

The Art of WWI

World War I had far reaching effects into the world of art. Among the millions of soldiers, there were artists of every nationality. Many enlisted out of patriotism or because they could not bear to be away from the action. Throughout most of history, artists and writers had witnessed wars without actually becoming involved. In 1914, for the first time, they all had to take part: Germans, Britons, Italians, Austro-Hungarians and Frenchmen. Fernand Léger became a stretcher-bearer, Oskar Kokoschka a cavalryman, Max Beckmann a medic, Andre Derain an artilleryman, Charles Camoin a camoufleur (camouflage expert), Otto Dix a machine-gunner. Many of them drew and painted what they saw and lived through. From the sketchbooks of pencil drawings done at the front to the canvases painted on returning home, their experience is a real testimony of what happened during the war.

New forms of Art

Techniques in art changed greatly in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Expressionism (changing an image to express one's emotions) became the trend in the art world. WWI led to even more abstract (*abstract-what seems to be separate from reality*) forms of expression. Some older artists continued to use the traditional techniques of realism (*realism-art that is real to life*) though this form of art used solely for war documentation became outdated with the use of color photography. Instead of trying to recreate what only the eyes could see, artists tried to paint the emotions they felt. They did this by using bold colors, jagged lines, and unusual shapes. With these new techniques, artists were able to say much more than in a simple photograph. This was the birth of abstract art.



How did art change at the time of WWI? Since cameras could now easily capture reality, what was the point of still creating art?

YOUR TASK: You and your partner will have about three minutes to examine each piece of art (there are six pieces in total). On the chart on the back, your job is to do the following:

- **Identify whether the name, date, and artist name**
- **Describe what you see (colors, objects, people, background, etc.)**
- **Explain what do you think the artist was trying to say when they created this artwork.**

Art in World War I

Name of painting and artist	Describe what you see (colors, objects, people, background, etc.)	What do you think the artist was trying to say when they created this artwork?

TASK: Pick a person in any image and create a narration (*as if they were speaking*) at least two lines long. Make sure it relates to the meaning of the painting.

EXTRA use for Guernica

The use of bold color, jagged lines, and three-dimensional shapes allowed the artist to say much more than a simple photograph. The Spanish artist Pablo Picasso created a revolutionary new style called **cubism**. He broke three-dimensional objects into pieces and arranged them in complicated patterns and angles. By changing the shapes of objects, Picasso offered a new view of reality. This was the birth of abstract art.

Aim: How does art reflect the society that creates it?

Objectives: SWBAT

- (1) ID/Define: Cubism and Fauvism
- (2) Describe the effects of war on soldiers, society, and the environment by analyzing artwork associated with World War I.
- (3) Assess the extent to which art is a reflection of society.

Motivation: 9/11 Art

First piece – Angels in America

- How would you describe this picture to someone who could not see it?
- How does this piece of art make you feel?

Second Piece - Art Of War: 9/11

- How would you describe this picture to someone who could not see it?
- How does this piece of art make you feel?
- When would you guess these two paintings were created?
- Are these paintings similar? Different? Compare the two.
- How does this art reflect our society?

Procedure:

- Review definition of an adjective – explaining or descriptive word – before a noun.
- List adjectives

Explain Art activity – Handout and questions.

Each piece: 5 minutes of silence and analysis (writing)

2-3 minutes of discussion

My explanation of artists' intentions

Medial Summary: Based on this artwork, write a paragraph explaining how society was affected by World War I.

