***Massachusetts Curriculum Framework – 2019***

**ARTS**

**Grades Pre-Kindergarten to 12**





**This document was prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education**

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Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone 781-338-3000 TTY: N.E.T. Relay 800-439-2370
www.doe.mass.edu

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***Massachusetts Department of
Elementary and Secondary Education*75 Pleasant Street, Malden, Massachusetts 02148-4906**

August 19, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to present to you the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Arts* adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in June 2019. This Framework is built upon the foundation of the 1999 *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Arts*, as well as the *National Core Arts Standards* developed in 2014.

The current Framework incorporates improvements suggested by members of the Arts Curriculum Framework Review Panel, scholars who served as Content Advisors, and the individuals and organizations who provided comments during the public comment period in early 2019.

This revision of the Framework retains the strengths of the previous frameworks and includes these improved features:

* addition of the discipline of media arts to the existing disciplines of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts;
* increased emphasis on the importance of creating original work in the performing arts and on presenting in visual and media arts;
* increased emphasis on responding to the work of other students and work from masters, with a focus on understanding the context in which art works were created;
* alignment to a consistent structure organized around a common set of artistic practices across the five disciplines to encourage integrated instruction and collaboration; and
* ambitious standards that highlight the importance of the arts as part of a well-rounded education that prepares students for college, careers, and civic participation.

In the course of revising these standards, the Department received many valuable comments and suggestions. I want to thank those who contributed their ideas, enthusiasm, and determination to make the standards useful for students, families, educators, and the community. In particular, I am grateful to the members of the Arts Standards Review Panel, especially the facilitators who led those panels, and to our Content Advisors, for giving their time generously to the project of improving learning standards for Massachusetts students. I am proud of the work that has been accomplished.

We will continue to collaborate with schools and districts to implement the 2019 *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Arts* over the next several years. We have hired a new full time Arts Content Support Lead to assist with implementation. All Massachusetts frameworks are subject to periodic review and improvement for the benefit of the students of the Commonwealth.

We hope you will find this Framework useful in building a strong arts curriculum for your school or district. A well-rounded arts curriculum should expose students to a rich diversity of high-quality works from multiple genres, cultures, and time-periods. The purpose of teaching the arts is not only to develop skills in a given art form, but also to instill in students a deep appreciation for art, beauty, and truth, while broadening their understanding of differing perspectives on the human condition.

Thank you again for your ongoing support and for your commitment to improving achievement for all students.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Table of Contents

[Acknowledgments 6](#_Toc9517748)

[Document Organization 9](#_Toc9517749)

[Vision 10](#_Toc9517750)

[The Arts Are Important to a Well-Rounded Education 10](#_Toc9517751)

[The History and Review Process of the 2019 Massachusetts Arts Framework 11](#_Toc9517752)

[What the Arts Curriculum Framework Does and Does Not Do 12](#_Toc9517753)

[Guiding Principles for Effective Arts Education 14](#_Toc9517755)

[The Standards for Artistic Practice 20](#_Toc9517756)

[Organization of the Content Standards 22](#_Toc9517757)

[Pre-K–K Dance Standards 24](#_Toc9517758)

[1st–2nd Grade Dance Standards 25](#_Toc9517759)

[3rd–4th Grade Dance Standards 26](#_Toc9517760)

[5th–6th Grade Dance Standards 27](#_Toc9517761)

[7th–8th Grade Dance Standards 28](#_Toc9517762)

[Foundations Course Dance Standards 29](#_Toc9517763)

[Proficient Course Dance Standards 30](#_Toc9517764)

[Advanced Course Dance Standards 31](#_Toc9517765)

[Pre-K–K Media Arts Standards 32](#_Toc9517766)

[1st–2nd Grade Media Arts Standards 33](#_Toc9517767)

[3rd–4th Grade Media Arts Standards 34](#_Toc9517768)

[5th–6th Grade Media Arts Standards 35](#_Toc9517769)

[7th–8th Grade Media Arts Standards 36](#_Toc9517770)

[Foundations Course Media Arts Standards 37](#_Toc9517771)

[Proficient Course Media Arts Standards 38](#_Toc9517772)

[Advanced Course Media Arts Standards 39](#_Toc9517773)

[Pre-K–K Music Standards 40](#_Toc9517774)

[1st–2nd Grade Music Standards 41](#_Toc9517775)

[3rd–4th Grade Music Standards 42](#_Toc9517776)

[5th–6th Grade Music Standards 43](#_Toc9517777)

[7th–8th Grade Music Standards 44](#_Toc9517778)

[Novice Solo and Ensemble Standards 45](#_Toc9517779)

[Foundations Solo and Ensemble Standards 46](#_Toc9517780)

[Proficient Solo and Ensemble Standards 47](#_Toc9517781)

[Advanced Solo and Ensemble Standards 48](#_Toc9517782)

[Advanced General Music Standards 49](#_Toc9517783)

[Pre-K–K Theatre Standards 50](#_Toc9517784)

[1st–2nd Grade Theatre Standards 51](#_Toc9517785)

[3rd–4th Grade Theatre Standards 52](#_Toc9517786)

[5th–6th Grade Theatre Standards 53](#_Toc9517787)

[7th–8th Grade Theatre Standards 54](#_Toc9517788)

[Foundations Theatre Course Standards 55](#_Toc9517789)

[Proficient Theatre Course Standards 56](#_Toc9517790)

[Advanced Theatre Course Standards 57](#_Toc9517791)

[Technical Theatre Course Standards 58](#_Toc9517792)

[Pre-K–K Visual Arts Standards 59](#_Toc9517793)

[1st–2nd Grade Visual Arts Standards 60](#_Toc9517794)

[3rd-4th Grade Visual Arts Standards 61](#_Toc9517795)

[5th–6th Grade Visual Arts Standards 62](#_Toc9517796)

[7th–8th Grade Visual Arts Standards 63](#_Toc9517797)

[Foundations Visual Arts Course Standards 64](#_Toc9517798)

[Proficient Visual Arts Course Standards 65](#_Toc9517799)

[Advanced Visual Arts Course Standards 66](#_Toc9517800)

[Appendix 1: English Learners and Inclusion 67](#_Toc9517801)

[Appendix 2: Singing Skills 70](#_Toc9517802)

[Bibliography 76](#_Toc9517804)

# Acknowledgments

##### Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Arts Review Facilitators, 2018–2019

**Sarah Dugan,** Visual Arts Facilitator, Woburn Public Schools

**Jennifer Fidler,** Media Arts Facilitator, Wilmington Public Schools

**Alice Matthews Gentili,** Media Arts Facilitator, Mendon-Upton Regional School District

**Rebecca Csizmesia Jontos**, Music Facilitator, Fall River Public Schools

**Lisa Leach**, Music Facilitator, Worcester Public Schools

**Timmary Leary**, Visual Arts Facilitator, Worcester Public Schools

**Techla McElligott,** Dance Facilitator, Revere Public Schools

**Demerice Pallone,** Equity Facilitator, Holbrook Public Schools

**Jonathan Rappaport,** Lead Facilitator,Arts|Learning

**Emily Smith,** Theatre Facilitator,Nashoba Valley Technical High School

##### Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for Arts Review Panelists, 2018–2019

**Beth Balliro**, Visual Arts, Massachusetts College of Art & Design

**Danielle Bazinet,** Dance,The Sage School, Foxboro MA

**Emily Bilodeau,** Music,Medway Public Schools

**Angelica Brisk,** Media Arts, Cambridge Public Schools

**Katherine Bromley,** Theatre, Lexington Public Schools

**Laura Byrne,** Theatre, The Nantucket Dreamland Foundation

**Laura Cahill,** Visual Arts, Worcester Public Schools

**Julia Campisano,** Visual Arts, Braintree Public Schools

**Maggie Carberry Pasquan,** Visual Arts, Westwood Public Schools

**Anne Charron,** Visual Arts, West Springfield Public Schools

**Charles Combs,** Theatre, Berklee College of Music (emeritus)

**Elizabeth Coughlan,** Visual Arts, Milestones Day School and Transition Program

**Maureen Creegan-Quinquis** **,** Media Arts, Lesley University

**Rebecca Damiani,** Music, Milton Public Schools

**Christine De Lima,** Theatre, Hamilton Public Schools

**Angela Dickerson,** Dance, Boston Public Schools

**Sandra Doneski,** Music, Gordon College

**Sheron Doucette,** Theatre, Framingham Public Schools

**Chris Fehl,** Visual Arts, Weston Public Schools

**Elizabeth Fortin,** Visual Arts Worcester Public Schools

**Maria Galante,** Media Arts, Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School

**Allison Gover,** Visual Arts, Chelmsford Public Schools

**Lois Hetland,** Visual Arts, Massachusetts College of Art and Design

**Jason Luciana,** Theatre, Plymouth Public Schools

**Faith Lueth,** Music, Berklee College of Music

**Sarah Martin,** Theatre, Merrimack College

**Jessica McGettrick, T**heatre, Newton Public Schools

**Nancy Moses,** Dance, Bridgewater State University (emerita)

**Anna Naiman,** Visual Arts, South Hadley Public Schools

**Sandra Nicolucci**, Music, Boston University (emerita)

**Joan Ortu,** Visual Arts, Malden Public Schools

**Luci Prawdzik,** Visual Arts, Somerville Public Schools

**Sabrina Quintana,** Music, Lynn Public Schools

**Eleena Rioux,** Media Arts, Northbridge Public Schools

**Christopher Roberts,** Music, Monomoy Regional School District

**Lisa Rupp,** Music, Dracut Public Schools

**Tamara Shattuck,** Visual Arts, Western New England University

**Kellie Shea,** Dance, Worcester Public Schools

**Brian Sheehan,** Music, Malden Public Schools

**Blake Siskavich,** Music, Lincoln Public Schools

**Alyson Smith,** Visual Arts, Hampden-Wilbraham Regional School District

**Alyssa Taranto,** Media Arts, Franklin Public Schools

**John Travlos,** Visual Arts, Lawrence Public Schools

**Diana Young,** Theatre, Sturgis Charter School

##### Arts Education Advisory Council

**Elizabeth Byron,** Visual Art and Special Education, Boston Public Schools

**Charles Combs,** Theatre and Drama, Higher Education Consultant

**Diane Daily,** Education Programs Manager, MA Cultural Council

**Christopher P. Dearbeck,** Fine Arts Coordinator, Billerica Public Schools

**Jodi P. Falk,** Dance Teacher and Consultant, Nationally /Internationally

**Jennifer Fidler,** Visual Arts Liaison, Wilmington Public Schools

**Alice Matthews Gentili,** Visual Art Educator, Mendon-Upton Regional School District

**Hannah Hammond,** Theatre Teacher, UP Academy Holland Elementary School

**Julie Jaron,** Director of Visual and Performing Arts, Springfield Public Schools

**Richard P. King,** Music, Theatre, Visual ArtCoordinator,Newton Public Schools

**Simone Kivett,** Visual Art Teacher, Lynn Public Schools

**Timmary Leary,** Visual Arts Liaison, Worcester Public Schools

**Arlene Black Mollo,** Professor of Art Education, UMass Dartmouth

**Sandra Nicolucci,** Assoc. Professor of Music Education, Boston University (emerita)

**Joan A. Ortu,** Visual Art Teacher, Malden Public Schools

**William Thomas Pappazisis,** Director of Performing Arts, Arlington Public Schools

**Myran Parker-Brass,** former Executive Director for the Arts, Boston Public Schools

**Kim Pike,** Principal, Provincetown Public Schools, Provincetown District, Provincetown

**Luci Prawdzik,** Supervisor of Art K–12, Somerville Public Schools

**Sabrina Quintana,** Director of Music Education, Lynn Public Schools

**Jonathan Rappaport,** Executive Director (Emeritus), Arts|Learning. Faculty, Kodály Music Institute

**Lynn Souza,** Director of Fine Arts K–12, New Bedford Public Schools

**Matthew Wilson,** Advocacy for Arts and Culture, Executive Director for MASSCreative

##### Content Advisors

**Cecil Adderley,** Professor and Chair, Music Education, Berklee College of Music, Boston

**Noreen Burdett,** Associate Professor, Boston Conservatory at Berklee

**Rita Daly,** Associate Professor, Suffolk University, Boston

**Olivia Gude,** Professor,Art Institute of Chicago

**Priscilla Kane Hellweg,** Executive Artistic Director, Enchanted Circle Theater, Holyoke

**Julie Kiernan,** Assistant Professor, Salem State University

**Meghan McLyman,** Vice-President, Massachusetts Dance Education Organization

**Laura Marotta,** President, Massachusetts Art Education Association

**Julia Marshall,** Professor and Chair, Art Education, San Francisco State University

**Jennie Moctezuma,** Director of Leadership and Evaluation, Louisiana Department of Education

**Nancy Moses,** Dance, Bridgewater State University (emerita)

**Kristi Oliver,** Assistant Professor, Art Education, Art History & Media Studies, College of Visual & Performing Arts, UMASS Dartmouth

**Walter Pavasaris,** Professor, Music Education, Berklee School of Music

**Steve Seidel,** Principal Investigator, Project Zero Harvard Graduate School of Education

**April Shepard**, Dance Teacher, Boston Renaissance Charter School

**Ronald Sherwin,** Associate Professor, Music, Art History & Media Studies, College of Visual & Performing Arts, UMASS Dartmouth

**Marilyn Stewart,** Professor, Kutztown University

**Ellen Winner,** Professor, Morrissey College of Arts and Science, Boston College

**Diana Adams Woodruff,** Independent Visual Arts consultant

##### Massachusetts Executive Office of Education

**B Kim,** Policy Analyst

**Tom Moreau,** Assistant Secretary of Education

##### Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

**Jeffrey Wulfson,** Deputy Commissioner

##### Center for Educational Options

**Kristen McKinnon,** Service-Learning and Student Engagement Coordinator, Office of Student and Family Support

##### Center for Instructional Support

**Kerry Akashian,** Literacy Content Support Lead

**Dawn Benski**, Arts Content Support Lead

**Rachel Bradshaw,** Manager, Instructional Policy

**Gail Castle,** Management Analysist

**Ron Noble,** Associate Commissioner

**Heather Peske,** Senior Associate Commissioner

**Susie Pham,** Educator Effectiveness Specialist

**Katherine Tarca,** Director Arts and Humanities

**Craig Waterman,** Assistant Director Instructional Policy, Lead Writer

**Susan Wheltle,** Consultant

##### Student Advisory Council

**Matt Jens,** Student,Winchester High School

**Maya Mathews**, Chair, Newton North High School

# Document Organization

**The Vision** describes the significance of the arts to a well-rounded education and to preparation for college, career, and civic participation. **The Guiding Principles** describe the key components that should guide the design, implementation, and evaluation of pre-K through grade 12 arts curriculum and instruction. **The pre-K through 12 Standards for Artistic Practice** describe skills students develop and improve across their entire Arts education. They focus on dispositions and skills that underlie creating, presenting, producing, responding within each arts discipline, and making connections across disciplines. **The Content Standards** describe what students should know and be able to do in each of the arts disciplines within elementary and middle school grade clusters (pre-K–K, grades 1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8), and in high school courses at the foundations, proficient, and advanced levels. They are organized into five disciplines (dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts) and are designed to complement the development of the Standards for Artistic Practice.

# Vision

All Massachusetts students will develop artistic literacy through active participation in the arts, expressing creative ideas with skill, confidence, and artistic intent. A high-quality arts education empowers students to take artistic risks and supports the social emotional and learning needs of all students. Through practices related to creating, presenting or performing, responding, and connecting, students will understand the role of the arts in their individual lives and interests. While recognizing the intrinsic value of the arts, students will also discover the meaningful connections between the arts and other disciplines, and how the arts contribute to their communities and cultures around the world. As art students respond to great artists and works of art, they develop the ability to analyze artworks in terms of their formal qualities, historic style, social context, and artistic intent. The practice of responding to works of art builds perceptive acuity and aesthetic sensitivity. A rigorous progression of learning and engagement with the arts throughout Pre-K–12 education is the foundation for a rich, lifelong relationship with the arts.

## The Arts Are Important to a Well-Rounded Education

**Federal education legislation of 2015 (the “Every Student Succeeds Act”) defined a well-rounded education as one that includes the arts.** The arts complement the skills and content of mathematics, science and technology/engineering, English language arts, history and social science, and foreign languages. Study of the arts engages students’ divergent thinking in seeking and finding solutions to problems, and in communicating ideas and emotions not amenable to expression through words alone.

**A well-rounded pre-K to grade 12 education prepares all students to succeed in education beyond high school.** Study of the arts develops attitudes, skills, and content knowledge applicable to a comprehensive education. These include the pursuit of excellence; creativity and flexibility; focus and concentration; working collaboratively; respect for people with diverse experiences, abilities, and perspectives; and cultural and historical knowledge.

**A well-rounded pre-K to grade 12 education looks ahead to students’ employability and adaptability to careers that are likely to evolve throughout their lifetimes.** The global economy is shifting to an economy of ideas and innovation. According to a coalition of researchers, 73 percent of American corporate leaders affirm that creativity is an essential skill for success, but most high school graduates were deficient.[[1]](#footnote-1) Companies with greater measures of creativity perform better financially.[[2]](#footnote-2) Currently, over 3.4 million people nationally are employed in creative industries. In Massachusetts alone, the creative economy includes jobs ranging from design to writing to entertainment and reflects a billion-dollar industry.[[3]](#footnote-3)

**A well-rounded pre-K to grade 12 education prepares students to contribute to the civic life of their communities.** The arts are an indispensable element of vibrant community life in Massachusetts cities and towns. Citizens’ lives are enriched by local arts centers and internationally known museums and performance groups whose exhibitions and productions often provoke discussions about society, politics, and aesthetics. People who have had sequential and meaningful arts education as students tend to continue to participate in the arts as adults – as performers, creators, and audience members. They support the arts in the community today and as a legacy for future generations.

## The History and Review Process of the 2019 Massachusetts Arts Framework

The Massachusetts Arts Framework of 2019 is the third set of arts standards for Massachusetts since the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993 authorized the Board of Education “to direct the commissioner to institute a process to develop academic standards for the core subjects of mathematics, science and technology, history and social science, English, foreign languages, and the arts.” The Board adopted the first set of arts standards in 1995. In 1999, the second Framework identified standards in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, following the organization of the 1994 *National Standards for Arts Education*.

The latest Massachusetts review process began in October of 2017. Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) staff met with arts educators from across the state, as well as representatives from state arts education associations, to develop and answer questions to guide the review process. Following this initial outreach, DESE staff recruited arts educators to serve as facilitators to lead the review process for each arts discipline. These facilitators worked with a review panel in summer and fall of 2018 to develop proposed modifications and additions to the 1999 arts standards.

The 2019 *Massachusetts Arts Framework* endorses the NCAS definition of artistic literacy, uses the NCAS “Anchor Standards” as the Massachusetts “Standards for Artistic Practice,” and includes media arts as a distinct artistic discipline. It includes Content Standards that specify what students should know and be able to do in the arts in pre-K to K, grades 1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8, and at the novice, foundation, proficient, and advanced levels of high school courses.

### **What the Arts Framework Does and Does Not Do**

The standards define what all students should know and be able to do, not how teachers should teach. While the Framework provides an overall structure, it purposefully leaves the details of curriculum and instruction to the discretion of district teachers and curriculum developers. Educators are best equipped to design programs that are most appropriate in promoting excellence in their own communities.

[**What is Media Arts Education?**](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cdbenski%5CAppData%5CLocal%5CPackages%5CMicrosoft.MicrosoftEdge_8wekyb3d8bbwe%5CTempState%5CDownloads%5CMedia%20Arts%20Education%3A%20An%20Introduction%20http%3A%5Cwww.medialit.org%5Csites%5Cdefault%5Cfiles%5Cannouncements%5CMedia%20Arts%20Education%20Intro.pdf)

The Framework structure has changed since the 1999 version by including Media Arts as a new arts education discipline. Media Arts education encompasses interconnectivity across all disciplines and domains, artistic and academic elements, aesthetics and forms for the purpose of learning and creating. Media artworks are intrinsically interdisciplinary, integrative, and expressive, inclusive of imaging, sound, moving images, virtual and interactive components. Media artworks may be realized through, but not limited to the following domains: digital art, photography, graphics, music, video, animation, motion graphics, web design, interactive apps and game design, 3D products, architecture and environments, audio production, Television, internet broadcasting, virtual and augmented reality, and virtual worlds.

**Framework Structure**

The Curriculum Framework provides a structure intended to guide the selection, development, and evaluation of arts curriculum and programming that builds students’ artistic literacy. It primarily does this through the Standards of Artistic Practice, specifically the development of artistic ideas to:

* create original work aligned to the artist’s intent,
* present or perform artistic works to others,
* respond to the structure and context of artistic works, and
* make connections about the impact of the arts on oneself, history, and culture.

It further identifies specific Content Standards, aligned to the Standards for Artistic Practice, that students should demonstrate by the end of each grade dyad or course.

**District Decisions about Building Technical Skills and Vocabulary**

Because local flexibility is important in arts programs, the Framework leaves to districts the articulation of which technical skills, concepts, and academic vocabulary to emphasize, and at which grade levels or courses to introduce and refine them. All teachers have an important role to play in supporting the development of students’ academic vocabulary and knowledge about the world, as outlined in Language Standards 4–6 of the *English Language Arts and Literacy Framework*. Arts educators help students build general academic vocabulary when they take the time to teach students the meanings of words such as *compose/composer/composition*, or *image/imagery/imagination* in an arts context, or explain how common words with multiple meanings are used in the arts (e.g., a *high note*, a *warm* color, a block *print*, *firing* a clay pot). They contribute to students’ ability to speak and write precisely by introducing them to the technical vocabulary in the arts: *jazz, choreography, overture, trumpet, abstract painting*.

While it is paramount for students to gain knowledge of the crucial vocabulary, elements, and a range of technical skills to participate in the arts, it is important to remember that technical skills and vocabulary are in service to the Standards for Artistic Practice outlined in this Framework. Students should learn to read western musical notation, for example, because this knowledge will help them select, analyze, and interpret artistic works for presentation. They should learn about elements of visual arts because these concepts can help students to perceive and analyze artistic works. It is important that arts programs make these connections explicit for students, and regularly reinforce the relationship between knowledge and practice.

**Development of Foundational Skills**

The Curriculum Framework provides an overall structure for developing multi-dimensional artistic practices from pre-K–12 while remaining open-ended so districts may customize vertical alignment of foundational artistic skills. Such foundational skills include singing in music or drawing in visual art, for example. The Department recognizes a need for further support in districts that may require additional resources and professional development. For an example resource, refer to *Appendix 2*: *Pre-K–12 Sequential Development of Singing Skills.* Additional resources for the other arts disciplines will be forthcoming from the Department within implementation guidelines.

**Supporting Excellence**

As with all state frameworks, the Arts Framework provides a floor, not a ceiling. Standards provide a baseline to support equity across the Commonwealth, with the understanding that many programs and individuals will exceed these expectations. Similarly, it is expected that a high-quality district arts program will support excellence by encouraging individual students to move far beyond the standards for visual, performing, and media arts.

**Supporting All Students**

All students must have the opportunity to learn and meet the same high standards if they are to access the knowledge and skills that will be necessary and rewarding in their post-high-school lives. No set of standards can reflect the great variety of abilities, needs, learning rates, and achievement levels in any given classroom. The standards do not define the support materials that some students may need. It is beyond the scope of the standards to define the full range of support appropriate for English learners and for students with disabilities, but the Department acknowledges the need for additional resources such as Appendix 1.

# Guiding Principles for Effective Arts Education

The following principles are philosophical statements that underlie the standards and resources in this Curriculum Framework. They should guide the design and evaluation of arts programs in schools. Programs guided by these principles will prepare students for colleges, careers, and their lives as productive citizens.

#### Guiding Principle 1

##### An effective arts education enables students to become artistically literate.

Artistic literacy is the knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the arts. Fluency in the language(s) of the arts is the ability to create, perform or present, respond, and connect through symbolic and metaphoric forms that are unique to the arts. It is embodied in specific philosophical foundations and lifelong goals that enable an artistically literate person to transfer arts knowledge, skills, and capacities to other subjects, settings, and contexts.[[4]](#footnote-4)

As a society, we need to embrace the model that continued experience leads to learning in arts, just as it does in other valued subjects, like mathematics, science, history, and language study. Arts are our human birthright—every culture throughout time and across the globe has them. They are another way of knowing, and at least as valuable as any other subject in understanding the world. As opposed to being the purview of the talented few, the arts are essential throughout everyone’s lives for understanding and appreciation, expression, social and emotional well-being, and creative opportunity.

To give every individual the opportunity to live a life enriched by artistic engagement fueled by competence and confidence, this *2019 Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework* identifies explicitly how artistic literacy is acquired and developed in Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts.

#### Guiding Principle 2

##### An effective arts education develops students’ understanding of the concept of artistic intent.

Arts programs should focus on helping students create or perform work guided by thoughtful and intentional decision-making. Likewise, students should understand that an analysis or critique of a work of art considers artistic intent. A high-quality arts education program keeps artistic intent central by ensuring student analytical and aesthetic thinking, opportunities to share work, and conversations.

**What is Artistic Intent?**

Artistic intent is the meaning the artist intended in a work, so far as it can be determined from the artist’s statements or cultural context.

What does a classroom look like when a teacher focuses on developing artistic intent? Imagine a kindergarten teacher who inspires students to have an aesthetic response to a snowy day. The children go outside, observe the rhythms of falling snow, examine the geometry of snowflakes, hear the snow crunch beneath their boots, feel the chill and wetness of melting snow through their mittens. Back inside, children talk about the different ways they perceived snow before choosing art materials to express their *own* ideas of experiencing snow. The images are all likely to be different, each informed by an individual child’s desire to communicate what he or she saw, heard, or felt. The classroom gallery becomes a vibrant space as children discuss the intention behind their work (e.g., “I wanted to show how snow swirls” “I wanted to show how I shiver when it’s cold”).

The young child who learns that making art is purposeful creative work has taken the first step to becoming an artist and comprehending the power of the arts to inspire creative expression. As President John F. Kennedy wrote, “If art is to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him. We must never forget that art is not a form of propaganda; it is a form of truth...”

#### Guiding Principle 3

##### An effective arts education fosters a coherent and rigorous progression of learning.

Each lesson of an arts program should build upon previous lessons to create a coherent progression of learning. This framework presents the artistic processes of creating, presenting/performing, responding, and connecting from the *National Core Arts Standards* in 11 Standards of Artistic Practice that are applicable to all the grades. It also includes Content Standards that specify what students should know and be able to do in the arts disciplines at various points in their school experience. The Content Standards and Practice Standards are designed to be used together to connect knowledge, skills, and practices that build into a coherent, sequential, and rigorous program. Using the structure of Content and Practice Standards, educators express their own creativity in choosing resources and materials to implement aligned lessons, units, and assessments in creating a coherent program that builds on the learning from previous lessons and units to promote the development of students’ artistic literacy.

#### Guiding Principle 4

##### An effective arts education is relevant to students’ interests.

We live in a world full of music, images, words, and movement. Most students already have deep and personal relationships with the arts—they are apt to have passionate opinions about favorite musicians or actors. A high-quality arts program supports educators in becoming familiar with the popular art forms students already value and makes authentic efforts to include these genres and styles where appropriate, not just as a strategy for engagement, but as legitimate forms of contemporary expression. Teaching with students’ interests in mind might mean assignments in which students design their own superhero figures, compose a musical hook, research the interaction of social movements and visual memes, or perform spoken word poems with a distinctive contemporary beat.

This guiding principle is challenging. What engages students one year may not interest students the following year. Educators need not become experts in every emerging art form, but they should become skilled at helping students understand how to express themselves in ways that are most authentic to them.

#### Guiding Principle 5

##### An effective arts education provides students with broad and frequent access to great works of art from the past and present, across genres, time periods, and styles, and represents diverse cultures in the United States and from around the world in order to develop an appreciation for the richness of artistic expression, understand the connections between art and history, and cultivate one’s own sense of beauty.

Encouraging students’ artistic interests and their need for self-expression should be complemented by an introduction to enduring art from a wide variety of perspectives and cultures throughout history. Although “beauty is in the eye of the beholder,” great works of art not only reflect technical mastery, they also make visceral connections with their audience. Great art can inspire or provoke; it can reveal hidden truths or awaken the imagination; it can engender joy or sadness; it can produce serenity or awe. Regardless of their subject or form, accomplished works of art can communicate intellectually and emotionally in ways that are powerful and moving, and uniquely human.

In order to recognize the beauty and impact of art, students at all grade levels must have regular opportunities to experience important works of art, appropriate to their age. In doing so, they will also learn about the artistic techniques and aesthetic sensibilities that can help them to develop their own distinctive perspective and voice.

The arts from all over the world are an important part of our complex heritage. Integration of the arts and the history and social science curricula can help students understand the scope and breadth of human history, while at the same time providing a basis for understanding the context and themes of artworks that have become historical and cultural touchstones. For example, in the Grade 1 standards of the *History and Social Science Framework*, students look at the meaning of symbols in the lyrics of American songs such as “America the Beautiful.” This is an opportunity for collaboration between the music and history/social science educators. In the course of a well-designed pre-K to grade 12 arts program, arts curriculum designers have tremendous opportunities to motivate students to explore and perform works from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, as well as Europe and the Americas.

The twenty-first-century classroom and workplace includes people from diverse cultures and experiences and perspectives who must learn and work together. To be college and career ready, students need to understand and appreciate other perspectives and cultures. One way in which students learn about views different from their own is through the examination and performance of artistic works from varying cultures, historical periods, and genres. Deep study of works of art from around the world helps students become aware of how their own culture shapes attitudes and aesthetic values.

#### Studying a wide range of art forms helps students understand cultural allusions that they will encounter elsewhere in conversation and study. For example, the student who has discussed Salvador Dali’s 1931 painting, “The Persistence of Memory,” will recognize its melting clocks and bleak landscape as examples of surrealist imagery. Students who have performed and learned about a variety of musical styles will hear how composer/lyricist Lin-Manuel Miranda has incorporated musical elements from hip-hop, rhythm and blues, pop, soul, and show tunes into the musical *Hamilton*.

#### Guiding Principle 6

##### In effective arts education programs, students have the opportunity to experience different artistic roles, groupings, and uses of media.

In addition to exposure to a variety of genres and styles, students should learn about many different kinds of work artists do and the different media they use. This will mean different things for different disciplines. Students should have experiences in different roles such as that of a dancer or choreographer in dance, or a stage manager or costume designer in theatre. Students should explore different instruments in music, produce a range of interactive or design projects, or use an array of visual arts media in both two- and three-dimensional work. This guiding principle is particularly important in the elementary and middle grades. By high school, especially in advanced courses, it is appropriate for students to focus on deep mastery of a particular role or medium, whether it is playing the flute, lighting a theatrical production, sculpting in wood, painting, or animating a short film.

Across the arts program students should have a wide range of experiences working independently and with different size groups. For example, in visual art classes where students usually work independently, educators can design small and large collaborative group projects that reflect how contemporary professional artists complete major works and installations. In music and dance programs where students usually perform as large group ensembles, educators explore opportunities for small group and solo performance opportunities.

#### Guiding Principle 7

##### An effective arts education makes connections with other disciplines and bodies of knowledge.

An effective arts curriculum provides opportunities for students to make connections among the arts, with other academic subjects, and with arts resources in the community. Arts Integration is a method of teaching and learning that links curricular content with artistic discipline, creative expression, and individual inquiry. Consulting the grade-level and course topics and standards in the *Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering, Mathematics, English Language Arts and Literacy,* *History and Social Science,* *Digital Literacy and Computer Science, Foreign Languages* and *Comprehensive Health Frameworks* helps arts teachers find opportunities for collaborating with teachers of these subjects. Creative exploration helps students find personal connections to content knowledge, enhances comprehension, and develops students’ point of view, making academic content compelling and memorable.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Connecting the arts to other disciplines sets the expectation that students will learn about their artistic heritage. They will investigate the historical and cultural contexts of the arts, learn about the arts in their communities, and use their knowledge of the arts in the study of other disciplines.

#### Guiding Principle 8

##### An effective arts education promotes family and community engagement.

In order for students to have authentic opportunities to share their artistic work, effective arts education programs create opportunities to engage with families and the community. Family members often have arts backgrounds to share with students. Local artists and performers, museums, performance spaces, cultural organizations, and arts-related businesses can also contribute to the richness of a school or district arts program. In particular, there should be opportunities for music, theatre, and dance students to perform for families and the community and for visual and media arts students to exhibit their work beyond the school community.

#### Guiding Principle 9

##### An effective arts education supports social and emotional growth.

Students develop their social and emotional skills through every subject. The arts are unique because they offer so many opportunities for students to lead others and to practice collaboration. The arts also help students develop their own self-awareness, confidence, and persistence. In doing so, the arts help to deepen respect for others’ ideas, cultures, and perspectives. For example, actors develop empathy when they assume roles of characters whose personalities and situations are markedly different from their own. Group performances require cooperation, concentration, listening to colleagues. The thrill of an excellent performance boosts self-confidence. Former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan observed that diverse artistic experiences foster flexibility: “The arts can help students become tenacious, team-oriented problem solvers who are confident and able to think creatively.”[[6]](#footnote-6)

Performing and exhibiting artistic work also requires a level of bravery. Psychologist Dr. Carol Dweck of StanfordUniversity, who studies motivation, personality, and development, says the belief that success in the arts is based on talent, rather than effort, leads to thinking that “arts are for some.” In contrast, Dweck’s “incremental” model proposes that learning results from effort, hence that “arts are for all.” Everyone has the capacity to learn any subject at any time, if they have the opportunity to study with a capable teacher and are motivated to learn. As in any subject, all students learn the arts at their own rate. Most accomplish proficiency, and quite a few even reach mastery levels in a given art form.

#### Guiding Principle 10

##### An effective arts education program is inclusive; all students participate and benefit.

Effective arts programs provide the necessary supports for all students to meet the standards. The standards allow for the widest possible range of students to fully engage and benefit from the outset with appropriate accommodations as needed while taking into account that not all participants engage in the same manner. Inclusive arts education programs are based in the philosophy that all students can and have the right to express themselves in and through the arts. Such programs ensure maximum participation of students with disabilities, English learners, students with minimal experience with the arts, and students who have completed advanced arts training. In the arts, as in any other academic subject, some students may require assistive technologies, others may need more time, practice, or individual help. Regardless, all students must feel welcome in the arts studio, in the practice room, on the stage, or at an exhibition and valued for their artistic insights.

#

# The Standards for Artistic Practice

The Standards for Artistic Practice describe the processes and skills students learn as practitioners throughout the elementary, middle, and high school years in order to achieve artistic literacy. Based on the processes presented in the 2014 *National Core Arts Standards* (NCAS), these practices are grouped into four clusters that focus on creating, presenting/performing, responding, and connecting across the five arts disciplines (dance, media arts, music, theatre, visual art).

While instructional time in the arts is comprised of these four clusters, the amount of time designated to each cluster is flexible and is at the discretion of the district. It is not expected that each cluster will receive equal time during instruction (for example, music may dedicate the majority of its time to performance, whereas visual art may dedicate the majority of its time to creating). However, it is the expectation that each cluster will be represented in a meaningful way within the curriculum. For example, visual arts classes need to ensure adequate time for students to present their art to a diverse range of audiences, just as music students need to have meaningful opportunities to improvise and compose music.

##### Cluster 1: Creating art with artistic intent.

**What are Artistic Ideas?**

The term “idea” is used throughout the Framework to represent a building block of an artistic work. This could be a musical motif or sound, or a texture or shape in visual arts.

Artistically literate students generate, organize, and refine artistic ideas using a variety of strategies and tools to serve an intended purpose for their artistic work.

**Practice 1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.** Through exploration, students generate a wide variety of innovative ideas while expanding the boundaries of connection, style, genre, or medium.

**Practice 2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.** Using a myriad of tools (e.g., brainstorms, sketches, outlines), students plan and organize their ideas to best support their artistic intent.

**Practice 3. Refine and complete artistic work.** Through a variety of strategies (e.g., teacher or peer feedback, exploration, research, self-reflection), students conceive and revise their artistic ideas to better express, evoke, or communicate their artistic intent.

##### Cluster 2: Presenting or performing artistic works to evoke, express, or communicate.

Artistically literate students share their creations with an audience or viewers to evoke, express, or communicate an intended purpose or meaning. They recognize choices and make improvements within their own work or performance aligned with their artistic intent.

**Practice 4. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation.** When performing work written by others, students interpret the creator’s script or score to convey the artist’s intention. When sharing their own work, students reflect on how their performance or presentation best supports their artistic intent.

**Practice 5. Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.** Through the practice and development of technical skills, and the refining of details, students polish a work for presentation.

**Practice 6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.** Through the presentation of an artistic work, students successfully evoke, express, or communicate the artistic intent.

##### Cluster 3: Responding to arts through intellect and emotion.

Artistically literate students regularly analyze and evaluate their own and others’ works of art, including the work of peers and important artwork from varied historical periods and cultures. These students understand that artistic intent is profoundly intertwined with an artist’s cultural milieu, and they use this understanding to guide their own reactions to works of art. Learning to appreciate artistic works is a lifelong cumulative experience. It is fostered through repeated performing, listening, looking, reading, and by pondering questions such as *What did the artist mean to convey? Why has this work of art endured? What makes a work of art significant to its time and place?*

**Practice 7. Perceive and analyze artistic work**. Through observation of a completed work or exploration of the creative process, students understand how aspects of the artwork, such as the elements and principles of design, support the creator’s intent.

**Practice 8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.** Through observation, discussion, or research, students reflect on an artistic work to discern what it evokes, expresses, or communicates to them.

**Practice 9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.** Students evaluate an artwork’s effectiveness at evoking, expressing, or communicating artistic intent using either self-, group-, teacher-, or externally created criteria.

##### Cluster 4: Connecting the arts to the self, society, history, culture, and other disciplines and bodies of knowledge.

Artistically literate students discern connections between personal, societal, historical, and cultural contexts as well as multi-disciplinary knowledge when they reflect upon, interpret, respond to, and create artwork. These students understand that diverse forces influence how they view their own artwork as well as the art of others. As artistically literate people, they recognize the powerful influence and impact of the arts on society, history, and culture, as well as their own lives.

**Practice 10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.** Students draw from their personal and artistic experiences and their multi-disciplinary knowledge when envisioning and creating original art works that reflect their own artistic identity.

**Practice 11. Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, historical, and cultural contexts to deepen understanding.** Students can articulate how societal, historical, and cultural forces have influenced artistic works, styles and genres, and vice versa.

# Organization of the Content Standards

**Integration:** The standards were written to intentionally highlight the connections across different disciplines and grades. This was done to promote consistency and integration across the arts. For example, students in all disciplines and grades are working on using criteria to evaluate artwork. This practice may look similar or different across the different disciplines, but provides a common structure to support districts in using these standards to organize their arts programs.

The Framework first groups content standards by **discipline:** dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual art. The pre-K through grade 8 standards are organized in grade pairs or dyadsand standards for the high school grades are organized in courses. The content standards for each grade dyad or high school course are then organized by the four **clusters** of the Standards for Artistic Practice, with at least one **content standard** aligned to each of the eleven practice standards. This intentional, nearly one-to-one relationship between practice and content standards supports vertical (across grades) and horizontal (across disciplines) alignment.

##### High School Courses

Within each arts discipline, high school content standards are presented in courses.

* **Foundation** courses are introductory or survey courses that high school students typically complete during the first or second year of high school.
* **Proficient** courses are built upon students’ work in Foundations courses and begin to focus on specific aspects of the discipline.
* **Advanced** courses are designed to prepare students for post-high school study in the discipline. The Framework includes special advanced courses to address unique features of the disciplines. For example, the Technical Theatre and Musical Composition courses reflect specialized offerings in Theatre and Music respectively.
* Finally, the Framework includes standards for **Novice** Solo & Ensemble Music appropriate for courses designed for students without significant prior experience playing music. These courses may also be appropriate to ensemble courses offered in the middle school grades.

##### Matching Standards and Courses

Educators should look across these standards when determining which best match a course. This Framework is not intended to match every possible course offered in schools. For example, there may not be a good match for a musical appreciation course, but educators could look closely at the responding and connecting practices to help identify which learning standards could guide this type of course.

##### Connections to other bodies of knowledge

A number of direct connections to other disciplines have been identified directly under each content standard applicable. For instance, there are numerous connections to the *Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework* (HSS) indicated throughout the content standards. Educators should note that these connections are examples which they are free to use, modify, replace, or omit as is appropriate for their own arts programs. Since integration is a highly worthwhile approach to pedagogy, teachers are encouraged to make meaningful connections to other relevant bodies of knowledge whenever possible, including other arts disciplines.

##### Standards Organization

The standards are organized by discipline, with a page for each grade dyad (Pre-K–K, 1–2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–8) or high school course (Novice, Foundation, Proficient, Advanced). The standards are organized into the four clusters, with each practice in bold, followed by the content standard and standard identifier.

Each standard has a unique standard identifier following content standard, as shown in the example below. The identifier consists of the grade dyad or course, discipline initial, cluster, and artistic practice, and a lowercase letter if necessary.



For example, the standard “Identify influential works of dance from different periods and how they impact current dance forms” would be coded 5–6.D.Co.11 since this standard is for grades 5 and 6, in dance, and related to Practice 11. If there are multiple standards related to a single practice in the same grade dyad, discipline, and cluster they are distinguished by a lower-case letter.

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# Grade 5-65th–6th Grade Visual Arts Standards

##### Creating

1. **Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.** Generate artworks that integrate ideas with new materials, methods, and approaches. (5-6.V.Cr.01)

Media Arts Connection: Students sketch out a script for a stop-motion animation then paint a landscape as a backdrop in the film. (5-6.MA.P.06)

1. **Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.** Organize and plan an idea using a variety of self-selected strategies (e.g., sketches, prototypes, rough drafts). (5-6.V.Cr.02)
2. **Refine and complete artistic work.**
	1. Refine an artistic work by making changes to specific elements, such as color, form, or space. (5-6.V.Cr.03.a)
	2. Investigate and invent new techniques and approaches using two- and three-dimensional materials. (5-6.V.Cr.03.b)

##### Presenting

1. **Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.** Develop a title and artist statement that explain important information about a personal artwork. (5-6.V.P.04)
2. **Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.** Develop a visual plan for displaying works of art and the layout of the exhibit. (5-6.V.P.05)
3. **Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.** Formally present a piece of artwork (i.e., personally speak about the artwork, as opposed to just having the work displayed) that makes connections to other disciplines. (5-6.V.P.06)

##### Responding

1. **Perceive and analyze artistic work**. Analyze how an artwork's form (e.g., portrait, sculpture, installation, textile art) compares and contrasts with others of the same type or period. (5-6.V.R.07)

HSS Connection: Students study the quilts of enslaved African Americans, discuss their possible use for communication in the Underground Railroad and compare them to other 19th century American quilts. (HSS.5.T1.07)

1. **Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.** Use domain-specific vocabulary to identify details about an artistic work. (5-6.V.R.08)
2. **Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.** Evaluate a piece of artwork based on a predetermined list of criteria. (5-6.V.R.09)

##### Connecting

1. **Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.** Describe and demonstrate personal artistic style and preferences. (5-6.V.Co.10)
2. **Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding.** Identify influential works of art from different periods and their impact on the artistic world. (5-6.V.Co.11)

# Grade 7-87th–8th Grade Visual Arts Standards

##### Creating

1. **Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.** Generate artistic ideas that demonstrate differences in composition principles (e.g., balance, proportion, emphasis) and push the boundaries of what materials can do.(7-8.V.Cr.01)
2. **Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.** Develop clear artistic plans that others could implement. (7-8.V.Cr.02)
3. **Refine and complete artistic work.** Apply strategies to work through creative blocks. (7-8.V.Cr.03)

##### Presenting

1. **Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.** Curate a theme-based exhibition. (7-8.V.P.04)
2. **Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.** Utilize different approaches to share artwork (e.g., digital portfolio, exhibit installation). (7-8.V.P.05)
3. **Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.** Match a piece of artwork with expressed intent (e.g., wanting the audience to feel tension between two positions). (7-8.V.P.06)

Dance Connection: Students choreograph movement phrases that interpret famous works of sculpture, such as those of Giacometti. (7-8.D.P.06)

##### Responding

1. **Perceive and analyze artistic work**. Analyze elements of a work that are indicative of the historical or cultural context in which it was created. (7-8.V.R.07)
2. **Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.** Explain how an artistic work was influenced by the culture or historical context in which it was created. (7-8.V.R.08)
3. **Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.** Develop criteria for evaluating a collection of artworks (e.g., students determine criteria for an exhibition juried by students). (7-8.V.R.09)

##### Connecting

1. **Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.** Describe and demonstrate influences of personal artistic style and preferences in visual arts. (7-8.V.Co.10)
2. **Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding.** Identify visual ideas from a variety of cultures connected to different historical populations. (7-8.V.Co.11)

HSS Connection: Students are able to identify the three types of Greek columns (Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian) when studying ancient architecture. (HSS.7.T4b.07)

# Foundations Visual Arts Course StandardsFoundations Visual Arts Course Standards

##### Creating

1. **Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.** Create artistic ideas that reflect characteristics of different artistic movements from different cultures (e.g., study art by different individual 20th century Australian aboriginal artists and choose one as an inspiration for a composition. (F.V.Cr.01)
2. **Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.** Develop multiple plans for producing a piece of artwork prior to selecting one. (F.V.Cr.02)
3. **Refine and complete artistic work.** Refine concepts and content by focusing on a particular principle of design such as emphasis, balance, contrast, or pattern. (F.V.Cr.03)

##### Presenting

1. **Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.** Justify choices for curating and presenting artwork for a specific exhibit or event. (e.g., Students complete a proposal for a juried show within the community.) (F.V.P.04)
2. **Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.** Develop a proposal for an installation, artwork, or space design that transforms the perception and experience of a particular place. (F.V.P.05)
3. **Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.** Describe how decisions about how an artwork is presented are connected to what the student wants to express, evoke, or communicate. (F.V.P.06)

##### Responding

1. **Perceive and analyze artistic work**. Analyze the style of an artist, and how it manifests itself in a given artwork. (e.g., examine influences on the artist). (F.V.R.07)

HSS Connection: When studying the Mexican Revolution, students analyze Mexican folk culture and its influence on the life and work of Frida Kahlo. (HSS.USI.T7.05.i)

1. **Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.** Identify specific elements in a work that connect it to a specific genre or style. (F.V.R.08)
2. **Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.** Compare and contrast different rubrics or criteria for evaluating artwork. (F.V.R.09)

##### Connecting

1. **Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.** Describe what has influenced changes in one’s own artistic style and preferences in visual art. (F.V.Co.10)
2. **Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding.** Identify the connections between historical and cultural contexts and define stylistic elements of artistic movements (e.g., how the impact of World War II influenced the western art world and shifted focus from Europe to New York City). (F.V.Co.11)

# Proficient Visual Arts Course StandardsProficient Visual Arts Course Standards

##### Creating

1. **Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.** Consistently apply research to support development of artistic ideas (e.g., researching alternative kiln firing techniques to generate innovative approaches to creating a ceramics piece). (P.V.Cr.01)
2. **Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.** Document a plan for an original large scale or multi-step art project (e.g., sketches for an art installation at a playground). (P.V.Cr.02)
3. **Refine and complete artistic work.** Refine an artistic work that builds on previous work by incorporating new materials, constraints, genres, or styles. (P.V.Cr.03)

##### Presenting

1. **Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.** Explain how specific techniques were used to evoke, express, or communicate in an artistic work or collection. (P.V.P.04)
2. **Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.** Contribute to an art show that explores a personally meaningful theme, idea, or concept (e.g., select work to include, provide feedback on presentation ideas). (P.V.P.05)
3. **Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.** Modify a two- or three-dimensional installation to align to one’s artistic intent after listening to initial viewer comments. (P.V.P.06)

##### Responding

1. **Perceive and analyze artistic work**. Use contextual and aesthetic information to construct interpretations of an artwork or collection of works. (P.V.R.07)

HSS Connection: When studying the Harlem Renaissance and the Civil Rights Movement, students analyze the work of Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden. (HSS.USII.T4.05)

1. **Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.** Compare and contrast the artistic elements that make art unique (e.g., compare and contrast how contemporary installation art is different from contemporary realistic portraits). (P.V.R.08)
2. **Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.** Choose and defend criteria for evaluating artwork.(P.V.R.09)

##### Connecting

1. **Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.** Describe how visual arts influences one’s approach to other academic disciplines (e.g., how knowledge of changing art movements help contextualize history). (P.V.Co.10)
2. **Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding.** Explain the relationship between artworks and commercialization or propaganda (How Norman Rockwell’s work, such as “Rosie the Riveter,” supported the war effort in World War II). (P.V.Co.11)

# Advanced Visual Arts Course StandardsAdvanced Visual Arts Course Standards

##### Creating

1. **Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.** Generate original ideas that integrate aesthetic principles with individual personal style while pushing the boundaries of style, genre, medium, and connections. (A.V.Cr.01)
2. **Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.** Document personal strategies used regularly to organize artistic ideas (e.g., sketchbook, visual journal, etc.). (A.V.Cr.02)
3. **Refine and complete artistic work.** Identify, design, and document several ways to address artistic challenges in a work and reflect upon the advantages and disadvantages of each potential resolution. (e.g., how to attach two parts of a sculpture consistent with the piece). (A.V.Cr.03)

##### Presenting

1. **Select, analyze and interpret artistic work for presentation.** Explain how personal experience of culture or history has influenced a piece of artwork or collection or works. (A.V.P.04)
2. **Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.** Organize and plan an art exhibition that explores a personally meaningful theme, idea, or concept (e.g., identify and coordinate an artistic space; intentionally choose lighting). (A.V.P.05)
3. **Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.** Present an artwork that causes audience reflection through its use of different artistic styles or viewpoints (A.V.P.06)

##### Responding

1. **Perceive and analyze artistic work**. Identify ways that a contemporary artwork pushes the boundaries of a genre and discipline. (A.V.R.07)
2. **Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.** Analyze the ways one’s own cultural and personal perspectives and biases affect understanding of a visual work. (A.V.R.08)
3. **Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.** Identify how bias, culture, and privilege affect the criteria used to evaluate artwork. (A.V.R.09)

##### Connecting

1. **Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.** Explain the development of a personal aesthetic vision as a visual artist and how it is represented in a specific piece or collection. (A.V.Co.10)
2. **Relate artistic ideas and works to societal, cultural and historical contexts to deepen understanding.** Identify the historical and cultural contexts that caused shifting of stylistic elements between artistic movements. (A.V.Co.11)

HSS Connection: Students learn about the influence of Japanese and African art on the European art styles of Impressionism and Cubism. (HSS.WHII.T3.04.e)

1. Casner Lotto & Barrington (2006) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Brodherson, Heller, Perry, & Remley (2017) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Supporting the Creative Industries of Massachusetts https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2016/07/xf/creative-next-summary-reportfinal.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. National Core Arts Standards: A Conceptual Framework <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/content/national-core-arts-standards> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For a good example of how close observation in visual arts supported the science curriculum, see this 2nd grade example from EL Education. <http://modelsofexcellence.eleducation.org/projects/what-snake-am-i> Letter to school and district leaders, December 2nd, 2009. <https://blog.americansforthearts.org/2015/09/09/the-political-process%E2%80%A6-what-hope-is-there-for-the-arts-and-arts-education> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)