



Marc Chagall
"I and the Village"
1911

Vocabulary

Fauvism: An early-20th-century movement in painting begun by a group of French artists and marked by the use of bold, often distorted forms and vivid colors.

Cubism: A nonobjective school of painting and sculpture developed in Paris in the early 20th century, characterized by the reduction and fragmentation of natural forms into abstract, often geometric structures usually rendered as a set of discrete planes.

Surrealism: a 20th century movement of artists and writers (developing out of Dadaism) who used fantastic images and incongruous juxtapositions in order to represent unconscious thoughts and dreams.

Artist Biography: Marc was born July 7, 1887 in Russia. His hometown and his Jewish faith were significant influences on his art. He grew up in a home of ten children. They did not have much money, but they were very happy. At a young age he learned to play the violin and sing as well as draw and write poetry. In 1906 Marc wanted to become an artist so he left home and went to St. Petersburg, Russia where it was illegal to live if you were a Jew. Four years later he found an art patron who gave him a small monthly allowance and paid for him to go to Paris, France to continue his art. He loved Paris and being with all the artist there. In 1933 some of his artwork was burned by the Nazis. In 1941 he moved to the United States to keep safe during World War II. During this time he created theatrical art, designed costumes and created stained glass along with his other art. He returned to France in 1947. Chagall enjoyed

popularity in his life time. He died in 1985. During his life he was influenced by many types of art **Cubism**, **Fauvism** and **Surrealism**, but he never aligned fully with any of those styles, but rather created his own style.

Print:

Ask students why they think Chagall named this picture I and the Village. Explain that all the items in this picture had something to do with Marc Chagall's home village of Vitebsk, Russia. Have the students identify different items and state why he may have included them in this picture. Tell the students what **Fauvism** means. Have them show examples of Fauvism in the picture (The bright colors used on things that wouldn't normally be that color i.e. Green horse face etc.) Chagall said that if he wanted things to look like they were you just as well take a picture. He used elements of the **Cubist** movement. In this style the artists reduced things to their simplest shape (squares, circles, triangles and painted the units usually in one color) Ask the students to find shapes in the picture (i.e. circle in the center, it appears to have a large X through the center of the picture which divides the picture into 4 triangles). Tell the students that the **Surrealist** movement placed things in positions that didn't make logical sense they also painted dreamlike or unconscious thoughts. Have the students identify these elements in the picture (i.e. woman upside down, buildings upside down). How do you think Chagall felt about his village?

Project:

Prepare enough black sheets of construction paper before class as you have students using the following method. Using **crayola** brand glue (the one with the unique green no-clog top) draw lines on each paper that separates the paper into 4 to 5 sections. You can just make a big X from corner to corner, but it is more interesting if you make a variety of designs. Allow the glue to dry. Have the students brainstorm things that tell about them, favorite foods, travels, stories or experiences, favorite sports, talents and use each section to illustrate a different thing using oil pastels. Have them color in really darkly. They can use toothpicks to scrape thin swirls or lines. Also encourage them to use Surrealist, Cubist and Fauve techniques.

In the example the orange animal is our horses that had just gotten out the night before so we had to round it back up (hence the "evil" eye). The green animal on the left is a huge frog that my kids were showing me and it jumped into my house and freaked me out! The softball is because all of my girls have played softball so I spend lots of time at their games. The volcano is for my trip to Hawaii and I saw a volcano erupting. The night sky with stars is because I love to look up at the stars at night especially when I am with my family.

