

Focus of Learning for Dance K – 12

from *Engaging Students in the Arts: Creating, Performing, Responding*, The Perpich Center for Arts Education, 2004

Dance:

Dance: Focus for Primary Level Learning

Children entering kindergarten love to move, and easily engage the whole self—muscles, imaginations, and emotions—in the learning process. They are willing to learn by doing and can easily integrate movement with the other arts and academic areas.

Student learning at the primary level should focus on the elements of dance and using them to solve movement problems, perform dance movements, and communicate ideas verbally and non-verbally. By both creating and viewing dance, students develop their understanding of dance and their critical thinking skills. In addition, learning at the primary level should focus on building the students' skills to demonstrate basic movement (locomotor and non-locomotor), to create and perform sequences of movement, to respond to selected dances, and to identify and replicate dances from different cultures and times.

Dance: Focus for Intermediate Level Learning

Intermediate level students have greater strength and endurance, finer movement control and better balance than primary level students. Students should arrive at the intermediate level with basic body movement skills, the ability to solve basic movement problems, and the skills to perform dances and communicate ideas in a variety of contexts.

The focus of student learning at the intermediate level is on developing collaborative dance skills and the ability to work with others to solve movement problems and demonstrate basic compositional forms.

The second focus is development of the students' abilities and skills to work independently in longer sequences of movement. In addition, students should develop a knowledge base of dances from different cultural traditions and be able to identify similarities and differences in dance performances.

Dance: Focus for Middle Level Learning

Students should arrive at the middle level with collaborative dance skills and the ability to work with others to solve movement problems and demonstrate basic compositional forms. They should also have the skills to work independently in longer sequences of movement. In addition, they should have the knowledge of dances from different cultural traditions and be able to identify similarities and differences in dance performances.

The focus of learning at the middle level is developing the skills to create more sophisticated dances, including more complex and extended sequences of movements that express feelings and ideas on topics of significance for the student. This focus requires students to develop a more thorough knowledge of the elements of dance and choreographic processes as well as to improve their physical skills and strength. In addition, students must continue to build a knowledge base that includes the cultural, historical and social significance of dance.

Dance: Focus for High School Level Learning

Students should arrive at the high school level with the skills to create and the strength to perform complex and extended sequences of movement that express feelings and ideas. They should possess thorough knowledge of the elements of dance and of choreographic processes. In addition, students should have a knowledge base that includes the cultural, historical and social significance of dance.

The focus of learning at the high school level is deeper understanding of the elements of dance and increasing ability to achieve physical and technical detail and nuance. Learning at this level should focus on refining the student's knowledge and skills to express emotions and experiences through movement and to create dances with coherence and unity.

In addition, student must focus on the ability to perform with consistency, artistic expression, clarity, musicality and stylistic nuance. They must develop the ability to distance themselves from their work in order to analyze it objectively and compare it with the work of other dancers.



Focus of Learning for Literature/Creative Writing K – 12

from *Engaging Students in the Arts: Creating, Performing, Responding*, The Perpich Center for Arts Education, 2004

Literature/Creative Writing:

Literature/Creative Writing: Focus for Primary Level Learning

Children enter the primary level with varying degrees of literacy readiness. While some recognize that letters are symbols that make words and those words create sentences, others do not. Children should arrive at the primary level, however, with well-developed oral language abilities and emerging vocabulary. Children at this level should be able to follow and retell simple stories.

They should understand that communication means more than writing pristine text—that drawing figures and symbols also communicates. They should understand that they can participate in the creative process of communication.

One focus of student learning at this level is to make meaning of the text. Meaning making involves developing the students' understanding of and ability to describe literature using basic literary elements—setting, character, plot and main idea. Children also learn how to select literature based on established criteria and to explain their reasons(s) for making a selection. Another focus of student learning is development of skills in drawing conclusions based on information and making personal judgments about a piece of literature.

The focus for writing at the primary level is developing students' knowledge and skills to organize information into beginning, middle and end or problem/solution. Writing competency is based on experiences with language play that includes the development of students' motor skills and their abilities to distinguish sounds and generate ideas.

Literature/Creative Writing: Focus for Intermediate Level Learning

Students should arrive at the intermediate level with the ability to make meaning from text. They should be able to choose a piece of literature based on established criteria and to explain the reason(s) for making the choice.

They should also be able to describe a piece of literature using the basic literary element of setting, character, plot and main idea. Using this information, they should be able to draw conclusions and formulate a persona response to the piece of literature.

In addition, students should arrive at the intermediate level with knowledge of organizing information into beginning, middle, and end as well as problem/solution. They should possess writing skills, including fine motor skills, the ability to distinguish sounds and generate ideas.

One focus for student learning at the intermediate level is developing the skill to gather information and make meaning from a piece of literature that is beyond the students' personal experience. Another focus is developing the understanding of literature as art—that a piece of literature is created through a process that involves a series of artistic choices. This concept is an important focus in both what students read and in what they create. Students write both prose and poetry. Another focus is the ability to distinguish between fact and opinion in both what they read and what they write.

Literature/Creative Writing: Focus for Middle Level Learning

Students should arrive at the middle level with the ability to gather information and make meaning from a piece of literature that is beyond their personal experience. Students should also have developed an understanding of literature as art—a work that is created through a process that involves a series of artistic choices. In addition, students should be able to distinguish between facts and opinions and use them in their writing. They should be able to create both prose and poetry.

One focus of student learning at the middle level is skill in understanding how genre, structure and purpose shape a piece of literature or writing. Another focus is the ability to distinguish text from subtext. In addition, students should develop an understanding of how subtext and point of view contribute to overall effect. Specific focus for student writing is skill in refining clarity of ideas.

Literature/Creative Writing: Focus for High School Level learning

Students should arrive at the high school level understanding genre, structure and purpose. They should be able to distinguish text from subtext and understand how point of view as well as text and subtext contribute to the overall effect of the piece of literature.

In addition, students should have the writing skills to clearly express their ideas and use structure to further the purpose of their writing.

At the high school level, students focus on learning the skills necessary to identify author's intent and to conceive, develop, and support multiple interpretations for a single text—including longer, more complex works.

In addition, students should focus on developing their abilities to accurately assess both audience and purpose for their writing. Students should also focus on developing their own, unique voice as a writer and on understanding their own creative process. By refining their editing skills, students can focus on becoming their own “best editor” and carry out intentional revision of their writing.

Focus of Learning for Media Arts K – 12

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Media Arts:

Media Arts: Focus for Primary Level Learning

Today's children are often exposed to the tools of the media arts long before they enter the kindergarten classroom. They have spent hundreds of hours being entertained and/or informed by programs and movies on television or by video games. They have had their activities and development documented on hours of videotape or in dozens of photograph albums. Still, they have yet to acquire the skills needed to understand and critically analyze the processes, techniques and messages that are part of media artwork.

During the primary school years, learning should focus on students developing the basic technical skills to create and present media art works and to evaluate their own and others' media art works. Students should draw ideas for the content of their media arts work from their imaginations, experiences, or the exploration of ideas and feelings. They should learn how to generate, capture, manipulate, produce, and present information both to communicate with others and to express themselves. They should work collaboratively to produce and create narrative, documentary or experimental media arts works. They should experience presenting their works in media arts to a wider community. They should evaluate their own work and the works of others by examining the elements and techniques found in the work.

Media Arts: Focus for Intermediate Level Learning

Students should arrive at the intermediate level with the basic technical skills necessary to create and present media artwork and to evaluate their own and others' media artwork. They should know how to generate, capture, manipulate, produce and present information both to communicate and express themselves.

In addition, students should be able to work collaboratively to produce media artworks. They should also have the skills necessary to evaluate their own work and the works of others in relationship to the elements and techniques of media arts.

The focus for student learning at the intermediate level should be the ability to create as well as find meaning in and understand the impact of more complex entertainment or information media arts texts. Part of this focus is building an understanding of the personal, cultural and historical contexts of the media. This focus should contribute to the students' overall understanding of media arts by requiring them to examine who created the work, the function of the work, and the cultural context in which it was made as well as how and why media arts have changed over time.

Intermediate students should learn to observe, discriminate, compare, and contrast media artworks during the process of creating a complex project. In addition, intermediate students should refine their knowledge and use of media arts elements as well as develop high-level technical skills for creating, presenting and evaluating their own and others' media artwork with an emphasis on discrimination as a consumer of media arts.

Media Arts: Focus for Middle Level Learning

Students should arrive at the middle level with the ability to create—as well as find meaning in and understanding the impact of—complex media arts texts. They should have an understanding of the personal, cultural and historical contexts of media. In addition, they should be able to compare and contrast the media artwork of others with their own, with an emphasis on their ability to discriminate as a consumer of media arts.

At the middle level, student learning should focus on the use of original imagery and sound in new combinations and multiple formats. Students should develop an understanding of media as art—beyond mass media imagery—and use the tools of production for their own personal expression.

In addition, students should increase their technical base of knowledge and skills by learning more sophisticated software and hardware to create their own works. This knowledge base should also include basic copyright issues. Another focus of student learning is the ability to make in-depth, informed judgments about media arts.

Students should learn to use the expressive language of media arts as they observe, discriminate, compare, and contrast works of art and explain their judgments.

Media Arts: Focus for High School Level Learning

Students should arrive at the high school level with the skill to use original imagery and sound in new combinations and multiple formats. They should understand media arts beyond mass media imagery and use the tools of production for their own personal expression. In addition, they should have the technical knowledge base to use sophisticated software or hardware and an understanding of basic copyright issues. They should also have the ability to make informed judgments using the expressive language of media arts.

The focus of student learning at the high school level should be the development of skills and abilities for extended interaction with various genres of the media arts. Particular emphasis should be placed on students using one or more genres to demonstrate creativity, problem-solving, and collaborative skills in complex works.

In addition, students' technical expertise and artistic expression should be developed through more in-depth review, interpretation, and evaluation of their own work and that of others. Students should include aesthetic, cultural and historical contexts in their interpretations and evaluations and develop the ability to relate media arts to situations in contemporary life.

Focus of Learning for Music K – 12

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Music:

Music: Focus for Primary Level Learning

Young children learn music by “doing.” They enter the primary level with diverse backgrounds and a wide variety of formal and informal experiences in music.

The focus of student learning at the primary level is to develop basic skills in creating, performing, listening and responding to music.

By learning to read, notate, perform, listen to, move to, discuss and evaluate music, students develop the knowledge and skills to explore music independently and with others. Students at this level need interaction with music from their own cultures as well as the diverse, global world of music.

Music: Focus for Intermediate Level Learning

Students should enter the intermediate level with experiences that include creating, performing, listening and responding to music. They should know how to read, notate, perform, listen to, move to, discuss and evaluate music. They should have developed the skills and knowledge to explore music independently and in cooperation with others. They should possess the skills and knowledge to respond to music from their own culture as well as others.

Students at the intermediate level learn best by doing. Singing, playing instruments, and creating music should be the base from which students continue to develop music skills and knowledge. Student learning should focus on the ability to read and notate more complex musical symbols and to extend skills in exploring music independently and with others.

Another focus of student learning includes the skills and knowledge to respond to more complex musical compositions by developing their ability to describe, analyze, interpret, move to, and evaluate music. Engagement with a wide variety of music develops students’ understanding of the diverse, global world of music.

Music: Focus for Middle Level Learning

By the time students enter the middle level they should have acquired basic skills in singing, playing instruments, and creating music. They should know how to read and notate using more complex musical symbols and have the skills to explore music independently and with others. Their skill level in responding to music should allow them to describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate more complex musical compositions.

The focus of student learning at the middle level should be developing the skills and knowledge needed to make connections between music and other disciplines. Student learning should also focus on the ability to make informed musical judgments, which requires refinement of listening, analysis, composition, and improvisational skills.

In addition, student learning should focus on building deeper understanding of form and structure. Experiences with a wide variety of music will support students in refining their musical judgment and understanding of musical form and structure.

Music: Focus for High School Level Learning

Students entering high school should have the ability to make connections between music and other disciplines as well as the ability to make informed musical judgments. They should have well-developed listening, analyzing, composing and improvising skills and should possess a clear understanding of musical form and structure.

The focus of student learning at the high school level is deeper understanding of music as a product of its time and place and how music can also transcend its original setting. In addition, students learning should focus on refining skills in singing, playing instruments, and composing as a means of creative expression while building a knowledge base of notation and performance traditions which will enable students to learn new music independently throughout their lives. Students should also focus on further refining skills in analysis and evaluation to develop a broad cultural and historical perspective of music.



Focus of Learning for Theater K – 12

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Theater:

Theater: Focus for Primary Level Learning

Students enter the primary grades with basic knowledge of “play” and “role-playing” that develops naturally as children seek to explore and mimic the world around them.

Learning at the primary level develops out of these “play” and “role-playing” elements as students use movement, sound, and language to create images, express emotions, and imitate animals, objects and/or shapes. Student should extend “playing” and “role-playing” by using costumes, props, the environment and the elements of theater to communicate story and character.

Theater: Focus for Intermediate Level Learning

Students should arrive at the intermediate level with the skills to use movement, sound, and language to create images, express emotions and imitate animals, objects, or shapes. They should know the element of theater and have the ability to develop character and communicate story using their bodies, voices, the environment, costumes and props.

The focus of student learning at the intermediate level is building the knowledge base and developing the skills to adapt an existing piece of literature for a theatrical performance and to create more complex characterizations.

This includes developing students’ skills in interpreting a story, adapting the plot and creating characters and language for a dramatic performance. Student learning should also focus on expanding skill in describing a performance using theater terminology such as plot, character, theme, sound, props, setting and spectacle.

Theater: Focus for Middle Level Learning

Students should arrive at the middle level with the ability to use imagination, creative movement, and vocal expression to develop characterizations as well as the skills to consider and evaluate a variety of artistic choices in creating dramatic presentations.

They should also have the skills necessary to interpret, adapt and perform an existing piece of literature. In addition, students should arrive at the middle level with the skills to evaluate performances using the elements of plot, theme, character, language, sound and spectacle.

The focus of student learning at the middle level is on understanding theater as an expression of human experience and culture that is both creative and collaborative. Student learning should focus on the development of more complex acting skills based on artistic intent.

Included in this focus are the skills used for improvisation. In addition, middle level learning must focus on building the student’s knowledge of social, historical and cultural contexts for theater. With this knowledge, student should focus on developing skills in analyzing, interpreting and evaluating more complex dramatic performances from a variety of contexts.

Theater: Focus for High School Level Learning

Students should arrive at the high school level with the skill to create complex characters based on artistic intent. In addition, they should have a knowledge base of social, historical and cultural contexts for theater and the skills necessary to analyze, interpret and evaluate complex dramatic performances from a variety of contexts.

The focus of student learning at the high school level is developing skill in using more complex tools and techniques to create and refine more sophisticated characterizations and performances. Student learning must also focus on expanding and refining the skills involved in interpretation and evaluation of dramatic performance with reference to style and social, historical and cultural contexts.



Focus of Learning for Visual Arts K – 12

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Visual Arts:

Visual Arts: Focus for Primary Level Learning

Children generally enter elementary school with a basic curiosity about visual art. They enjoy exploring art materials and techniques, and their art making reflects their personal interests and experiences. Students also enjoy looking at art and other visual images. Students should enter school with a basic art vocabulary such as the names of colors, lines, and simple shapes. They should also be able to identify colors, lines, and simple shapes in works of art.

During the primary grades the focus of student learning is developing the skills to use a variety of materials and tools to create art while developing and refining motor skills. Students should have the opportunity to explore, imagine and use various art media while learning the creative process and developing the ability to do creative problem solving. Primary student should develop a visual arts vocabulary—including the elements of art—as they investigate art from around the world and from different times.

Visual Arts: Focus for Intermediate Level Learning

Students entering the intermediate grades should understand the creative process and have basic skills in creative problem solving. They should also have knowledge of various media and the basic skills to use them to create art that expresses personal interests and experiences. Student should understand the concepts of historical time periods and diverse cultures in reference to visual art. They should also enter the intermediate grades with the ability to describe visual art and other images using visual art vocabulary.

The focus of student learning at the intermediate level is on the development of skills to analyze artistic choices and the ability to form generalizations about art. Students focus on the skills of planning and refining their artwork and explaining their ideas and choices during the creative process. This includes knowledge of various media and their effects as well as solving more complex visual problems using the elements and principles of visual art. Intermediate students expand their visual arts vocabulary while viewing, discussing and comparing art from various cultures, times and styles to develop knowledge of visual arts in various cultural and historical contexts.

Visual Arts: Focus for Middle Level Learning

Students entering the middle level should possess the skills to explain artistic choices and to form generalizations about art. Student should be able to plan and refine their artwork and describe their ideas and choices during the creative process. They should also have knowledge of various media and their effects and be able to use the elements and principles of visual arts to solve more complex visual problems. In addition, students entering the middle level should have knowledge of the cultural and historical context of visual arts and the vocabulary to discuss and compare art from various cultures, times and styles.

One focus of student learning at the middle level is on developing skills in refining artistic choices to communicate artistic intent and meet specific criteria. Student should develop skills with various media to create specific effects related to the artistic intent and criteria. Included in this

focus is the understanding of the elements of visual arts and principles of design in terms of their effects on the expressive qualities of their own and others' artwork. While studying the artwork of others, students should focus on analyzing, interpreting and evaluating works of art from other cultures, historical periods and styles with emphasis on the social context.

Visual Arts: Focus for High School Level Learning

Students entering the high school level should have the ability to refine their artistic choices to communicate artistic intent and meet specific criteria. They should also possess a skill level with various media that allows them to create specific effects related to the artistic intent and criteria. In addition, they should understand the effects of the elements of visual arts and principles of design in terms of expressive qualities, both in creating their own art and in the study of the artwork of others. They should be able to analyze, interpret and evaluate works of art from different cultures, historical periods, and styles with consideration of the social context.

The focus of student learning during high school is on developing an understanding of general aesthetic principles and the historical development of artistic ideas. Included in the focus is the development of the student's abilities to compare and contrast their artistic ideas and creations with the work of other artists.

Student creations at this level involve more demanding media and address more complex visual problems. While studying how art relates to the people of various cultures and time periods, student learning should focus on specific styles and artists as well as art history concepts.

