Pablo Picasso and Abstract Art

Pablo Picasso is famous for his “cubism,” a style of abstract art that splinters objects into many pieces. He is also famous for taking a famous painting and making a cubist version of it.

Here is a perfect example. In the early 1600’s, a Spanish artist named El Greco created a portrait of his son as a famous painter. It is the portrait on the left. In 1950, Picasso painted his version, the painting on the right.

How many similarities do you see? There are the colors used, black and brown. There are the ruffles at neck and wrist, the palette and the hand holding the brush.

What are the differences? Picasso has “abstracted” the features of the face and turned them into an African mask-like cubist version. He has also distorted the shape of the hands. He has “abstracted” the ruffles, making them a splintered pattern of triangles.

Picasso’s version is a tribute to his favorite artist, El Greco. He is showing a more modern interpretation of an old master.