

Year 7 Reading Homework

The Blue Period of Picasso is the period between 1900 and 1904, when he painted essentially monochromatic paintings in shades of blue and blue-green, only occasionally warmed by other colours. These somber works, inspired by Spain but painted in Paris, are now some of his most popular works, although he had difficulty selling them at the time. Picasso settled in Paris in 1904, having spent a few difficult years with no fixed studio and little artistic success. While back in 1903, he had produced his Blue Period works, which seemed to reflect his experience of relative poverty and instability, depicting beggars, street urchins, the old and frail and the blind.

Picasso was influenced by a journey through Spain and by the suicide of his friend Carlos Casagemas, who took his life at the L'Hippodrome Cafe in Paris, France by shooting himself in the right temple on February 17, 1901.

Picasso's depression didn't end with the beginning of his rose period, which succeeded the blue period and in which the colour pink dominates in many of his paintings. In fact, it lasted until the end of his cubist period (which followed the rose period) and only in the period thereafter, which was his neo-classicist period, did Picasso's work begin to show the playfulness that would remain a prominent feature of his work for the rest of his life. Picasso's contemporaries didn't even distinguish between a blue and a rose period but regarded the two as one single period.

Questions about the text

1. What types of paintings did Picasso do during the years 1900-1904?
2. In what year did Picasso settle in Paris?
3. What imagery did the Blue paintings depict?
4. How did his friend Carlos Casagemas influence Picasso's work?
5. How did the paintings of the Rose period differ from the Blue period?

