

ASSESSMENT

The Role of Assessment in a Standards-Based Visual and Performing Arts Classroom

Assessment is the key in ensuring that all students meet the learning standards for the Visual and Performing Arts. Assessment is a systematic way of gathering information about what students know, are able to do, and are working toward. Assessment provides feedback to students, to the teacher, parents, and to administrators.

There are many ways that teachers assess students both formally and informally in the arts classroom. Here are just a few ways.

Observation	Projects
Student self-assessment	Oral and written reports
Daily practice assignments	Performance reviews
Quizzes and tests	Portfolios
Samples of student work	

Student performance should always be compared to established criteria rather than to the performance of other students. Criteria are established based on learning outcomes for the unit of study. Criteria are parts of a performance or a product that describes in specific terms what is involved in meeting the learning outcomes. Teachers should evaluate student performance or product using information collected through assessment activities and teacher insight gained through experience with students.

Assessment is most effective when it is provided on a regular basis. It should be seen as an opportunity to promote learning rather than as a final judgment. Assessment should show learners their strengths and suggest how to develop further. Students should use this information to redirect efforts, make plans and establish future learning goals.

Assessment should affirm and articulate the arts as ways of knowing and forms of knowledge with a unique capacity to integrate the intellect, the emotions, and physical skills in the construction of meaning. Assessment tasks should be as authentic as possible connecting to the “real world.” Assessment should examine and report on developing abilities for younger and older students, regardless of whether they are beginners or advanced. It should connect with students’ real-life experiences and should assess students’ knowledge, attitudes, and performance in the modalities and forms of expression characteristic of the arts as well as verbal and linguistic modes. Assessment should report the student’s progress towards meeting specific curricular goals and should produce information useful to the students, teacher, administrators and parents.

The following are **examples** of assessment tools used in the arts as well as scoring tools.

Prompts Open-ended questions or problems that require the student to think critically (not just recall knowledge) and to prepare a response, product, or performance.

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Portfolios	A purposeful, integrated collection of student work showing effort, progress, or degree of proficiency.
Journals	Written accounts of what students do in their classes, at home, or when engaging in other school-related activities. Journals can include ideas about what they learn, as well as reflections on how they respond to various ideas and experiences.
Quizzes & Tests	Simple, content-focused questions.
Performance Tasks	Complex challenges that mirror the issues and problems faced by adults, they are authentic. Ranging in length from short-term tasks to long-term, multi-staged projects, they require a production or performance.
Student Tools Self-Assessment Tools	Processes in which the student engages in a systematic review of performance for the purpose of improving that performance or comparing oneself against the established criteria (related terms: critique, reflection, and self-evaluation).
Peer Assessment Tools	Processes in which the students engage in a systematic review of others performance for the purpose of improving that performance or comparing that performance against a set of established criteria.
Teacher-Student Conferences	Process in which the teacher and student engage in dialogue regarding a student's performance and set future goals based on mutually agreed upon strengths and weaknesses.
Short- & Long-term Observation Reports	Informal and formal anecdotal records of student progress over time (Example: Running- record).
Performance & Skill-testing Exercises and Drills	Musical Scale tests; Multiplication Facts; Physical Fitness Test; Fluency test; Timed tests (keyboard); Computer worksheet
Rubrics	An established and written-down set of criteria for scoring or rating students' performance on essays, portfolios, or other performance tasks.
Creative Responses	Responses to questions and/or experiences produced through creative means, such as drawings, paintings, three-dimensional work, poetry/spoken word, dance and movement, and theatrical presentations. Creative responses stimulate critical thinking and emphasize communication skills other than verbal and literary.