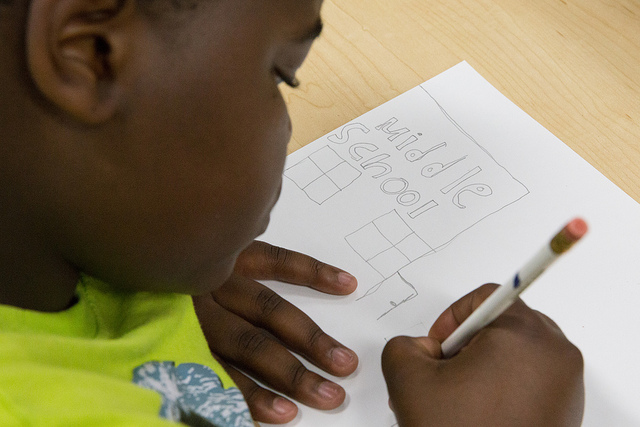




Middle School (Grades 6-8)  
Visual Arts Curriculum Guide  
August, 2017-18

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**Foreword** The curriculum in this document is based on the National Core Arts Standards published in the spring of 2014. It has been developed by visual art educators and curriculum specialists in the Des Moines Public Schools. The objectives in this curriculum guide are the minimum requirements in the visual arts that set rigorous, relevant, clear, and measurable learning targets and expectations for what teachers should teach and students should learn. Schools and educators are continuously encouraged to go beyond these targets to better serve the needs of all students in the visual arts.

**Definition of the Visual Arts**  
Visual arts include the traditional fine arts such as drawing, painting, printmaking, photography, and sculpture; media arts including film, graphic communications, animation, and emerging technologies; architectural, environmental, and industrial arts such as urban, interior, product, and landscape design; folk arts; and works of art such as ceramics, fibers, jewelry, works in wood, paper, and other materials. –*National Art Education Association*

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**How to use this document:**

**This curriculum guide is *not…***

* A lock-step instructional guide detailing exactly when and how you teach.
* Meant to restrict your creativity as a teacher.
* A ceiling of what your students can learn, nor a set of unattainable goals.

**Instead, the curriculum guide *is* meant to be a common vision for student learning and a set of standards by which to measure and report student progress and provide meaningful feedback.**  
  
The curriculum guide outlines which learning goals are **most essential** for student learning; it is our district’s guaranteed and viable curriculum. The expectation is that every student in our district, regardless of school or classroom, will know and understand these learning goals. As the classroom teacher, you should use the curriculum guide to help you to decide how to scaffold up to the learning goals, and extend your students’ learning beyond them.   
  
The curriculum guide is a planning tool; assessed clusters and topics are provided, but **as the instructional leader of your classroom, you determine the scope and sequence in which you will introduce the prioritized learning goals**. You are encouraged to create your own sub-units of study within each cluster using the topics as a starting point. Within this document you will find a foundational structure for planning instruction in the visual arts which can be supplemented with unlimited materials from any number of sources, including but not limited to district texts and prints.

Please consider this guide a living and dynamic document, subject to change and a part of a continuous feedback loop. As part of this logic model, common task banks and district-wide common formative assessments are being generated during the 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 school years.

**Des Moines Public Schools Educational Philosophy**

**Vision**

Becoming the model for urban education in the United States.

**Mission Statement**

The Des Moines Public Schools Exist So That Graduates Possess the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities to Be Successful at the Next Stage of Their Lives.

**Student Expectations**

**Students demonstrate proficiency and understanding of a rigorous core curriculum:**

* They demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening
* They demonstrate proficiency in mathematics, including algebra and geometry
* They demonstrate financial and economic literacy
* ***They demonstrate an understanding of the value of fine and performing arts in society***
* ***They demonstrate proficiency in technological and information literacy***
* They demonstrate proficiency in science, including life, earth and physical science

**Students possess the knowledge and skills to be self-directed and autonomous:**

* ***They demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving skills***
* ***They exercise sound reasoning in making complex choices***
* ***They exhibit creative, innovative and entrepreneurial thinking***
* ***They understand the attributes of physical and mental well-being***

**Students have world awareness:**

* ***They learn from and work with individuals representing diverse cultures and religions in a spirit of mutual respect in school, work and community***
* ***They understand the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national, and global levels***
* ***They are actively engaged in community life***
* ***They will be exposed to languages and cultures of the world***
* **Des Moines Public Schools K-12 Student Learning Objectives in the Visual Arts** 
  + Students can communicate at a foundational level in the visual arts. This includes knowledge and skills in the use of basic vocabularies, materials, tools, techniques, and intellectual methods of the discipline.
  + Students can communicate proficiently in at least one art form, including the ability to define and solve artistic problems with insight, reason, and technical proficiency.
  + Students can develop foundational evaluations and analyses of works of art from structural, historical, and cultural perspectives.
  + Students can develop an informed acquaintance with exemplary works of art from a variety of cultures and historical periods, and a basic understanding of historical development in the arts disciplines, across the arts as a whole, and within cultures.
* **Effective Components of an Educational Studio Program**
  + Demonstrations of artistic techniques and uses of media
  + Opportunities for practice, experimentation, and refinement based on effective feedback
  + Support for divergent thinking and multiple learning outcomes
  + A rich and robust variety of visual references
  + A variety of critique and response formats
  + Introductions to and expectations for use of appropriate art vocabulary
  + Connections among artists, careers, and art in everyday life and communities
  + An organizational system for storage and disbursement of materials and tools
  + Clear and maintained expectations for art room safety, cleaning, and classroom procedures
  + Integrations and connections with other content areas
  + Displays of various student works within the school and the community
* **Topics for Grades 6-8**
  + Design Concepts: *Elements of Art and Principles of Design*
  + Studio Skills: *Media and Processes*
  + Critical Analysis: *Planning and Evaluating*
  + Making Connections: *Connecting to Contexts*

**Document Structures**Learning goals for all curricular areas are organized by overarching concepts called *topics*. Within those topics live a learning goal. All learning goals for the visual arts are guided by the 2014 National Visual Arts Standards and assessed on the provided reporting scales. The outline below serves to define the various elements of the curriculum structure.

* **Learning Topic – The Overarching Concept**
  + Definition of the topic.
  + National Standards alignments – those most closely related to the overarching concept.
    - Anchor Standard: *Anchor standards define the expectations for students entering college and careers, and provide the foundation for the K-12 visual arts standards.*
    - Enduring Understanding*: Statements summarizing important ideas and core processes that are central to visual arts and have lasting value beyond the classroom. They synthesize what students should understand—not just know or do—as a result of studying visual arts.*
    - Essential Questions: *Organizing questions to set the focus for lessons or units. They are the initiators of creative and critical thinking.*

Evidence of student learning is assessed on a four-point scale, common throughout the district. Scales are designed to measure each learning topic. The generalized scale, with student-friendly language included, is below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SCALE SCORE** | **ACADEMIC DESCRIPTOR** | **STUDENT-FRIENDLY DESCRIPTOR** |
| **4** | **Exceeding Standard** | I have demonstrated deep understanding  that goes beyond the learning goal |
| **3** | **Meeting Standard** | I have met the learning goal |
| **2** | **Developing Toward Standard** | I have the foundational skills and knowledge  for the learning goal and I am almost there |
| **1** | **Insufficient Progress** | The evidence I have submitted shows I have a  long way to go to reach the learning goal |
| **0/M** | **No evidence of student understanding in submitted work OR  Missing – student has not submitted evidence** | I have not submitted evidence of learning for the learning goal |

\**For more information on district assessment and grading practices, please refer to the Grading Practices website* [*http://grading.dmschools.org/teacher-resources.html*](http://grading.dmschools.org/teacher-resources.html)

**Standards-Referenced Grading Basics**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Evidence shows the student can...** | **Topic Score** |
| Demonstrate all learning targets from Level 3 and Level 4 | 4.0 |
| Demonstrate all learning targets from Level 3 with partial success at Level 4 | 3.5 |
| Demonstrate all learning targets from Level 3 | 3.0 |
| Demonstrate some of the Level 3 learning targets | 2.5 |
| Demonstrate all learning targets from Level 2 but none of the learning targets from Level 3 | 2.0 |
| Demonstrate some of the Level 2 learning targets and none of the Level 3 learning targets | 1.5 |
| Demonstrate none of the learning targets from Level 2 or Level 3 | 1.0 |
| Produce no evidence appropriate to the learning targets at any level | 0 |

The teacher designs instructional activities that grow and measure a student’s skills in the elements identified on our topic scales. Each scale features many such skills and knowledges, also called **learning targets**. These are noted on the scale below with letters (A, B, C) and occur at Levels 2 and 3 of the scale. In the grade book, a specific learning activity could be marked as being 3A, meaning that the task measured the A item at Level 3.

When identifying a Topic Score, the teacher looks at all evidence for the topic. The table to the **right** shows which Topic Score is entered based on what the Body of Evidence shows.

Only scores of 4, 3.5, 3, 2.5, 2, 1.5, 1, and 0 can be entered as Topic Scores.

**Guiding Practices of Standards-Referenced Grading**

**1.** A consistent 4-point grading scale will be used.

**2.** Student achievement and behavior will be reported separately.

**3.** Scores will be based on a body of evidence.

**4.** Achievement will be organized by learning topic and converted to a grade at semester’s end.

**5.** Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate proficiency.

**6.** Accommodations and modifications will be provided for exceptional learners.

**Multiple Opportunities**

*It’s not about going back to do a retake, or back to redo something; it’s about going forward, continually scaffolding student learning through multiple opportunities, and noting that improved learning.* Our curriculum builds on itself. “Multiple opportunities” are about taking an assessment and connecting it to past topics. It’s about allowing students to demonstrate their learning multiple times in units subsequent to their current unit, or when learning is scaffolded into future units.

**Grade Level Year-Long Learning Goals**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Topic | **6-8** |
| **Design Concepts: Elements of Art & Principles of Design** | **Students will…**   * Independently apply multiple Elements of Art to an original artwork. * Independently apply multiple Principles of Design to an original artwork. * Provide evidence for their artistic choices. |
| **Studio Skills: Media & Processes** | **Students will…**   * Apply intended uses of media and tools in an artistic process or technique to create an original artwork. * Provide evidence for their artistic choices. |
| **Planning & Evaluating** | **Students will…**   * Formulate, communicate, and implement an action plan, making appropriate adjustments. * Critically analyze and evaluate their own work or the work of others based on established criteria. * Collaborate with peers or other learning partners. |
| **Connecting to Contexts** | **Students will…**   * Apply contextual elements from history, cultures, artistic movements, and society to their own artwork. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Design Concepts: Elements of Art & Principles of Design | |
| 4 | *In addition to score 3.0 performance, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond the learning goal.* |
| 3 | * Independently apply multiple Elements of Art to an original artwork. * Independently apply multiple Principles of Design to an original artwork. * Provide evidence for their artistic choices. |
| 2 | ***Students demonstrate they have the ability to:***   * **Identify** and **Describe** the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design |
| 1 | *Student’s performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.* |

**Academic Vocabulary**

*Including, but not limited to…*

*Line, Shape, Form, Space, Color, Texture, Balance, Emphasis, Movement, Pattern, Repetition, Proportion, Rhythm, Variety, Unity, Composition, Perspective*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Studio Skills: Media & Processes | |
| 4 | *In addition to score 3.0 performance, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond the learning goal.* |
| 3 | * Apply intended uses of media and tools in an artistic process or technique to create an original artwork. * Provide evidence for their artistic choices. |
| 2 | ***Students demonstrate they have the ability to:***   * **Identify** and **Describe** the intended uses of media and tools. * **Identify** and **Describe** artistic processes and techniques |
| 1 | *Student’s performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.* |

**Academic Vocabulary**

*Including, but not limited to…*

*Craftsmanship, Portfolio, Technique, Media*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Planning & Evaluating | |
| 4 | *In addition to score 3.0 performance, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond the learning goal.* |
| 3 | * Formulate, communicate, and implement an action plan, making appropriate adjustments. * Critically analyze and evaluate their own work or the work of others based on established criteria. * Collaborate with peers or other learning partners. |
| 2 | ***Students demonstrate they have the ability to:***   * **Make** an action plan. * **Describe the relationship between** their own artwork and the work of others. |
| 1 | *Student’s performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.* |

**Academic Vocabulary**

*Including, but not limited to…*

*Composition, Perspective, Media*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Connecting to Contexts | |
| 4 | *In addition to score 3.0 performance, the student demonstrates in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond the learning goal.* |
| 3 | * Apply contextual elements from history, cultures, artistic movements, and society to their own artwork. |
| 2 | ***Students demonstrate they have the ability to:***   * **Identify** and **Describe** contextual elements from history, cultures, artistic movements, and society in the work of others |
| 1 | *Student’s performance reflects insufficient progress towards foundational skills and knowledge.* |

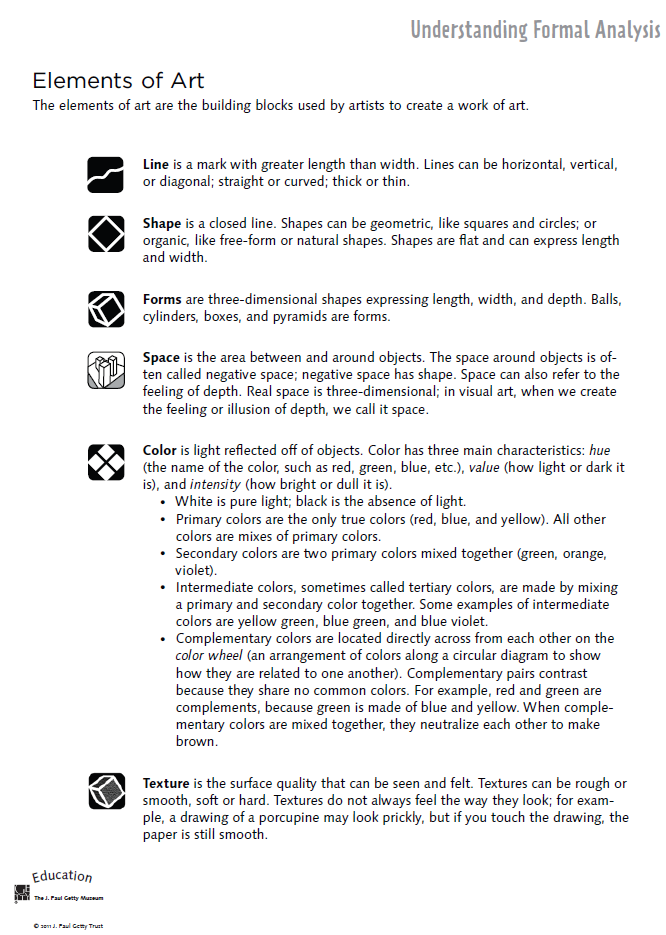
**Academic Vocabulary**

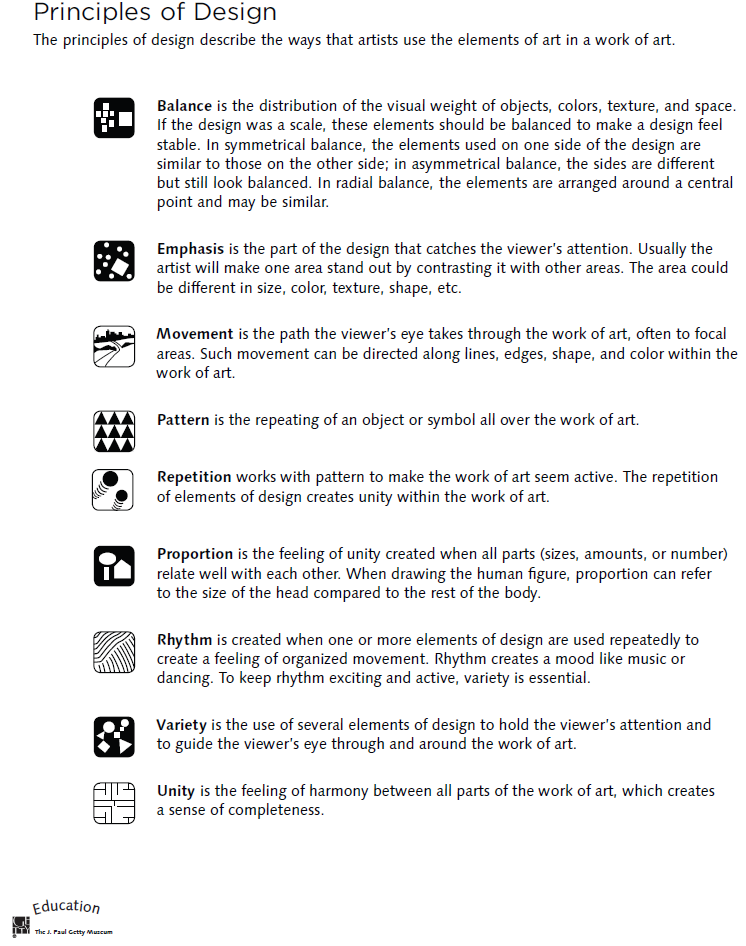
*Including, but not limited to…*

*Composition, Perspective, Media*

**Common Vocabulary Terms**Common vocabulary for selected media, styles, art movements, and art expressions reflect the concepts, techniques, and skills for each grade level and course of study. Students will use these terms in oral, written, and visual communications. Teachers are encouraged to provide additional visual arts vocabulary to the identified lists.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Required Terms** | | | **Recommended Terms** | | |
| * Line * Shape * Forms * Space * Color * Texture | * Balance * Emphasis * Movement * Pattern * Repetition * Proportion * Rhythm * Variety * Unity | * Composition * Perspective * Craftsmanship * Portfolio * Technique * Context * Media * Critique | * Horizontal * Vertical * Diagonal * Geometric * Organic * Length * Width * Depth * Negative Space * Positive Space | * Hue * Value * Intensity * Primary * Secondary * Tertiary * Complimentary * Surface * Scale * Symmetry * Asymmetry | * Contrast * Focal Point * Symbol * Mood * Harmony |





**Four-Step Critical Analysis Process**

* **Step 1: Describe – *What do you see?***
  + Credit line information such as title, artist, date created, size, medium, location, genre.
  + What do you see in the art work? Use objective observations and identification skills. All descriptions must be observable facts.
  + EXAMPLE: “*Starry Night,* Vincent Van Gogh, 1832…I see a large cypress tree in the foreground. I can tell it is a cypress by the shape. The majority of the picture is taken up by a night sky. There are many stars in the sky. Etc….”
* **Step 2: Analyze—*How is the work organized?***
  + Focus on how the Elements of Art and Principles of Design have been used in the artwork. You are still collecting clues, not guessing! How do the Principles organize the Elements? Use specific evidence from the art. This will help you discover how the artist might have created moods, messages, or ideas.
  + EXAMPLE: “The night sky is dark blue, and it is filled with vibrant yellow stars. The pattern of the stars moves the viewer’s eye back and forth throughout the painting. The repetition of the yellow into the village lights help give the picture unity. Etc….”
* **Step 3: Interpret – *“What is the artist saying?”***
  + Using the information from the description and analysis, explain what the artist might be trying to communicate. What is the mood or the meaning of the artwork? Make some guesses and provide some evidence for your thinking using the Elements and Principles. Your interpretation might be different from someone else’s.
  + Answer the question, “I think\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, because I see \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”
  + EXAMPLE: “I think the artist is trying to show a connection between a sleepy peaceful mood and the quiet little town, because the artists uses the some colors and kinds of lines in the sky and the village. I see the colors and the soft, swirling lines in the sky, and it makes me think the artist was trying to show that even a dark sky can have lots to see. Etc….”
* **Step 4: Judge – *“Is this a successful piece of art?”***
  + Now you can finally express your own personal opinion about the piece of art. Your opinion, however, is still based on what you’ve discovered through description, analysis, and interpretation, all backed up with visual evidence and the language of art. This is a carefully thought out decision in which you decided if the art was successful or not successful, not necessarily a like or dislike.
  + Answer this questions, “I think this work is (not) successful because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”
  + EXAMPLE: “I think this work is successful because it the colors and lines are organized in an interesting, swirly way that grabs my attention. The work is almost like a lullaby because the yellow stars twinkle in the sky like peaceful little notes over the sleepy town. Etc….”