

## Visual & Performing Arts Model Curriculum Assessment User's Guide

**Student learning objectives** (SLOs) and sample assessment/performance tasks have been developed for Dance, Music, Theatre, and the Visual Arts. The SLOs reflect the expectations of the 2014 Visual and Performing Arts standards and promote developmentally appropriate discipline-specific arts literacy skills. The intent of the SLOs are to provide clear targets that can assist in the daily planning of lessons, aid in the development of curriculum units and support collegial discussions about preparing students with career and college readiness skills.

The assessment/performance tasks may be used formatively and summatively to gauge students' progress toward learning goals, to identify struggling students, and as a means of checking for understanding about crucial arts literacy skills across a broad spectrum of proficiency. Using assessment as a pedagogical tool also enables teachers to differentiate instruction for all students.



For music and visual arts, assessments linked to units of instruction spanning the entire school year were created for grades K-12, which cover the entirety of the progress indicators embedded in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for Visual and Performing Arts.

The assessments linked to the Model Units that were created for dance and theatre in grades three and five are twelve weeks in length, and cover the entirety of the progress indicators in the Standards. This approximates the amount of instructional delivery time for dance and theatre

most commonly availed to elementary students. The dance and theatre assessments for grades 6, 7, 8, and high school follow the same five unit, six weeks per unit format as found in music and visual art.

The **assessment tools** for each unit are designed to aid in the development and evaluation of a student's ability to understand disciplinary literacy skills. The tasks are intended to serve as examples of the type of activities that support critical thinking and the development of career and college readiness skills. It is anticipated they will be an invaluable tool for teaching and learning, and means of objectively evaluating progress towards student growth/learning goals.

**Teachers and supervisors are encouraged to modify the assessment tools to meet the needs and interests of the students in their districts.** Educators may find these tools useful in designing instructional activities, developing formative and summative assessment experiences, creating district curricula or as a basis for professional learning conversations. In some circumstances, scripted directions to students are included in the assessment items. Such language is intended as guidance to the teacher to frame the parameters of the assessment/performance task, and its use is not mandatory.

The assessment/performance tasks and the accompanying rubrics / scoring guides for each unit can be accessed by clicking on the links below. \*\*

## NAEP Artistic Strands Correlation

The New Jersey Core Curricular Content Standards for visual and performing arts correlate structurally to the three processes defined in the 2008 NAEP Arts Education Assessment Framework: *creating*, *performing*, and *responding*. When actively engaged in these processes, students not only learn about the arts, they learn through and within the arts. (The use of the NAEP processes as an organizing structure is also a commonality with the National Arts Standards, published in 2015, with the caveat that NCAS take *connecting* into account as a fourth strand or ‘lens’ for assessing levels of proficiency in the arts).

The organization of the visual and performing arts standards reflects the critical importance of locating the separate arts disciplines (dance, music, theatre, and visual art) as one common body of knowledge and skills, while still pointing to the unique requirements of individual disciplines. The four visual and performing arts standards which follow, serve as a framework for the model curriculum unit structure:

**Standards 1.1 (Creative Process)** and **1.2 (History of the Arts and Culture)** respectively, articulate the requisite knowledge and skills for artistic literacy concerning the elements and principles of the arts, as contextual understanding of the arts inextricably linked to history and culture. Together, the two standards forge a corollary to the NAEP arts process of *Creating*.

**Standard 1.3 (Performing)** is rooted in arts performance and thus stands as a corollary to the NAEP arts process of *Performing/Interpreting*. Like standard 1.1, standard 1.3 is made up of four arts domain-specific strands: a) Dance, b) Music, c) Theatre, and d) Visual art.

**Standard 1.4 (Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies)** addresses two ways students may respond to the arts, including (1) the study of aesthetics and (2) the application of methodologies for critique. Standard 1.4 provides a corollary to the NAEP arts process of responding. This standard pertains to all four arts disciplines, and is comprised of two strands related to the mode of response: a. Aesthetic responses and b. Critique methodologies.

While the standards are typically taught concurrently, each of the five units of instruction has a particular focus or emphasis, which maps conceptually to the four strands of the New Jersey Visual and Performing Arts Standards in the following manner:

- Unit 1 focuses primarily on instruction within the context of Standard 1.1: Creative Process (i.e., the guiding principles, structures and conventions that govern art making);
- Units 2 & 3 focus primarily on skills acquisition and presentational technique (Standard 1.3:Performing);
- Unit 4 provides students with the opportunity to make informed aesthetic responses to works of their own making that that of others by using critique methodologies as a tool for constructive feedback loops (Standard 1.4: Aesthetic Responses & Critique Methodologies);
- Unit 5 Provides students the opportunity to create, perform and respond to works of dance spanning a broad spectrum of social, historical, political, and economic circumstances (Standard 1.4: History of the Arts and Culture).

Most units are design for six weeks of instruction, but may be scaled up or down as appropriate to the local circumstance. The exceptions to this structure, as noted previously, are found in the dance and theatre units in grades 3 & 5, which are samples of abbreviated, 12 week instructional units commonly deployed in districts, which cover all of the core curriculum content standards.

Additionally, this organizational structure of the Curriculum Assessments in K-5 Visual Art was modified to fit the actual teaching settings of most New Jersey K-5 visual arts teachers. Because these teachers typically see their students once each week, the imposition of five separate units seemed impracticable.

Instead, for each grade level, the assessment consists of a body of work created and scored over the course of the entire year. For each grade, there are four work samples in the collection, and each sample focuses on the understanding and application of a different element of art. The expectations for students grow progressively more challenging across grade levels.

## **A Guide to Using the Assessment Tools**

### **Purpose**

The tasks in each unit are designed to aid in the development and evaluation of a student's ability to understand disciplinary concepts and practices associated with artistic literacy and fluency as well as other broadly applicable literacy skills. The content selected for the assessment/performance task is representative of the unit (i.e., based on selected SLOs) and an effective means by which to demonstrate targeted literacy skill(s) leading to fluency in the selected artistic discipline. Not all SLOs are assessed within the unit assessment examples that are provided. Some will necessitate the use of formative assessment embedded within classroom instruction.

### **Two Views of the Documents Are Available**

Two different subsets of the assessments and supporting documents may be downloading using the links embedded in the charts appearing earlier in this guide. Both can be viewed as either PDF documents or in Word. The first option includes a brief written Unit Overview, the SLO(s) being assessed, the assessment Task, and the Scoring Guide. The second link provides access to the SLO(s) & Scoring Guides Only in PDF or Word formats. Having access to each task each individual take along with its associated scoring guide is included for the purpose of allowing customization, should the teacher wish to create a different task for a particular SLO.

It should also be noted that the Unit Overview is color-coded. The (olive) coding is meant to provide directions to support teachers in carrying out assessments. Text coded (blue) is provided as a tool for teachers who want domain-specific scripted language to communicate the expectations of the assessment, which also articulates any directions students may need to complete the assessment task.

### **How the Tasks May Be Used**

The tasks are intended to serve as examples of the type of tasks that support critical thinking and the development of career and college readiness skills.

**Teachers and supervisors are encouraged to modify the tasks to meet the needs and interests of the students in their districts.** Such modifications might include using different stimulus material, adding additional scaffolding questions, or revising the expectations of the task.

## How the Assessment Tools may be used for Instruction, Assessment or Professional Learning

The tasks were created as a way to interrogate a student's understanding of disciplinary concepts associated with dance, music, theatre, and visual art that are indicators of both declarative and procedural knowledge and skill. In addition, these tasks are intended to help students develop and demonstrate important critical thinking skills and non-cognitive dispositions such as data interpretation, citing evidence in support of a stated position, analyzing and evaluating an argument, perseverance, flexibility, self-efficacy and collaboration.

The assessment tools that are included in this unit may be used for the following purposes:

- **Instructional** – teachers may select one or more of the tasks and use them for whole class or small group instruction.
- **Formative assessment** – teachers may select one or more of the tasks and use them as a way to evaluate the student's degree of mastery of a skill or construct. Adjustments to future instructional activities could be made based on information gained from this type of experience.
- **Summative assessment** – teachers may select one or more tasks in combination with other assessment items to create an end of unit summative assessment. When designing such assessment, consideration should be given to cognitive demand and time constraints.
- **Professional learning** – teachers may want to use the tasks as a way to frame a conversation about designing learning experiences across several grades to promote the development of habits of the mind essential to the visual and performing arts and learning. In addition, collegial teacher groups may want to examine student work based on these tasks as a way to identify skills/tasks that are challenging for students. An analysis of tasks across units/grades may be useful in recognizing common themes that teachers may want to emphasize in order to connect new ideas to previous learning or for the purpose of creating district-wide assessments or rubrics.

## About the Creation of the Assessment Tools

A group of experienced dance, music, theatre and visual arts teachers and supervisors selected student learning objectives (SLOs) that are central to the content covered in the unit, as well as being closely aligned with the three artistic processes embedded in the standards, including creating, performing and responding to works of art. Tasks were designed to enable students to demonstrate their knowledge specific to the artistic discipline they are studying and are aligned with key career and college-readiness skills.