

RATIONALE: VISUAL ARTS

This rationale complements and extends the rationale for The Arts learning area. Visual Arts includes the fields of art, craft and design. Learning in and through these fields, students create visual representations that communicate, challenge and express their own and others' ideas as artist and audience. They develop perceptual and conceptual understanding, critical reasoning and practical skills through exploring and expanding their understanding of their world, and other worlds. They learn about the role of the artist, craftsperson and designer, their contribution to society, and the significance of the creative industries. Similarly with the other art forms, the visual arts has the capacity to engage, inspire and enrich the lives of students, encouraging them to reach their creative and intellectual potential by igniting informed, imaginative and innovative thinking. Through Visual Arts, students make and respond using visual arts knowledge, understanding and skills to represent meaning associated with personal and global views, and intrinsic and extrinsic worlds. Visual Arts engages students in a journey of discovery, experimentation and problem-solving relevant to visual perception and visual language. Students undertake this journey by utilising visual techniques, technologies, practices and processes. Learning in the Visual Arts, students become increasingly confident and proficient in achieving their personal visual aesthetic, and appreciate and value that of others. Visual Arts supports students to view the world through various lenses and contexts. They recognise the significance of visual arts histories, theories and practices, exploring and responding to artists, craftspeople and designers and their artworks. They apply visual arts knowledge in order to make critical judgments about their own importance as artists and audiences. Learning in the Visual Arts helps students to develop understanding of world culture and their responsibilities as global citizens.

Learning Area The Arts: Years 5 and 6 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 6, students explain how ideas are communicated in artworks they make and to which they respond. They describe characteristics of artworks from different social, historical and cultural contexts that influence their art making. Students structure elements and processes of arts subjects to make artworks that communicate meaning. They work collaboratively to share artworks for audiences, demonstrating skills and techniques. **Visual Arts: Years 5 and 6 Achievement Standard** By the end of Year 6, students explain how ideas are represented in artworks they make and view. They describe the influences of artworks and practices from different cultures, times and places on their art making. Students use visual conventions and visual arts practices to express a personal view in their artworks. They demonstrate different techniques and processes in planning and making artworks. They describe how the display of artworks enhances meaning for an audience.

AIMS

- In addition to the overarching aims of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, Visual Arts knowledge, understanding and skills ensure that, individually and collaboratively, students develop:
- conceptual and perceptual ideas and representations through design and inquiry processes
 - visual arts techniques, materials, processes and technologies
 - critical and creative thinking, using visual arts languages, theories and practices to apply aesthetic judgment
 - respect for and acknowledgement of the diverse roles, innovations, traditions, histories and cultures of artists, craftspeople and designers; visual arts as social and cultural practices; and industry as artists and audiences
 - confidence, curiosity, imagination and enjoyment and develop a personal aesthetic through engagement with visual arts making and ways of representing and communicating

Organisation and Content Structure

In the Australian Curriculum, the Arts is a learning area that draws together related but distinct art forms. While these art forms have close relationships and are often used in interrelated ways, each involves different approaches to arts practices and critical and creative thinking that reflect distinct bodies of knowledge, understanding and skills. The curriculum examines past, current and emerging arts practices in each art form across a range of cultures and places. The Australian Curriculum: The Arts Foundation to Year 10 enables exploration of the dynamic relationships between Arts subjects. This can involve students making and responding to artworks in traditional, contemporary and emerging forms, using materials, techniques and technologies from one Arts subject to support learning in another. In this twenty-first century Arts curriculum, students explore innovative and hybrid art forms which extend and challenge art making and combine practices of two or more art forms. Within all Arts subjects, design facilitates the creative and practical realisation of ideas. Design thinking is a fundamental strategy in the experimentation, refinement and resolution of an artwork and takes into account logical, critical and aesthetic considerations. Many different words describe design within the Arts such as choreographing, narrating, devising, constructing, composing and sculpting. Design connects the different art forms so that they inform each other, providing possibilities for students to create innovative and hybrid forms of art. **Strands** - Content descriptions in each Arts subject reflect the interrelated strands of *Making* and *Responding*.

- *Making* includes learning about and using knowledge, skills, techniques, processes, materials and technologies to explore arts practices and make artworks that communicate ideas and intentions.
- *Responding* includes exploring, responding to, analysing and interpreting artworks.

Relationship between the strands: *Making* and *Responding* are intrinsically connected. Together they provide students with knowledge, understanding and skills as artists, performers and audience and develop students' skills in critical and creative thinking. As students make artworks they actively respond to their developing artwork and the artworks of others; as students respond to artworks they draw on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired through their experiences in making artworks. **Viewpoints** - In both making and responding to artworks, students consider a range of viewpoints or perspectives through which artworks can be explored and interpreted. These include the contexts in which the artworks are made by artists and experienced by audiences. The world can be interpreted through different contexts, including social, cultural and historical contexts. Based on this curriculum, key questions are provided as a framework for developing students' knowledge, understanding and inquiry skills. In **Visual Arts**, students experience and explore the concepts of artists, artworks, world and audience. Students learn in, through and about visual arts practices, including the fields of art, craft and design. Students develop practical skills and critical thinking which inform their work as artists and audience. **Knowledge and skills of Visual Arts** Students make new knowledge and develop their skills, techniques and processes as they explore a diversity of artists, visual imagery, representations, designed objects and environments, and viewpoints and practices. Knowledge, understanding and skills are intrinsically linked and interact with each other constantly through and between Making and Responding.

The Arts across Foundation to Years 10: Years 3– 6

Through the primary years, students draw on their growing experience of family, school and the wider community to develop their understanding of the world and their relationships with others. In Years 3 to 6, learning in the Arts occurs both through integrated curriculum and The Arts subject-specific approaches. Some of the instinct to play evident in the early years becomes formalised into both experimentation and artistic practice. Students in these years increasingly recognise the connections between the Arts and other learning areas. While arts in the local community continues to be the initial focus for learning in the Arts, students are also aware of and interested in arts from more distant locations and the curriculum provides opportunities to build on this curiosity. Students learn that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples tell history through combinations of art forms. They learn that particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories have been recorded and will explore the meanings of stories and styles in which they are told. Students have opportunities to participate in a variety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art forms that are publicly available for broader participation in their community. Students may also extend their cultural expression with appropriate community consultation and endorsement. Students also study artworks which represent Australia's connections with other places, the effects of these interconnections and the factors that affect people's knowledge and opinions of other places. During these years of schooling, students' thought processes become more logical and consistent, and they gradually become more independent as learners. Students talk about changes in their own thinking, performance or making, giving reasons for their actions and explaining and demonstrating their organisation of ideas. They begin to recognise, appreciate and value the different ways in which others think, act and respond to artworks and consider how practices in the Arts may be enacted and sustained.

Content descriptions in each Arts subject focus on similar concepts and skills that, across the bands, present a developmental sequence of knowledge, understanding and skills. The focus of each content description in Foundation to Year 6 expands into more specific content descriptions for Years 7 to 10 as presented in the table below. For transition purposes from primary to secondary in Years 7–8 and consistency state-wide, generalist primary teachers at Year 7 could focus on the four initial similar concepts and skills eg, the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 6th Content Descriptions, with the deeper and expanded concepts being the focus in year 8, eg, the 2nd, 4th, 5th, and 7th Content Descriptions. E.g. The focus in Year 7 could then be on: 8.1, 8.3, 8.5 and 8.6, and in Year 8: 8.2, 8.4, 8.5 and 8.7.

Content description	Foundation–Yr 6	Content description	Yrs 7–10
1 st	Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas	1 st	Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas
		2 nd	Manipulating and applying the elements/concepts with intent
2 nd	Developing understanding of practices	3 rd	Developing and refining understanding of skills and techniques
		4 th	Structuring and organising ideas into form
3 rd	Sharing artworks through performance, presentation or display	5 th	Sharing artworks through performance, presentation or display
4 th	Responding to and interpreting artworks	6 th	Analysing and reflecting upon intentions
		7 th	Responding to and interpreting artworks

Years 5–6 Level Description: Visual Arts

In Years 5 and 6, learning in Visual Arts builds on the experience of the previous band. It involves students making and responding to visual arts independently, and collaboratively with their classmates, teachers and communities. Students extend their awareness of how and why artists, craftspeople and designers realise their ideas through different visual representations, practices, processes and viewpoints. They develop conceptual and representational skills. They use and apply appropriate visual conventions. Students test and innovate with properties and qualities of available materials, techniques, technologies and processes. The focus for this experimentation is on combining two or more visual arts forms to test the boundaries of representation. As they experience visual arts, students draw on artworks from a range of cultures, times and locations. They explore the influences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and those of the Asia region. Students explore the practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to learn about how these artists communicate intention. As they make and respond to visual artworks as artists and audiences, students explore a diversity of ideas, concepts and viewpoints. They draw ideas from other artists, artworks, symbol systems, and visual arts practices in other cultures, societies and times. Suggested topics for their inquiry could include examining how artists have explored the concept of 'environment' or 'sustainability' in different places and at different times. Students extend their understanding of safe visual arts practices and choose to use sustainable materials, techniques and technologies. Their understanding of the roles of artists and audiences builds upon their experience from the previous band.

Years 5–6: Examples of knowledge and skills in Visual Arts

Students apply their knowledge and understanding through appropriate and skilful use of visual arts practices as artists and audiences. Through *Making and Responding*, students develop knowledge, skills and understanding of their art making by becoming increasingly proficient with art, craft and design techniques, processes, and ways of perceiving worlds.

Examples of knowledge and skills in Visual Arts:

The following information serves to articulate the main parts of the broader conceptual areas of Knowledge and Skills. These are not an exclusive, exhaustive list, but an indication of the breadth of study within Visual Arts. In this band students develop their knowledge of how ideas and intentions are communicated in and through visual arts. They build on and refine their knowledge, understanding and skills through visual arts practices focusing on:

Representation

- Subject matter* - such as environment (macro/micro), physical and conceptual properties of materials and technologies
- Forms* - cross-media—drawing, design, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, film, etc
- Styles* - figurative, expressionistic, abstract, surrealism, Dada, digital art, etc
- Techniques* - collage, drawing, screen printing, digital imaging, construction and environmental sculpture
- Visual conventions* - identifying, using and interpreting a selection of design elements and design principles
- Materials* - understanding of possibilities and restraints (qualities) of a range of materials
- Technologies* - traditional and digital

Practices

- Spaces* - recognising the meaning of studio, and adopting appropriate behaviour in the studio as a specialised space, for example, cleaning up, organising materials, naming work and exhibiting work
- presenting artworks in formal and informal spaces to enhance meaning; influence of viewpoints and audience on artworks; form and function
- Skills* - expressive—interpreting subject matter through various contexts and/or viewpoints to enhance understanding and create a personal response to stimuli
- conceptual—developing a thought or idea into a visual representation
- practical—using visual arts materials, equipment and instruments
- Processes* - investigating, conceiving, experimenting, selecting, refining, predicting, testing, evaluating, comparing, analysing, identifying, evaluating, judging and displaying

Viewpoints

- Expression* - physical, psychological, sensory and intuitive
- Contexts* - recognising artists and artworks who work in cross-media and those who install their artworks in various locations. Refer to artists and audiences from different cultures, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and from Asia

Years 5–6: Considering Viewpoints in Visual Arts

In both *Making and Responding*, students learn that meanings can be generated from different viewpoints and that these shift according to different world encounters. As students make, investigate or critique artworks as artists and audiences, they may ask and answer questions to interrogate the artists' meanings and the audiences' interpretations. Meanings and interpretations are informed by contexts of societies, cultures and histories, and an understanding of visual arts practices. These questions provide the basis for making informed critical judgments about their own art and design works and other artworks they see, hear and interact with as audiences.

Examples of viewpoints and questions within the Visual Arts Content Elaborations Years 5–6

Considering viewpoints:

- *Materials and technologies*: What is the artwork made of? How does the choice of material enhance the audience's understanding of the artist's intention? What made you want to touch this sculpture?
- *Histories*: For example – What did the artist want the audience to see and understand?
- *Societies and cultures*: For example – What clues in the artwork tell us where it was made, who made it, and why? What artworks are you familiar with? Which style of artwork represents your community? How would you represent your neighbourhood?
- *Skills, techniques and processes*: For example – How did the artist work within a space, and at this time? How have they innovated their practice?
- *Critical theories*: For example – Compare these paintings (one from India, one Australian). What do you recognise? What do you understand? What is new?
- *Meanings and interpretations*: For example – What is this artwork about? What visual conventions have been used to convey meaning? How did the artist represent their subject matter? How does the artwork reflect the artist's perspective about the environment? How did the audience react to the artwork when it was first displayed?
- *Psychology*: For example – What elements are used to show excitement in the sculpture? Make a scary monster.
- *Evaluations*: For example – Did it make you think more seriously about the issue? Did the rest of the class understand your message?

Years 5–6 Content Descriptions: Visual Arts

- 6.1 Explore ideas and practices used by artists, including practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent different views, beliefs and opinions
- 6.2 Develop and apply techniques and processes when making their artworks
- 6.3 Plan the display of artworks to enhance their meaning for an audience
- 6.4 Explain how visual arts conventions communicate meaning by comparing artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks

NB: It is advised that the 'Learning in Visual Arts' two page introduction (Subject, structure) is used along with this 'explorer' paper. Download it from the Australian Curriculum website.

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