

New York State Learning Standards for the



Visual Arts

Glossary

TOGETHER WE • CREATE • PRESENT
PERFORM • RESPOND • CONNECT
PRODUCE

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VISUAL ARTS

GLOSSARY

of Discipline-Specific Terms & Concepts



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NOTES:

The letters “MA” in the next-to-right-hand column indicate that part or all of the definition is the same in the New York State Visual Arts and Media Arts standards.

✓ A checkmark in the far right-hand column indicates that a significant part or all of the definition is a New York State addition to definitions published by the National Core Arts Standards (SEADAE, 2014). When only a small part of a definition is added by NYS authors, that part is underlined.

NCAS definitions can be found at <http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/content/glossary>.

Visual Arts

As defined by the National Art Education Association, includes 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, and works in wood, paper, and other materials (Revised July 2012).

Definitions	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
A		
<p>Aesthetic Specific artistic awareness, or a deep appreciation of the meaning of an artistic experience through intellectual, emotional, and sensual responses to a work of art. In some cases, it is a set of principles underlying and guiding the work of a particular artist or artistic movement.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Aesthetics The philosophical inquiry into the nature of what makes a work of art a “work of art,” and not just an object; our response to the work, and the resulting examination of our values concerning art. Other aesthetic inquiries include questions like <i>who is the artist?</i> or <i>when or under what circumstances is a work art?</i> Aesthetics can change over time, in response to context and culture.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Analyze Examine methodically and in detail the constitution or structure of something, typically for purposes of explanation, interpretation, or deeper understanding.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Appropriation The intentional borrowing, copying, and altering of pre-existing images and objects.</p>	MA	

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Art In everyday discussions and in the history of aesthetics, multiple (and sometimes contradictory) definitions of art have been proposed. In a classic article, “The Role of Theory in Aesthetics,” Morris Weitz (1956) recommended differentiating between classificatory (classifying) and honorific (honoring) definitions of art.</p> <p>In the <u>New York State Learning Standards for the Arts</u>, the word “art” is used in the classificatory sense to mean “an artifact or action that has been put forward by an artist or other person as something to be experienced, interpreted, and appreciated.”</p> <p>An important component of a quality visual arts education is for students to engage in discussions about honorific definitions of art: identifying the wide range of significant features in art-making approaches, analyzing why artists follow or break with traditions, and discussing their own understandings of the characteristics of “good art.”</p>		
<p>Art criticism The combined act (not always in this order) of carefully observing; describing; analyzing form, structure and/or application of media; and interpreting meaning in a work of art based on what has been perceived. Some theorists add evaluation or judgment as a final step. Others include creating connections with other works and/or integrating context.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Art history <u>Discussion, research, and writing about artists, their work, influences on their lives and work, and writings about and by that artist. Also, the published results of scholarship that seeks to explain relationships between artworks and art movements by sorting art into categories and organized systems (e.g. chronological order, styles, genres, “isms,” etc.).</u></p>		✓
<p>Art production The direct experience and process of creating art by using materials, techniques, perceptual skills, and imagination to explore, set down, and communicate observations, ideas and feelings about the tangible and intangible worlds around us. Through the creative process of developing and manipulating images, students gain an intimate familiarity with the rich synthesis of motives that inspire the making of art.</p>		✓
<p>Artist statement Information about context, explanations of process, descriptions of learning, related stories, reflections, or other details in a written or spoken format shared by the artist to extend and deepen understanding of his or her artwork; an artist statement can be didactic, descriptive, or reflective in nature.</p>		

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<p>Artistic investigations In making art, forms of inquiry and exploration. Through artistic investigation, artists go beyond illustrating pre-existing ideas or following directions, and generate fresh insights – new ways of seeing and knowing.</p>		
<p>Artistic processes An overarching term that includes artmaking approaches, creative process strategies, and the use of tools, techniques, and media (bold words – see separate definitions).</p>		√
<p>Artistic work Artifacts or actions that have been put forward by an artist or other person as something to be experienced, interpreted, and appreciated.</p>	MA	√
<p>Artmaking approaches Diverse strategies and procedures by which artists initiate and pursue making a work of art.</p>		
<p>Artwork Artifact <u>or</u> product that has been put forward by an artist or other person as something to be experienced, interpreted, and appreciated.</p>	MA	√
<p>B</p>		
<p>Brainstorm Technique for the initial production of ideas or ways of solving a problem by which ideas are spontaneously contributed without critical comment or judgment.</p>		
<p>C</p>		
<p>Categorize Arrange or group things in categories according to shared qualities or characteristics.</p>		√
<p>Characteristic(s) Attribute, feature, property, or essential quality.</p>		
<p>Collaborate, Collaboration Working together to formulate and solve creative problems.</p>	MA	
<p>Collaboratively Joining with others in attentive participation in an activity of imagining, exploring, or making.</p>	MA	

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Composition A whole made up of multiple parts arranged in such a way that the relationships between the parts work together to create a particular effect or meaning.</p>	MA	√
<p>Concepts Ideas, thoughts, schemata; art arising out of conceptual experimentation; emphasizes making meaning through ideas rather than through materiality or form.</p>		
<p>Conservation The act of conserving; prevention of decay, waste, or loss; preservation; or the preservation and restoration of works of art.</p>		√
<p>Construct Build, make, or create something (such as an object, story, or theory) by using strategies, rules, or instructions to organize materials, ideas, words, etc.</p>		√
<p>Constructed environment Human-made or <u>human</u>-modified spaces and places; art and design-related disciplines such as architecture, urban planning, interior design, game design, virtual environment, and landscape design and shape the places in which people live, work, and play.</p>		√
<p>Contemporary artistic practice Processes, techniques, media, procedures, behaviors, actions, and conceptual approaches by which an artist or designer makes work, using methods that, though possibly based on traditional practices, reflect changing contextual, conceptual, aesthetic, material, and technical possibilities. Examples include artwork made with appropriated images or materials; social practice artworks that involve the audience; performance art, new media works, installations; and artistic interventions in public spaces.</p>		
<p>Context Interrelated influences surrounding the creation and experience of an artwork, including the artist, audience, time, culture, presentation, and physical or virtual location of the production and reception of the work. Often divided into the larger categories of personal, social, historical, and cultural kinds of context.</p>	MA	√
<p>Convention An established, common, or predictable rule, method, or practice.</p>	MA	√
<p>Copyright Form of protection grounded in the US Constitution and granted by law for original works of authorship fixed in a tangible medium of expression, covering both published and unpublished works.</p>	MA	
<p>Craftsmanship Workmanship, artistry, and mastery of technique.</p>		√

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Create, Creativity (n.) Conceive and develop rich, original ideas; discover unexpected connections; and invent or make new things.</p>		
<p>Creative Commons Copyright license templates that provide a simple, standardized way to give the public permission to share and use creative work on conditions of the maker’s choice.</p>	MA	
<p>Creative economy A creative economy is based on people’s use of their creative imagination to increase an idea’s value. In a creative economy, value is based on novel, imaginative qualities rather than on the traditional resources of land, labor, and capital. Some observers take the view that creativity is the defining characteristic of developed 21st century economies, just as manufacturing typified 19th and early 20th century economies.</p>	MA	√
<p>Creative process There are various models of the creative process that contain stages of work phases, such as inspiration, clarification, distillation, perspiration, evaluation, and incubation. During a particular piece of creative work, each phase might be experienced many times, in no definite order or duration of time.</p>	MA	√
<p>Criteria (plural), Criterion (singular) The particular parameters (content, context, desired effect, form, structure, duration, medium, etc.) used to define and/or evaluate an assignment, task, or work.</p>	MA	√
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contemporary criteria—Principles by which a work of art or design is understood and evaluated in contemporary contexts that include, for example, judgment based not necessarily on originality, but rather on how the work is re-contextualized to create new meanings. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established criteria—Identified principles that direct attention to significant aspects of various types of artwork in order to provide guidelines for evaluating the work; may be commonly accepted principles developed by artists, curators, historians, critics, educators, and others, or principles developed by an individual or group that pertain to a specific work of art or design. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal criteria—Principles for evaluating art and design, based on individual preferences. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant criteria—Principles that apply to making, revising, understanding, and evaluating a particular work of art or design that are generated by identifying the significant characteristics of a work. 		

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Critique Individual or collective reflective process by which artists or designers experience, analyze, and evaluate a work of art or design.</p>	MA	
<p>Cultural contexts Ideas, beliefs, values, norms, customs, traits, practices, and characteristics shared by individuals within a group that form the circumstances surrounding the creation, presentation, preservation, and response to art.</p>		
<p>Cultural traditions Pattern of practices and beliefs within a societal group.</p>		
<p>Cultural, Culture Pertaining to values and beliefs of a particular group of people, from a specific place or time, expressed through characteristics such as tradition, social structure, religion, art, and food.</p>	MA	
<p>Curate Collect, sort, and organize objects, artwork, and artifacts; preserve and maintain historical records and catalogue exhibits.</p>	MA	
<p>Curator Person responsible for acquiring, caring for, and exhibiting objects, artworks, and artifacts.</p>		
<p>D</p>		
<p>Describe Give a factual account, usually in words, of someone or something, including all of the relevant characteristics, qualities, or events.</p>		√
<p>Design Application of creativity to planning the optimal solution to a given problem, and communication of that plan to others.</p>		
<p>Design thinking A formal, cognitive methodology for practical, innovative resolution of problems and creation of solutions, with the intent of an improved future result. Design thinking specifically starts with empathizing with and gathering information on the needs of all constituents involved, not just a specific party; goal setting is geared for a better future situation rather than resolving a discrete problem independent of reference to the current and future environment. A popular version of the design thinking process has seven stages: <i>define, research, ideate, prototype, choose, implement, and learn.</i> Within these steps, problems can be framed, the right questions can be asked, more ideas can be created, and the best answers can be chosen. The steps aren't linear; they can occur simultaneously and be repeated. <i>cont'd</i></p>	MA	√

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>By considering both present and future conditions and parameters of the problem, alternative solutions may be explored simultaneously. Learning happens throughout the process, from the early research phase to the final presentation.</p> <p>Design thinking has been adapted for business purposes as a method of developing divergent and innovative solutions.</p>	MA	√
<p>Digital, Digital format Anything in electronic form, including photos, images, video, audio files, or artwork, created or presented through electronic means; a gallery of artwork viewed electronically through any device.</p>	MA	√
<p>Document Record in written, photographic, or other form.</p>		
<p>E</p>		
<p>Edit, Editing To change a work of art to move it closer to a resolved state, ready for viewing or publication. Though usually associated with shortening and correcting, it can also include rearranging, adding, revising, refining, clarifying, etc.</p>	MA	√
<p>Elements (of art) and Principles (of design) Elements are visual forms used by artists in the creation of an artwork, such as line, color, shape, mass, size, etc. Principles describe structural relationships between the forms, such as balance, contrast, pattern, etc.</p> <p>Many classrooms feature a commercialized formulation of elements and principles, but, in truth, there is no consensus in the field about a uniform set of elements and principles. There are other relationships that are commonly found in works of art that are neither elements nor principles, such as time, flavor, sound, site-specificity, juxtaposition, re-contextualization, hybridization, etc. These limitations have led to the contemporary use of the more inclusive phrase form and structure.</p>	MA	√
<p>Ethics Moral guidelines and philosophical principles for determining appropriate behavior within arts environments.</p>	MA	√
<p>Evaluate Judge or determine the significance, worth, or quality of something.</p>	MA	√
<p>Exhibition narrative Written description of an exhibition intended to educate viewers about its purpose.</p>		

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Expressive properties Moods, feelings, or ideas evoked or suggested through the attributes, features, or qualities of an image or work of art.</p>	MA	
<p>F</p>		
<p>Fair Use Limitation in copyright law that sets out factors to be considered in determining whether or not a particular use of one’s work is “fair,” such as the purpose and character of the use, the amount of the work used, and whether the use will affect the market for the work.</p>	MA	
<p>Form The visible shape, structure, or configuration of something.</p>		
<p>Form and structure Terms drawn from traditional, modern, and contemporary sources that identify the range of attributes that can be used to describe works of art and design to aid students in experiencing and perceiving the qualities of artwork, enabling them to create their own work and to appreciate and interpret the work of others. Generally, form refers to the overall configuration and mode of the work. Structure refers to the organization of interrelated elements in works of art. Form and structure might include traditional principles of design, as well as contemporary systems of organization.</p>	MA	√
<p>Formal and conceptual vocabularies Terms, methods, concepts, or strategies used to experience, describe, analyze, plan, and make works of art and design drawn from traditional, modern, contemporary, and continually emerging sources in diverse cultures.</p>		
<p>Function The function of an object refers to its use and how it works or operates in a proper or particular way.</p>		√
<p>G</p>		
<p>Generate To bring into existence, cause to be, produce; to create and distribute with profusion.</p>		√
<p>Generative methods Various inventive techniques for creating new ideas and models, such as brainstorming, play, open exploration, experimentation, inverting assumptions, rule-bending, etc.</p>	MA	√

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Genre Category of art or design identified by similarities in form, subject matter, content, or technique.</p>	MA	
<p>H</p>		
<p>Hybridization The practice of combining two or more existing media forms to create new and original forms, such as multi-media sculptural installations. Used in particular when referencing artworks or art experiences that utilize some form of electronic imagery and/or sound.</p>	MA	✓
<p>I</p>		
<p>Identity The conceptions, qualities, beliefs, and experiences that make up a person or a group.</p>		✓
<p>Image Visual representation of something.</p>		
<p>Imagery See Visual imagery.</p>		✓
<p>Imaginative play Experimentation by children <u>that defines</u> identities and points of view by developing skills in conceiving, planning, making art, and communicating.</p>		
<p>Innovate The act or process of introducing new ideas, devices, or methods; often also viewed as the application of better solutions that meet new requirements, unarticulated needs, or existing market needs.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Innovation New changes in existent processes or products that improve or expand functionality, ease of use, new applications, etc.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Innovative thinking Imagining or conceiving something new and unexpected, including fresh ideas and ways of looking at things and new approaches to old problems, as well as formulating new problems.</p>	MA	
<p>Installation (Usually) large-scale mixed media construction, sometimes interactive, and often designed for a specific place and/or temporary period of time; designed to transform the viewer’s experience and perception of the space.</p>		✓

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Interactive art Art that requires the viewer to participate in the work in some way, beyond viewing. Interactive art breaks down traditional boundaries between the work of art and the viewer, and frequently raises the aesthetic question, “Who is the artist?”</p> <p>Actual participation in a work of art creates a different aesthetic experience than just viewing it alone, and blurs the boundaries between visual art and theatre. Artworks that require participation also ask the viewer(s) to consider, “Who is the artist?”, “When and where is the art?”, and “Is the viewer’s participation essential to making it art?”</p>		✓
<p>Interpret Draw inferences about, discern or extract meaning, purpose, and/or subject of investigation, based on visual evidence gathered through observation and analysis, and examination of context.</p> <p>In some senses can be construed to mean how one artist “interprets” the work of another artist, by remaking it and/or referencing it in a new or different context, resulting in another work of art.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Interpretation The resulting meaning or explanation (textual or visual) derived from the act of interpreting.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Invent Produce (something, such as a useful device or process) for the first time through the use of the imagination or of ingenious thinking and experiment.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Inventive Quality of being potentially useful yet imaginative, ingenious, and/or experimental.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Invention Something invented.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Investigate Carry out a systematic or formal inquiry.</p>		✓
<p>J</p>		
<p>Justify To provide a good reason for; to prove or show something to be just, right, or reasonable.</p>		✓

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Juxtaposition The putting together of two or more things that are normally not found together. In artwork, this often prompts the viewer to make new associations among objects or to think about connections her or she hasn't considered before.</p>	MA	√
K		
L		
M		
<p>Material culture Human-constructed or human-mediated objects, forms, or expressions that extend to other senses and study beyond the traditional art historical focus on the exemplary to the study of common objects, ordinary spaces, and everyday rituals.</p>	MA	
<p>Materials Substances out of which art is made or composed, ranging from the traditional to "non-art" material and virtual, cybernetic, and simulated materials.</p>		
<p>Meaning, Meaningful Purpose and/or significance expressed or indicated through a work of art.</p>	MA	√
<p>Media, Medium Mode(s) of artistic expression or communication; material or other resources used for creating art.</p>		
<p>Media art(s), Media artwork Media art is understood to apply to all forms of time-related art works which are created by recording sound and/or visual images. Media artwork usually depends on a technological component to function. It includes both fine art and commercially-oriented works presented via film, television, radio, audio, video, the internet, interactive and mobile technologies, transmedia storytelling, and satellite. Forms that are shared with contemporary visual arts/fine arts include kinetic sculpture, information art, organic and algorithmic art, interactive art, multimedia installations, etc. Other more commercially-oriented forms include news reporting, documentaries, advertisements, music videos, animation, machinima, video games and game design, and/or a combination of any of these. Media art forms are constantly evolving in response to technological innovations.</p>	MA	√
<p>Media literacy A series of communication competencies, including the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate information in a variety of forms, including print and non-print messages.</p>	MA	√

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Mediate A medium or media is so-named because it “mediates” (affects, changes) our thinking in some way (Eisner). That is, by taking our thoughts beyond simply thinking them, and exploring them through a particular medium outside of our minds, that medium changes or acts upon our thinking in a transactional, reciprocal way.</p>		√
<p>Metaphor A figure of speech that refers to one thing by mentioning another thing. It may provide clarity or identify hidden similarities between two ideas. A metaphor allows us to use what we know about our physical and social experience to provide understanding of countless other subjects by matching similar gestalts (organizing features, underlying patterns) of story, action, feeling, being, etc. In this sense, artworks can act as visual metaphors for different human experiences.</p>		√
<p>Multimedia The integration of multiple forms of media.</p>	MA	√
N		
O		
<p>Open source Computer software for which the copyright holder freely provides the right to use, study, change, and distribute the software to anyone for any purpose.</p>	MA	
P		
<p>Play Spontaneous, engaged activity through which children learn to experience, experiment, discover, and create.</p>		
<p>Popular culture Cultural activities, beliefs, customs, art, and/or products aimed at the common tastes of a broad cross section of people.</p>	MA	√
<p>Portfolio Actual or virtual collection of artworks and documentation demonstrating art and design knowledge and skills, organized to reflect an individual’s creative growth and artistic literacy.</p>		
<p>Preservation Activity of protecting, saving, and caring for objects, artifacts, and artwork through a variety of means.</p>		
<p>Preserve Protect, save, and care for objects, artifacts, and artwork.</p>		

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
Q		
R		
Reflect Think deeply, carefully, or introspectively about an object, place, process, idea, or experience.		✓
Represent Symbolize, express, designate, stand for, or denote, as a word or symbol represents an idea or object.		✓
Repurpose Adapt for use in a different purpose than originally found serving or intended.		✓
Responsible use When using technology, application of a normal standard of academic integrity, polite conduct and respect for the rights and privacy of others; includes use of anti-virus software and prevention of the spread of viruses and malware. Expectation to act responsibly and abide by all state and federal laws.	MA	✓
S		
Social media Digital network-mediated digital technologies that allow the creating and sharing of information, ideas, career interests, and other forms of expression via virtual communities.	MA	✓
Structure An arrangement and organization of interrelated elements in a material object or system. Structure in artwork might include traditional principles of design, as well as contemporary systems of organization.		✓
Style Recognizable characteristics of art or design that are found consistently in historical periods, cultural traditions, schools of art, or works by an individual artist.		
T		
Technical, Technique(s) Pertaining to specialized methods and procedures used with tools and materials to effect a desired result.	MA	✓
Technologies Tools, techniques, crafts, systems, and methods to shape, adapt, and preserve artwork, artifacts, objects, and natural and human-made environments.		

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
<p>Text That form through which information can be gathered, expanding beyond the traditional notion of written language to encompass visual representations, such as paintings, sculpture, diagrams, graphics, films, and maps.</p>		
<p>Theme A main idea or an underlying meaning of a work or collection of works.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Traditional and contemporary practices Tradition refers to a belief, habit, or behavior passed down within a group or society with origins in the past. Many traditional practices have symbolic meaning or special significance to an individual or group. Contemporary practices break with tradition and incorporate innovative thinking and unexpected results. It is important for students to learn about, explore, and experience both traditional and contemporary practices in the art classroom.</p>	MA	✓
<p>U</p>		
<p>V</p>		
<p>Venue Place or setting for an art exhibition, either a physical space or a virtual environment.</p>	MA	
<p>Virtual environment A computer-generated, three-dimensional representation of a setting in which the user of the technology perceives themselves to be, and within which interaction takes place; also called virtual landscape, virtual space, virtual world.</p>	MA	✓
<p>Visual Art(s) As defined by the National Art Education Association, includes 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, and works in wood, paper, and other materials (Revised July 2012).</p>	MA	
<p>Visual culture The aspect of culture expressed in visual images, especially mass media, advertising, and commercial images. While the image remains a focal point in visual culture studies, it is the relationships between images and consumers that are evaluated for their cultural significance, not just the images in and of themselves.</p>	MA	✓

	Shared with Media Arts	NYS additions to NCAS
Visual components Properties of an image that can be perceived.		
Visual image. Visual imagery Group of images; images in general.		
Visual organization approaches and strategies Graphic design strategies, such as hierarchy, consistency, grids, spacing, scale, weight, proximity, alignment, and typography choice, used to create focus and clarity in a work.		
Visual plan Drawing, picture, diagram, or model of the layout of an art exhibit in which individual works of art and artifacts are presented along with interpretive materials within a given space or venue.		
Visual presentation A presentation that communicates information visually to others.		√
W		
X		
Y		
Z		