This painting shows the 16th century Catholic Cardinal Albrecht. Cardinal Albrecht was a German Cardinal who was strongly against the newly formed Protestant Lutheran church. In this painting, the Cardinal worked with the artist to use symbolism to portray him as a champion of the Catholic Church. Cardinal Albrecht is wearing his red Cardinal's outfit with a second outfit (commonly associated with the Catholic Saint Jerome) nearby on the table. Not only is the Cardinal surrounded by symbols of the Catholic faith (the Madonna and Child painting on the wall, reading a Bible, the Crucifix, etc.) he is also surrounded by an assortment of animals. We don't know what symbolic meaning all of these animals would have had in the 16th century, but we do know they were chosen and placed with purpose and are meant to symbolize character attributes Cardinal Albrecht wished to be identified with.

**SYMBOLISM**

Animals are often used as symbolism in art, and their meaning has shifted and changed with the years. Here are some common animals used in Western art and some of the meanings art historians associate with them.

- **Lion**
  Royal, regal, fierce protector

- **Dove**
  Peacemaker, bridge-builder

- **Eagle**
  Patriotic (USA), regal, fierce

- **Lamb**
  Meek, gentle, calm, willing follower

**KEY TERMS**

- Catholic
- Protestant
- Symbolism
- Character Attributes
- Collage

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Lucas Cranach the Elder (German, 1472-1553, active in Saxony), Cardinal Albrecht of Brandenburg as Saint Jerome, 1526, oil on wood panel. Bequest of John Ringling, 1936. SN308
Cardinal Albrecht worked with the artist Lucas Cranach the Elder to present this portrait in a web of symbolism. From the outfit aligning the Cardinal with Saint Jerome, to the religious objects, to the lion and other animals in the painting, this work of art makes a statement about how Cardinal Albrecht saw himself and wanted to be seen.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Begin by drawing or sketching a self-portrait. For instructions on how to make a self-portrait see *Self-Portrait with Favorite Things* activity on the Homeschool Third Thursday webpage.

2. Gather collage materials include scraps of colored paper, junk mail, and magazines. Use scissors to cut out shapes and objects that could be symbolic of who you are. For example, you might choose a parrot if you are talkative, or a cake if you are sweet.

3. Using the collage materials that are symbolic of your identity, take your self-portrait and glue in the collage materials, inspired by the painting Cardinal Albrecht of Bradenburg as Saint Jerome. Craft a surreal, or bizarre, scene using your collage materials.

4. Write an artist statement for your collage. In 2 paragraphs, describe how the symbols you chose are representative of your identity. Be sure to discuss the medium, or materials, you used in this artwork, what process did you go through to find and decide on the collage symbols?

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