



Art Course Description (Academic year 2020-2021)

The Visual Arts Standards of Learning identify the essential knowledge and skills required in the visual arts curriculum for each grade level or course. The Virginia standards outline the minimum criteria for a sequential course of study within a comprehensive visual arts education program. The standards are designed to be cumulative, progressing in complexity by grade level from kindergarten through the sequence of high school courses.

Throughout visual arts education, course content is organized into four specific content strands or topics: Visual Communication and Production; Art History and Cultural Context; Analysis, Evaluation, and Critique; and Aesthetics. Although the strands are presented separately for organizational purposes, in practice they are integrated throughout visual arts instruction, regardless of the particular learning experience. Through the mastery of visual arts concepts and acquisition of visual arts skills, the goals for visual arts education are realized. A comprehensive visual arts program provides students with multiple means of expression as well as analytical skills to evaluate information that is conveyed through images and symbols. Through participation in the visual arts, students develop critical-thinking skills and draw upon core academic areas to solve problems of creation, design, and execution. They develop individual expression and the ability to work collaboratively to achieve common artistic goals, while preparing for a lifetime of engagement with the arts.

The standards are intended neither to encompass the entire curriculum for a given grade level or course nor to prescribe how the content should be taught. Teachers are encouraged to go beyond the standards and select instructional strategies and assessment methods appropriate for their students. Teachers are expected to consistently model appropriate use of copyrighted and royalty-protected materials.