

Reading Public Schools

Instilling a joy of learning and inspiring the innovative leaders of tomorrow



Fine and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide

6-8 Visual Art

Description

At both Coolidge and Parker Middle School, students are offered rich and sequential instruction in the visual arts that grows in complexity over the course of three years. Students are exposed to new media and continue developing skills with materials and processes learned at the elementary level. Conceptually, students develop skills to plan, create, revise, and share their artwork in concrete ways, and take on more responsibility to develop their own artistic voices. Students begin to develop their artistic identity by solving presented visual problems with increased choice and self-direction. Under the guidance of the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework, lessons support the development of emerging artists of all levels.

Guiding Principles

Art engages the minds, hands, and hearts of students in many beneficial ways. This includes both the tangible technical improvements of students' art and visual literacy, as well as the more intangible elements of learning such as self-regulation, self-esteem, confidence, and the pure joy obtained from the creative process. Every student has a right to be supported in their artistic journey by taking visual art classes. Art is not an "extra" learning opportunity; rather, it is an essential one. There is a language of art that can be learned, developed, and used to assist students with their creative development. Students become conversant in that language by understanding art elements (the ingredients of all visual things) and art principles (the ways in which elements can be organized within an artwork for expressive results.) During the middle school years, students are ready to learn more complex processes and hands-on skills and the curriculum in our schools supports and makes room for individual student growth. Technology has also become an essential part of the visual art world, and this is reflected in the curriculum through the inclusion of digital art creation, using technology tools to develop art made with traditional materials, the creation of digital portfolios, and exploring issues of image appropriation and reproduction.

Art Content Standards

By the end of eighth grade, students will have learned the following processes and skills:

Creating:

1. Generate artistic ideas that demonstrate differences in composition principles and push the boundaries of what materials can do.
2. Develop clear artistic plans that others could implement.
3. Apply strategies to work through creative blocks.

Performing:

4. Curate a theme-based exhibition.
5. Utilize different approaches to share artwork.
6. Match a piece of artwork with expressed intent.

Responding:

7. Analyze elements of a work that are indicative of the historical or cultural context in which it was created.
8. Explain how an artistic work was influenced by the culture or historical context in which it was created.
9. Develop criteria for evaluating a collection of artworks.

Connecting:

10. Describe and demonstrate influences of personal artistic style and preferences in visual arts.
11. Identify visual ideas from a variety of cultures connected to different historical populations.

Source: MA Arts Curriculum Framework 2019, page 63

Through art experiences in grades 6-8, students will develop an understanding of the Studio Habits of Mind:

<p>Develop Craft: <i>Learning how to use tools, materials and artist conventions in a skillful manner.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learn about the conventions of color mixing and then create an original painting that uses color in an expressive way. • Students learn about the technique of tapestry weaving, and then design and create their own woven images using techniques they find appropriate.
<p>Engage and Persist: <i>Developing personally meaningful projects and sticking with them through challenges.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learn a variety of drawing techniques to enable them to have multiple entry points when exploring the subject of an art project and encountering challenges. • Students keep sketchbooks that contain personally meaningful drawings and give space for visual problem solving and individual learning.
<p>Envision: <i>Imagining new artworks and steps to bring them to life, including brainstorming, problem solving, analyzing and evaluating art.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learn and use a two-step design development process to arrive at and develop original artistic content. • Students brainstorm and develop schematic drawings of a sculpture they hope to build or an installation they want to create.
<p>Express: <i>Making works that convey personal meaning and interpreting meaning in the works of others.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students develop an independent work of art based on a theme, such as identity, selecting their own materials and techniques. • Students examine historical works of art that brought attention to issues of justice and then create their own art based on a social justice issue of choice.
<p>Observe: <i>Looking closely and noticing.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students go outside and observe the seasonal changes of trees, and create artwork based on their observations. • Students create a drawing based on a grid technique.
<p>Reflect: <i>Talking about what works well, what does not, and why, win works by self and others.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students create an original work of art, and then use the list of art elements as a revision tool, identifying areas for improvement and developing the concept with more detail. • Students reflect on their artwork and write artist’s statements that share their interpretations with others.
<p>Stretch and Explore: <i>Experimenting, trying new things, making mistakes and learning from them.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students learn different clay building methods about materials and techniques, and then experiment to find a way to use them in personally satisfying and expressive ways. • Students are challenged to create a sculpture from a Styrofoam cup, figuring out how to cut and re-assemble pieces to create an original expressive work.
<p>Understand Art Worlds: <i>Learning about what artists make and the intent behind them.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students create a presentation about a specific genre of art (landscape, portrait, etc.) and identify key important qualities of the individual works before creating their own art. • Students collaborate to create an exhibition of their class members’ artwork, discussing criteria and content.

Structures for Learning

During a typical class, students and teachers may be in engaged in...

- Individually exploring 2-D, 3-D, and virtual media
- Participating in skill-building workshops and teacher demonstrations
- Working collaboratively with peers to design, create, and evaluate art
- Analyzing artwork individually and in groups
- Writing artist’s statements and personal reflections as part of developing a portfolio
- Utilizing virtual resources to learn about artists and their work in a variety of contexts



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Fine and Performing Arts Curriculum Guide Overview

Curriculum Guide

Curriculum guides are public documents aligned with the Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks. They outline and highlight the set of standards that students will learn within certain disciplines at each grade level. Curriculum guides are intended for teachers, parents, and the wide school community to provide an overview of the course of study for the year.

Curriculum Map

Curriculum maps are internal documents utilized as planning tools for teachers and administrators. Curriculum maps keep a focus on the end-of-year standards and chart a course for teaching and learning over the year. They are typically organized by month and/or marking period and may include: genres/topics or units of study, methods of assessment, and major content resources. Maps are fluid documents that are revised and revisited regularly to ensure students' needs are being met.

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles are philosophical statements that underlie the standards and resources in the Massachusetts Arts 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.

Content Standards

The standards used as the foundation of our curriculum come directly from the Massachusetts Arts Curriculum Framework. State standards may be viewed here: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/>

Seven Elements of Art

Elements of art are stylistic features that are included within an art piece to help the artist communicate. The seven most common elements of art are line, shape, space, value, form, texture, and color. These elements are the building blocks, or ingredients, of visual art.

Studio Habits of Mind

The Studio Thinking Project, funded 2001-2007 by the J. Paul Getty Trust, studied the kinds of habits of mind implicitly and explicitly taught in strong visual arts classes, and the classroom structures that facilitate this learning. The research team worked in two Boston-area arts-centered high schools (Boston Arts Academy and the Walnut Hill School) with five practicing artists committed to teaching. The study's qualitative methods included interviews, video-observation, and rigorous coding documenting art teachers' pedagogical intentions and strategies. Researchers conducted follow-up interviews with teachers following each observation. The analyses resulted in the Studio Habits of Mind and Studio Structures. The studio habits of mind describe eight dispositions students are taught so that they learn to think like artists. The studio structures are ways teachers organize time, space, and interactions in visual arts classrooms.