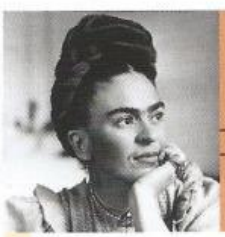
13 READING

A Scan the article. Where was Kahlo from? What happened when she was 18? Who did she marry?



A Life in Paintings: The Frida Kahlo Story

Mexican painter Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) was both a talented artist and a woman of great courage. Her paintings tell an amazing story of tragedy and hope.

At the age of six, Kahlo developed polio, and she spent nine months in bed. The illness damaged her right leg forever. Most girls didn't use to play sports back then, but Kahlo played soccer and took up boxing. Exercising helped Kahlo get stronger. Kahlo even dreamed of becoming a doctor one day.

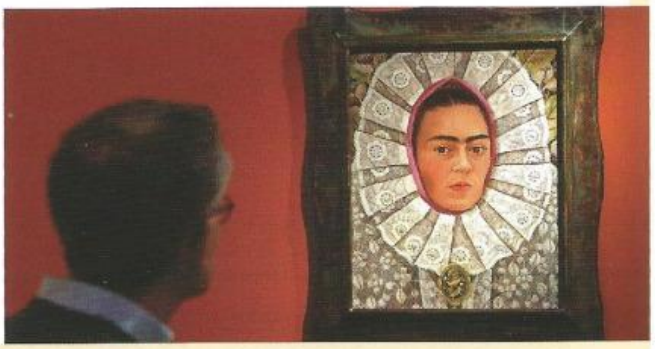
At 18, Kahlo was in a terrible bus crash, and her destiny changed. She wore a full body cast for months because her injuries were so bad. But again, Kahlo refused to give up. She entertained herself by painting self-portraits. She said, "I paint myself because I'm often alone, and because I am the subject I know best."

Kahlo suffered from very bad health the rest of her life, but she continued to paint. Other artists began to recognize her talent – an unusual achievement for a woman at the time. In 1929, she married famous Mexican painter Diego Rivera, but their marriage was troubled. Kahlo once said, "There have been two great accidents in my life . . . Diego was by far the worst."

Kahlo became pregnant three times. Unfortunately, because of her injuries from the bus accident and her generally poor health, none of her babies survived childbirth. This sadness almost destroyed Kahlo. Her paintings often show a broken woman, both in heart and body.

When she traveled, Kahlo always attracted attention. She dressed in long traditional Mexican skirts, wore her hair in long braids, and let her thick eyebrows grow naturally. She chose to look different, and people noticed her beauty everywhere she went.

Kahlo died at the age of 47 in the house where she was born. Her life was short, but extraordinary. Her paintings still amaze people with their honesty and originality.



B Read the article. Then circle the following words in the article and match them to the definitions below.

1. courage _____
2. tragedy _____
3. destiny _____
4. cast _____
5. recognize _____
6. injury _____

a. ability to control your fear in a difficult situation
b. accept that something is good or valuable
c. damage to a person's body
d. a special hard case that protects a broken bone
e. the things that will happen in the future
f. very sad event or situation

C Answer the questions.

1. What did Kahlo do to get healthier after her childhood illness?
2. Why did Kahlo start painting?
3. Why did Kahlo often do self-portraits?
4. What did Kahlo compare her marriage to?
5. Why couldn't Kahlo have children?
6. What was unusual about Kahlo's appearance?

D **GROUP WORK** What was unusual about Kahlo's life?
When do you think it's good to be different from what people expect?

LIVEWORKSHEETS