

Tennessee Academic Standards for Fine Arts Education

Visual Arts Introduction

The fine arts standards (dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts) are organized using the same overarching framework. First, the standards are divided into four distinct artistic processes, called domains. Each domain includes a series of ideas that unite the fine arts within those artistic processes, called foundations. Table 1 illustrates the four domains and foundations for visual arts.

Table 1. Visual Arts Domains and Foundations.

CREATE	PRODUCE	RESPOND	CONNECT
1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.	1. Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for production.	1. Perceive and analyze artistic work.	1. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to artistic endeavors.
2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.	2. Develop and refine artistic work for production.	2. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.	2. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context.
3. Refine and complete artistic work.	3. Convey and express meaning through the production of artistic work.	3. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.	

The last layer in our framework is the standard. Each foundation includes standards that move students towards a deeper understanding of the visual arts. Standards are building blocks that form a comprehensive, sequential education and describe student learning. Included with each foundation are enduring understandings and essential questions that connect each grade level and provide a context for the standards. Altogether, this framework sets the goals for the development of artistically literate citizens, preparing students not only for college and career, but also for a lifetime enhanced by and with the arts.

Domains

There are four artistic processes in which our standards can be grouped: Create, Present, Respond, and Connect. These domains are explained in more detail below. See Appendix A for a comparison between the 2016 Foundations and the prior Tennessee Visual Arts Standards.

Create

Creation is the dominant foundation for the visual arts and is listed as the first domain in our content area due to its importance. The Create domain can be divided into three spiraling behaviors: 1) generating and conceptualizing artistic ideas and work; 2) organizing and developing ideas and work; and 3) refining and completing artistic work.

In the prior versions of the standards, using materials and developing technique were found in the Perform domain. This version of the standards includes materials and techniques as part of Create behaviors. A crosswalk has been included in Appendix A to illustrate the adjustment.

Present

The skills included in the Present domain have not been included in prior versions of the standards. However, Present will seem familiar to educators and students since the content of the domain is already happening within most visual arts curricula. High school students selecting work for their portfolios, middle school students planning, creating, and displaying art to inform their peers on social issues, and kindergarten students selecting one work of art to leave at school to display and one to take home to share with their family are all examples of how to meet standards within the Present domain.

The content of the Present domain is organized into three big ideas about the presentation of artwork: 1) selecting, analyzing, and interpreting artistic work for presentation; 2) developing and refining artistic techniques and work for presentation; and 3) conveying and expressing meaning through the presentation of artistic work. In other words, the standards in foundation P1 focus on the process that supports the selection of art for different purposes, the standards in foundation P2 are centered around consideration for preservation and presentation of art, and the standards in P3 explore the role of presentation spaces and the interactions that occur between the space and the people who view it.

High School Levels

Within the standards, there are three levels of high school learning. A description of these levels is included below (NCCAS, 2013).

HS 1	HS 2	HS 3
<p>Students at the HS 1 level have developed the foundational technical and expressive skills and understandings in visual arts necessary to solve assigned problems or prepare assigned repertoire for presentation; make appropriate choices with some support; and, may be prepared for active engagement in their community. They understand visual arts to be an important form of personal realization and well-being and make connections between visual arts, history, culture, and other learning.</p>	<p>Students at the HS 2 level are, with minimal assistance, able to identify or solve visual arts problems based on their interests or for a particular purpose; conduct research to inform artistic decisions; and, create and refine visual arts productions that demonstrate technical proficiency, personal communication, and expression. They use visual arts for personal realization and well-being and have the necessary skills for and interest in participation in visual arts beyond the school environment.</p>	<p>Students at HS 3 level independently identify challenging visual arts problems based on their interests or for specific purposes and bring creativity and insight to finding artistic solutions. They are facile in using at least one art form as an effective avenue for personal communication, demonstrating a higher level of technical and expressive proficiency characteristic of honors or college level work. They exploit their personal strengths and apply strategies to overcome personal challenges as visual arts learners. They are capable of taking a leadership role in arts activity within and beyond the school environment.</p>
<p>This level of achievement is attainable by most students who complete a high school level course in the arts beyond the foundation of quality K-8 instruction.</p>	<p>This level of achievement is attainable by most students who complete a rigorous sequence of high-school level courses beyond the HS 1 level.</p>	<p>This level and scope of achievement significantly exceeds HS 2 Level. Achievement at this level is indisputably rigorous and substantially expands students' knowledge, skills, and understandings beyond the expectations articulated for HS 2 achievement.</p>

Artistic Literacy, Visual Literacy, Textual Literacy

Literacy is a complex term with multiple definitions including: a set of skills, the knowledge and understanding of a particular content area, or the act of learning (Burnett, 2005). In the visual arts standards, there are several types of literacy, which can involve some or all of these definitions as students engage in communication, interpreting and constructing meaning, using materials and techniques, and relating personal, historical, or contextual knowledge to artistic endeavors. The three specific areas of literacy that are included within the visual arts standards are artistic, visual, and textual literacy, which have been defined in more detail below.

Artistic literacy is the knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the visual arts. Fluency in the language of the visual arts is the ability to create, produce, respond, and connect through symbolic and metaphoric forms that are unique to the visual arts. It is embodied in specific lifelong goals that enable an artistically literate person to transfer visual arts knowledge, skills, and capacities to other subjects, settings, and contexts (NCCAS, 2013). Artistic literacy fosters connections among the arts and between the arts and other disciplines, thereby providing opportunities to access, develop, express, and integrate meaning within the visual arts and across a variety of content areas.

Visual literacy is a general term used to describe the ability to engage with visual images. Understanding and analyzing the contextual, cultural, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual, and technical components involved in the production and use of visual materials requires visual literacy skills. Visual literacy is developed as a result of intentional practice in effectively finding, interpreting, evaluating, using, and creating images and visual media. An individual who is visually literate is both a thoughtful consumer of and contributor to visual materials (Hattwig, 2011).

Textual literacy is a term that has traditionally been used to describe reading, writing, and analyzing written text. However, many goals including engagement, understanding, and making meaning are common throughout each of the areas of literacy. When building textual literacy, it is common to ask students to cite evidence within the text to support inferences. This is similar to asking students to cite evidence within visual images to support inferences to meaning, mood, and purpose. Another link between textual, visual, and artistic literacies is the consideration of how context impacts the meaning of the material being studied. The visual arts standards provide a unique opportunity to build textual literacy skills as visual and artistic literacy skills are developed due to the similarities between the areas of literacy.