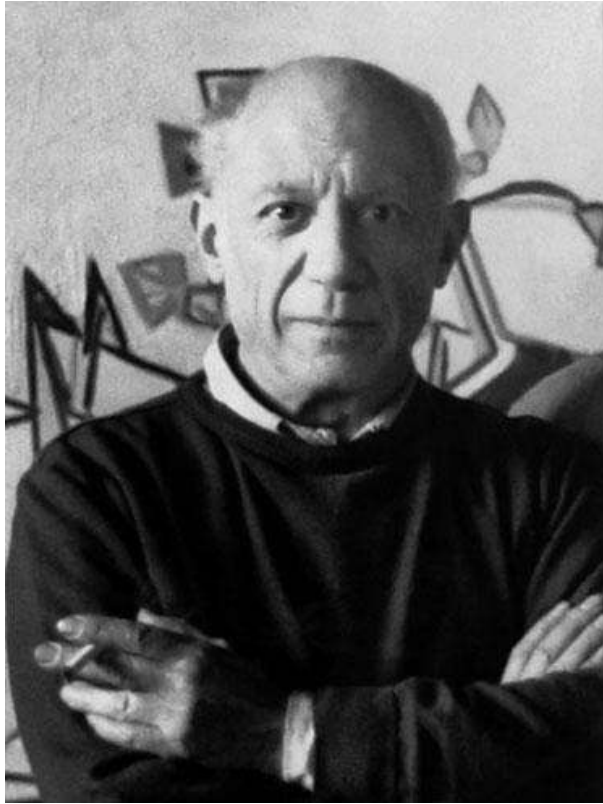
### Materials Needed:

1. 8.5" x 11" white glossy paper
2. Scratch paper
3. Pencils & Erasers
4. Black Sharpies, chisel-tip
5. Black Sharpies, fine-tip
6. Black Sharpies, brush-tip
7. 9 x 12 black construction paper
8. Glue sticks

### Process:

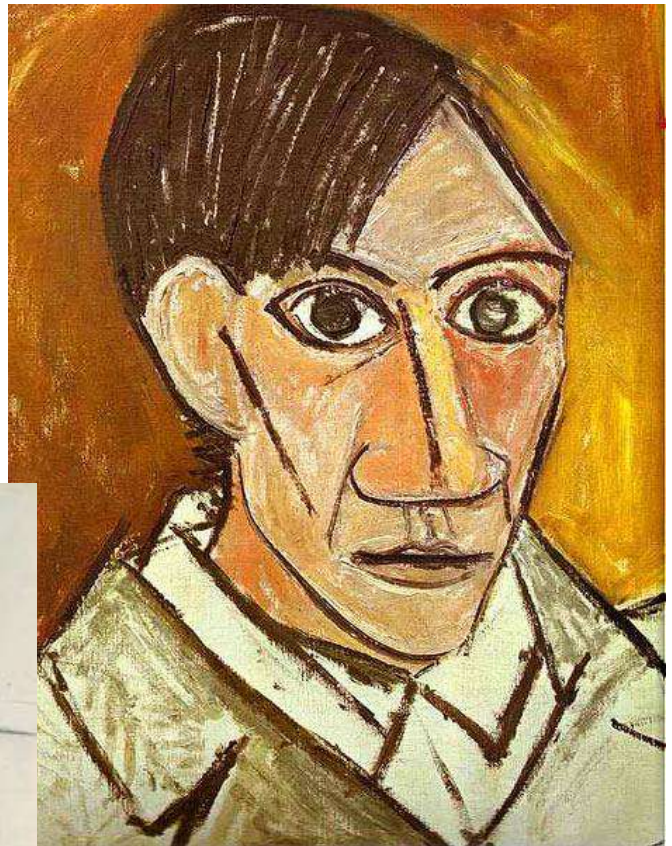
1. Have students use 5 minutes to imagine a scene from their favorite book. This should be one scene that depicts the character and the story line. (I.e.: Katniss Everdeen, arm extended with 3 fingers in the air, with white flowers and trees in the background. (Encourage them to NOT use this example.)) Use the scratch paper to "doodle" ideas.
2. Give each student a sheet of drawing paper, a pencil, eraser and one of each size black Sharpie
3. Once they have a scene in mind, have them SKETCH—that means fast with few details—their scene on the drawing paper with pencil. At this point they can erase and correct imperfections. (Note: it is difficult to erase pencil marks from glossy paper—draw lightly!) The sketch should fill the page and include background images. Do not use the pencil to color in spaces. This is an OUTLINE SKETCH.
4. When they are happy with the sketch they can trace their art with black using the various size Sharpies, filling in spaces as needed.  
**Note:** Students should practice using the different Sharpie tips on the scratch paper to understand the best way to get line variations.  
Because we are working in "monochrome" (single color), images can't overlap. Students should think about the use of "negative space" (white areas) to help define the image and the story.
5. As a final touch, students should sign their sketch with a black Sharpie and mount it on the black construction paper.

## Photograph of Pablo Picasso and Other Works



*The artist's full name:*

Pablo Diego Jose Francisco de  
Payla Juan Nepomuceno Maria de  
los Remedios Cipriano de la  
Santisima Trinidad Clito Ruiz y  
Picasso.



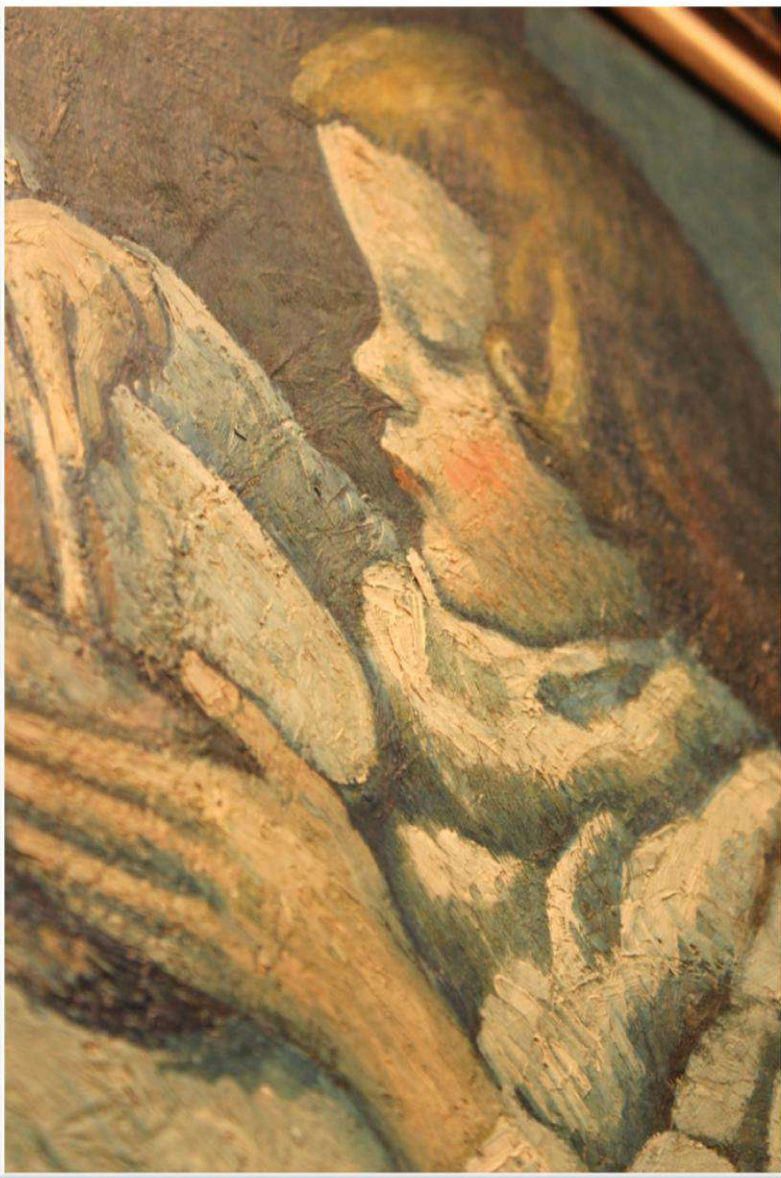
Self Portrait



*Marie-Thérèse Wearing a Hat,*  
1927



Le Gourmet



Le Gourmet, close up

Le Gourmet, paint application



*Le Gourmet* original is  
on display at the  
National Art Gallery in  
Washington, DC

These photos were taken  
by Terri McKenney,  
2012



Guitar Player  
*Cubism*

Old Guitarist  
*Blue Period*

