

# Marc Chagall

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Grade 4

## Artist Appreciation Lesson

### **Concepts:**

1. Marc Chagall was born in 1887 in Russia in an old provincial town with church towers, yellow stone buildings and wooden fences.
2. Chagall was brought up in a large family with many aunts and uncles. One uncle, who played the violin, is often found in his paintings.
3. When Chagall was 21, he went to Paris to study art and was influenced by the Cubists.
4. Chagall lived in France and the United States, but it was mostly the memories of Russia that he painted.
5. Marc Chagall said about painting: "It was more necessary for me than food. It seemed to me like a window through which I could have taken flight toward another world."
6. Chagall's painting had exotic elements. The figures and objects float about, not subject to the force of gravity.
7. Chagall's paintings are filled with villages, fiddlers, angels, animals, and flying people.

### **Materials:**

18" x 24" white paper, crayons, pencils, erasers, watercolors, water cans, brushes, sponges.

### **Procedure:**

1. Discuss the art of Marc Chagall. Tell about his life. Some prints you might discuss include:
  - a. The Green Violinist
  - b. Midsummer Night's Dream
  - c. Three Candles
  - d. I and the Village
  - e. Vase of Flowers by Moonlight
  - f. Peasant Life
  - g. The Birthday
2. All these prints are in the book, Marc Chagall by Ernest Raboff in the ART START series.

3. Discuss the recurring images in the Chagall paintings: the fiddler, the donkey, the village houses, the churches, flowers, cats, flying people, angels. Prepare a chart of these images or pass out a drawing sheet with the images. [Included.]
4. Point out how the figures in Chagall's paintings seem to float about and seem not to be subject to gravity. Discuss the dream-like quality of some of his paintings.
5. Instruct the students to create their own composition combining and selecting the Chagall images they like and put them together in a "Chagall-like" way.
6. Draw with crayon. Color some areas solidly with crayon. After drawing is done, paint within and around the images with watercolors. Paint over some areas in a crayon resist technique.

# Chronology

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## Marc Chagall

1887-1985

1. Marc Chagall was born in 1887 in a small provincial Russian village with church towers, yellow stone buildings and wooden fences.
2. His father, who Chagall remembered as tall, quiet, shy and hardworking, worked in a herring packinghouse.
3. His mother, who had eight children other than Marc, had a small shop in her home where she sold herring, flour, sugar and spices to help with the family income.
4. Chagall was brought up in a large Jewish family with many uncles and aunts. He often painted his Uncle Neuch, who played the violin.
5. At the age of 17, he went to St. Petersburg to study art.
6. When he was 21, he went to Paris, where he was influenced by the cubists. In his early years in Paris, he painted memories of his youth and symbols of Russian icons.
7. In 1914, he returned to Russia and married his childhood sweetheart, Bella Rosenfeld. They soon had a daughter.
8. In 1917, he founded an academy of art and later designed theater sets in Moscow, which helped him to develop his imaginative style.
9. In 1924, he returned to France for one of the happier periods of his life.
10. In 1941, The Museum of Modern Art in New York invited him to the United States, where he remained for five years.
11. In 1946, he designed costumes and sets for Stravinsky's ballet, *THE FIREBIRD*.
12. One of his great accomplishments, a series of stained glass windows of the Twelve Tribes of Israel for a synagogue near Jerusalem, was completed in 1961.
13. He gave a year of his life to designing the ceiling of the Paris Opera, with 2,153 square feet of ballet dancers, firebirds, and flowers in banks of vivid colors.
14. In 1965, for the New York Metropolitan Opera production of Mozart's *MAGIC FLUTE*, he designed 75 costumes and 14 sets.
15. Marc Chagall is known for his imaginative style in which recognizable objects are found in unusual positions, often floating through space. His work is literary and romantic with rich colors not corresponding to reality. The subjects of his works reflect a poetic interpretation of Russian-Jewish village life and religious pictures.
16. His work fostered the Expressionist movement in Germany and the Surrealist movement in France.
17. When discussing painting, Chagall said: "It was more necessary for me than food. It seemed to me like a window through which I could have taken flight toward another world."

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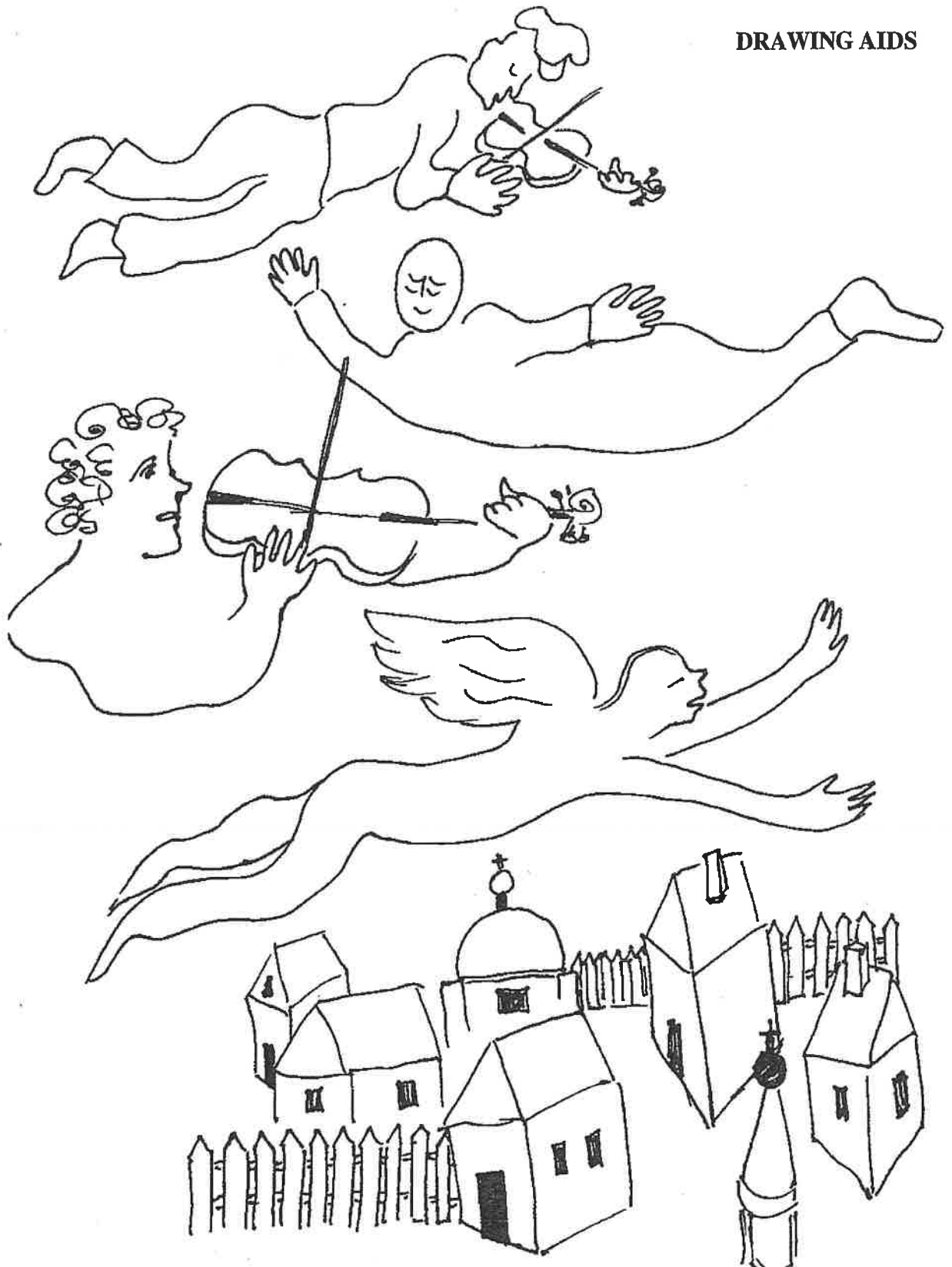
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