

# DAYDREAMING WITH CHAGALL



[\[CLICK HERE FOR PHOTOS OF THIS PROJECT FROM: Mrs. White's 2nd Grade Class\]](#)

**Level:** Primary, Junior

**Grades:** K-5 | **Age:** 5-11 | **Written by:** Julie Moses

[Julie is a homeschooling art teacher who runs Miss Julie's Art School in La Quinta, CA.]

## Summary:

Students will create works of art inspired by artist Marc Chagall's painting I and the Village.

### **Objectives:**

To explore the concepts of surrealism and early cubism that Chagall portrayed in his work.

### **What You Need:**

- 9x12 inch piece of drawing paper
- pencil
- markers
- a print or photo Marc Chagall's 'I and the Village.'

### **What You Do:**

1. Read through "About Marc Chagall" and "About I And the Village" (found below). Discuss with your students.
2. Start by having the kids draw (in pencil) a line from corner to corner on their paper diagonally creating two triangles. Then repeat with the other two diagonal corners so that they end up with a large 'X' on their paper.
3. In one of the triangles they are to draw the profile of a person. They should try to use the whole triangle for this. In the opposite triangle they are to draw the profile of an animal. Again, trying to use as much of the triangle as possible.
4. In the 3rd triangle they should draw what the person is thinking or dreaming about. In the last triangle they are to draw what the animal is thinking or dreaming about.
5. After they are happy with their drawings they should black line the pencil lines all except for the original 'X'.
6. At this point they can add color. Encourage the kids to repeat colors. For younger kids this can be achieved by giving them a very limited selection of markers.
7. For an extension of this project the kids can write stories about their pictures.

### **About Marc Chagall**

*Written by Andrea Mulder-Slater, KinderArt®*

*"Chagall's career was marked by endless political and social upheavel, which meant he lived a number of different lives as a permanent exile from his homeland."*

~Michel Makarius

Marc Chagall was born in Vitebsk, Belorussia, Russian Empire [now in Belarus] in 1887 - the oldest of nine children. His father worked in a herring factory and his mother sold spices and herring out of a small shop in their home. As a child he studied drawing and painting and in 1910 he went to Paris and became an artist. Chagall often painted dreamlike scenes and many of the pictures he painted include memories from his childhood. In addition to paintings, Marc created stage sets, stained glass, murals and costumes, as well as illustrations for children's' books.

## About I and the Village

Written by Andrea Mulder-Slater, KinderArt®



**Title:** I and the Village

**Artist:** Marc Chagall

**Date:** 1911

**Medium/Size:** Oil on canvas, 6' 3 5/8" x 59 5/8"

**Current Location:** Museum of Modern Art, New York, New York

**Points of Discussion:**

*"Chagall here relives the experiences of his childhood, experiences so important to him that his imagination shaped and reshaped them without ever getting rid of their memories."*

~H. W. Janson

I and the Village is a "narrative self-portrait" featuring memories of Marc Chagall's childhood in the town of Vitebsk, in Russia. The dreamy painting is ripe with images of the Russian landscape and symbols from folk stories.

The picture can be broken down into 5 distinct sections. The first at the top right includes a rendering of Chagall's home town, with a church, a series of houses and two people. The woman and some of the houses in the village are upside down, further emphasizing the dreamlike quality of the work. Below that we see a green-faced man who some say is Chagall himself. At the bottom of the work, we see a hand holding a flowering branch. Next to that, an object which some say is a child's bouncing ball -- perhaps a plaything from Chagall's earlier days. Finally, we see the image of a milkmaid layered atop the head of a lamb - a motif common to Chagall. (Cows, bulls and lambs figure in many of Chagall's paintings as cosmic symbols).

The important thing to note about this picture is that it is a reflection of Marc Chagall's dreams and memories. Also relevant is the fact that many of Chagall's pictures (including this one) have symbols that relate specifically to Jewish folklore.

### Interesting to Note:

I and the Village is one of Chagall's earliest surviving works. In it, he ignored the laws of gravity. Objects are upside down, things appear to float and perspective is disregarded entirely. Instead, Chagall chose to focus on color, form and shape. The result is a very emotional work -- a visual diary of Marc Chagall's life.