



BASQUIAT

GRADES K-5

Basquiat: Boom for Real

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQPZzSeC9nc>

Educators, Parents or Guardians: You may use the following discussion questions and activities to enhance your students' learning experience before and after viewing Deeper Than Read's *Basquiat: Boom for Real*.

Video Preview Questions: Asking the following questions will prepare students to be alert for details and view the video more critically.

- In this video, we will be learning about a graffiti artist named Jean-Michel Basquiat. What is graffiti? Can you describe graffiti that you have seen? What can you guess about Jean-Michel Basquiat now that you know he was a graffiti *artist*?
- One thing that you will learn about the artist Basquiat is that he did not attend an art school to learn to be an artist. How do you think he learned to be a great artist without special training? As you watch the video, note the things Basquiat does that help him to develop his skill as an artist.

Video Follow-Up Questions: The following questions help clarify and deepen students' understanding of topics addressed in the video and also allow for personal responses to Jean-Michel Basquiat's life.

Vocabulary Follow-Up

- The video states that Basquiat created his own *hieroglyphics* in his art work. What are hieroglyphics? Do you think Basquiat's hieroglyphics make his art work interesting? Do you think his hieroglyphics make his message easier or more difficult to understand?

Jean-Michel Basquiat

- What are some of the challenges Basquiat faced growing up with his parents in New York City? What do you learn about Basquiat from the way he faced these challenges?
- What are some things Basquiat did as a child that helped him to develop his skill as an artist? Can you think of a skill you might be able to develop without going to a formal school? What things would you need to do to develop the skill?
- What did Basquiat notice was missing in much of the famous art work in the New York City museums? How did this discovery influence Basquiat's art?
- Describe Basquiat's art. Why do you think it became popular so quickly?
- How did Basquiat use his art to express his ideas and convictions?
- Even though Basquiat created his paintings many years ago, people are still trying to understand their messages. Why are the messages sometimes difficult to understand?

Video Follow-Up Activities: Consider selecting one or more of the following activities to extend students' understanding of topics related to Jean-Michel Basquiat's life. You may choose to assign an activity to individuals, partners, or a small group.

- **Postcard** – Basquiat used his art skills when he began making and selling postcards as a child. Brainstorm a list of themes or subjects you might use to design a set of postcards to sell. Select one idea and create one post card on a 4 x 6 blank index card.
- **Art Museum** – Basquiat loved art museums as a child. He learned every sculpture, painting, and artist by heart. Visit a local art museum and identify a painting or sculpture that you especially enjoy. If possible, take a photograph of the painting or sculpture. Research to learn more about the artwork and the artist who created it. Present what you have learned to an audience.
- **Graffiti Art** – Basquiat started a new brand of art. He used different types of art media and included many symbols and words in addition to images. Basquiat used his art to express important messages such as to speak out against racism and to point out the tension between the rich and poor. Take the role of a Basquiat-like graffiti artist. Identify a message that is important to you. Think about how you can communicate this message using color, images, symbols and text. Create your graffiti work of art on a large blank white posterboard. Display your art work to an audience. Ask your audience to interpret your message.
- **Art and Social Issues** – Many artists have used their art work to confront social issues. Research artists of minority groups who challenge social issues in their art work. Select one artist and one of their works you particularly like. Present what you have learned about the artist and the work you selected in either a brief oral or written report.

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