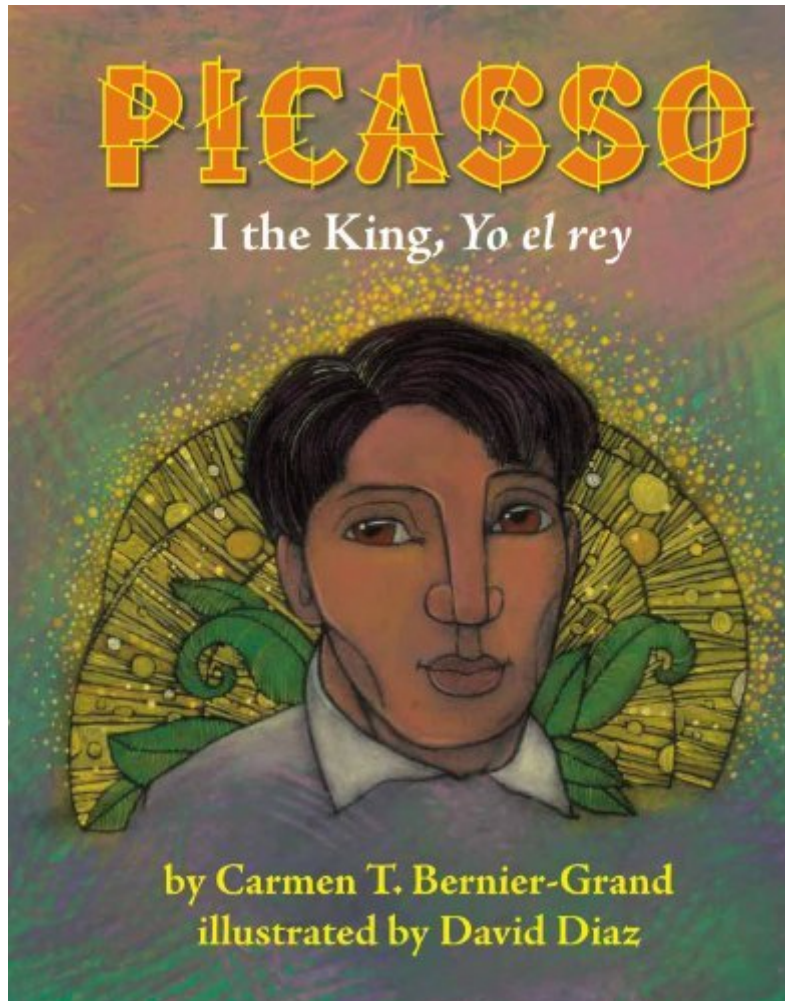




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# Picasso: I The King, Yo El Rey



## Synopsis

Pablo Picasso's relationships with both his children and his female companions were often tempestuous and destructive, but they provided the drama on which he fed as he created one groundbreaking work after another. From ceramics to print making to sculpture to photography to poetry "Picasso had a huge appetite for expressing himself through every kind of artistic medium, and he is now considered one of the greatest artists of the 20th century. With bold, powerful oil paintings, David Diaz captures the intensity of a man who once signed a drawing as "Yo el rey" or "I the King."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Cute book. Stories are poetry with a bit of Spanish which makes it a fun read. I think it's a good introduction for a child to a great artist.

I found this book entertaining and enjoyed reading it. The author artfully tells the story of Pablo Picasso. The verse is creative and poetic and accompanies colorful paintings by the illustrator who seems to capture the tone of the verse and topic. The author demonstrates a skillful and rhythmic

writing style. The biography of Picasso was interesting, revealing and candid. The author uses a frugal, selective economy of words that creates an intriguing story of a genius who created a swath of destructive relationships in his path and wake. The story of Picasso is, as described in the book description, "often tempestuous and destructive." This destructive behavior occurs in Picasso's relationships to women and his/their children. One previous reviewer has quoted the series of sexually explicit and suggestive texts from the book. This is fine for adults; however, this book is marketed to children by Children's Publishing. So, you have to ask yourself...do you want your child reading about Picasso's "menage a trois" that never ends? Or "Picasso, a minotaur, bull-man, ravenous for orgies?" The sexual exploits and dysfunction of Picasso that leads to sordid relationships and several children out of wedlock is a focus of this book. Call me "traditional" or "old-fashioned" but I do not want to be having conversations with my daughter about orgies and threesomes! Without checking this book out you would not know that it is NOT APPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN. Because it is marketed for children, it gets a 1-Star rating as totally missing that mark. In addition to the content, I think the style is too mature for readers younger than young adults. If it was marketed to adults, I would consider a 4-Star rating, as I found it interesting.

I am not going to give a harsh rating to this volume simply because it may contain content some parents do not know how to introduce with their children. Perhaps because this book is illustrated some feel the volume is intended for picture book age readers, but it is not. The description states ages 9 and up, and that would be a time where kids could begin to be introduced to some of the terms in this book. By this age discussions of puberty and adolescence should have already started, and, in many instances, the changes themselves, so discussing some of the problems grown-ups face in adult relationships, particularly those carried out without care and discernment, would be more than appropriate. If Picasso's personal life is anything, it is a cautionary tale about the havoc toying with the emotions of others causes. I also liked that this book dealt bluntly with death and with the reality of the aftermath of the Nazi bombing that inspired one of Picasso's most famous paintings - it even presents an actual reproduction of that painting - "Guernica" as well as a few others. The free form of the text in this volume actually lends a lot of style to the story of Picasso's life given his own styles of painting and producing art. In another book, it could become tiresome, but here it fits. Occasionally foreign language (French and Spanish) words are italicized and can be looked up in the glossary in the back of the book -- also a nice touch as is the thick matte paper used to hold the stunning illustrations that appear on each page (minus those that actually feature a work of Picasso). The only reason I am ducking this book a star is for the brief biography of Picasso

featured in the back of the book immediately before a chronology of his life. I found that this biography, while not as clipped as the main prose, actually featured a lot of really terse sentences when it could have been written with a more natural flow given that it was supplemental information. I also felt like this biography over-glorified Picasso's personal life in a space that could have addressed the fact that the man's ego, which allowed him to create great art, also led him into trouble when trying to sustain a personal relationship. I feel that the negative reviews here are unwarranted and think this is a very nice book for both the adult collector and for the parent who will sit and discuss more adult topics with an older child or middle schooler.

The toughest thing, I can say as an educator and as a children's book author, is less about what to say but how much to say. There's always a desire to say more than what is necessary and remorse that you didn't say enough. **PICASSO: I THE KING, YO EL REY**, a primarily pictorial biography of Pablo Picasso wonderfully written by Carmen T. Bernier-Grand and brilliantly illustrated by David Diaz pushes the boundaries of what to say and how much to say in this provocative look at an extraordinary artist.\*\*\*Typically with a pictorial, a book is driven by the strength of the pictures with a brief accompanying text to add some detail not readily apparent. Then, there are some biographies that have a smattering of pictures to give you a glimpse of a text-heavy or text-driven narrative. This book is equal parts text and equal parts artwork. But, what's also interesting here is the scope and the personal and somewhat intimate discussions about Picasso and his relationships. I'm measuring my critique as to being careful not to sound alarming. But, this "children's" book is perhaps more suited for the mature "tween" and up. Despite it being labeled by as a children's book, it's an academic discussion for your late grade school child. This is NOT to say that I don't like it. In fact, I love it. I'd rather have honest discussions about real people than pretense. It does them no good to rob them of the opportunity to discuss matters that are played out before their eyes every day.\*\*\*The subtitle, "Yo El Rey" seems to suggest that part or all of the book is in Spanish. With the exception of one or two words here and there, it is essentially a wholly English text. So, for what it's worth, if you have a good dialogue with your child and live in a household where the arts are respected and flourish, I have no doubt that a book like this would be a welcomed treasure.

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