

HOW TO UNDERSTAND AND USE ARTSOURCE®



What is *Artsource*®?

Artsource® is a unique educational reference guide to the performing arts. It is composed of short summaries which highlight artists of stature from diverse cultures and a selected work of their art. These are illustrated with audio-visual materials which relate to each unit. Although sample lesson plans are included, they are offered only as suggestions. We encourage teachers to create their own lessons from the materials provided, responding to the backgrounds and needs of their students.

Who will use it?

Artsource® is written specifically for the educator who teaches grades K-8. However, the information can easily be adapted for use by the artist, specialist and high school educator.

How does it relate to Core Curriculum Areas?

The arts can stimulate involvement in many subjects by helping students relate to abstract concepts such as pattern, energy, cycles, sound, motion, space and time. Artists create work within the physical laws of the universe, shaping and combining the elements in expressive ways.

Music, dance, theatre, literature and visual arts reflect culture, points of view and the period of time in which they are created. The arts represent different forms of communication and provide tools for exploring possibilities and demonstrating ideas. They enable students to express their own thoughts within artistic structures and help them to identify with universal human experiences.

What is the format?

Each *Artsource*® unit is composed of three parts and is accompanied by corresponding audio-visual materials.

Part I: Introduces an artist and describes a specific work created by him or her. The art form is identified in the top right corner. The 'Style of Art,' 'California Visual and Performing Arts Framework Components' and a 'Universal Theme' are highlighted as they pertain to the selected work. Background on the artist and work is given, with special emphasis placed on the creative process and the cultural context in which the piece was composed. A photo of the artist is included, as well as a quote and a map showing where the artist lived and worked.



Part II: Gives examples of discussion questions which are designed to elicit aesthetic and critical responses, rather than judgmental ones. There are participation activities for three different levels of experience, multidisciplinary options, and audio-visual materials which accompany each *Artsource*® unit. References are given for those interested in obtaining additional information.



Part III: Provides three sample lessons which develop one of the suggested activities at each level. Each lesson includes an introductory paragraph which provides a starting point for the teacher. The lesson utilizes and demonstrates creative processes or techniques appropriate to the specific art form and level of experience.

Universal themes:

Universal themes have been identified which reflect the thrust of the selected work or lesson. Throughout time artists have searched for answers, explored ideas and expressed their own perspectives through their art. Each has added something of his/her own creative insight to the collective pool of knowledge from which we all draw.

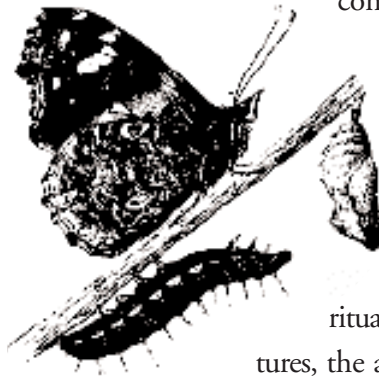
Transformation refers to a change in the appearance, thinking or character of a person, animal, idea, situation, place or object.

Enduring Values encompass the standards and principles which are considered important in life, such as love, aesthetics, justice, honor, spirituality and the search for truth.

Freedom and Oppression centers on the struggle and balance of power between individuals and between groups of people. It includes concepts such as war and peace, master and slave, and dictatorship and democracy.

Power of Nature includes the entire natural world, its laws and its mysteries, as well as man's relationship to it.

The Human Family embraces all that is human, including emotions, dreams, the family structure, relationships, work, games, culture and history.



Styles of Art:

Style is the manner in which something is created, and does not refer to the content of the artwork itself. We have identified each art work in terms of its style in order to help place it in an appropriate context.

Traditional: Arts which are involved with the beliefs or customs of a culture or group of people. These arts are long-established and are passed from one generation to the next, often as a part of ritual and ceremony. In most traditional cultures, the arts are not seen as separate, but are integrated into different aspects of the community experience.

Classical: Arts which are traditional and standard in style and have a high quality that is recognized and unquestioned. Often, the artists who perform in this style are identified and trained from an early age. In many cultures the children of certain families carry on the classical traditions because it is the responsibility of their particular lineage to do so.

Contemporary: Works of art which are within the 20th and 21st Century, often reflecting changes of attitude within a specific culture. Sometimes a work is contemporary for a specific period of time and then becomes a classic.

Experimental: Works of art which are highly innovative and sometimes controversial. They break ground for revolutionary ideas. Artists are developing new concepts of form, introducing new techniques, or employing an innovative process.

Multi-Media: Works of art which involve several different art forms in a collaborative way. This style can include musicals, opera and performance art.



California Visual and Performing Arts Framework Components

The five components from the California State *Visual and Performing Arts Framework** and *Content Standards* are identified in each *Artsource*® unit. The objective sections in each lesson identify specific Framework and Standards component strands in parentheses.

Artistic Perception (AP)

As one develops a fuller awareness of the nuances of light, color, sound, movement and composition through experiences in the arts, otherwise ordinary experiences take on an aesthetic dimension. Heightened perception provides a stimulus for imagination and creativity, and it also has an impact on all learning. This component includes the elements and principles of the artform.

Creative Expression (CE)

Expression in the arts includes originating, creating, performing and interpreting. Purposeful arts activities focus, channel and encourage communication and originality. Creative expression in the arts helps one to know one's self and to appreciate one's own and others' uniqueness.

Historical and Cultural Context (H/C)

The study of the arts within historical and cultural contexts develops a broad base for students to understand creative artists, their works, their evolution and their effects on society in the past and present.

Aesthetic Valuing (A/V)

Life is enriched as the awareness and response to beauty in all of its forms increase. To develop aesthetic values, the student studies the sensory, intellectual, emotional and philosophic bases for understanding the arts and for making judgments about their form, content, technique and purpose.

Connections, Relationships, Applications (CRA) Called Connect, Relate & Apply in *Artsource*®, this standard is about having students apply what they learn in an arts lesson across subject areas. They develop competencies and creative skills in problem solving, communication, and management of time and resources that contribute to life-long learning and career skills. They also learn about artists, their process and careers in, and related to, the arts.

Lesson Ideas for Age, Experience and Ability

Each of the three sample lessons shows how to introduce one of the specific activity ideas and develop it sequentially, using techniques which stimulate problem solving and define ways to involve students in a creative process. Each lesson relates to one of the universal themes highlighted on the artist description page.

Level I: The material at Level I can be used for younger grades or for students with little background or experience in the arts. The ideas at this level are valid for Grade 1 through Grade 8, since they are fundamental and basic, but can be developed in any way you choose.

Level II: The experiences at Level II offer more challenges. They require some specific arts vocabulary, increased skills and a fundamental knowledge of the elements in the art form being addressed. Students at this level can go further in developing their own aesthetic perceptions and judgments. There are also more activities requiring group co-operation.

Level III: This level draws upon the student's analytical abilities, as well as stimulating creativity. These lessons place more responsibility on the student to comprehend, communicate, apply, analyze, synthesize, critique and evaluate.

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Assessment:

What is Assessment?

The term *assessment* encompasses all the ways that a teacher checks on the progress and understanding of students as they learn. It involves questions which cause them to reflect on the experiences they have just had and encourages them to make connections to their lives, or other things they know about.

Performance Based Assessment places responsibility for learning on the students and helps them pick up new threads of understanding and perception, encouraging them to weave them into the larger tapestry of their total experience.

Ideally, assessment questions should be embedded throughout the lesson, rather than just at the end. It is important to note, however, that you do not want to disrupt the flow of energy in a lesson by interrupting the physical energy which has been created. The balance between assessment and flow of energy is one which requires intuition and experience.

Why Assess the Arts?

The arts are core subjects, grades K-12. In order to present them with integrity and meaning, the skills and knowledge gained by students must be assessed. Art lessons need to be more than just an activity or recreational. Rather, the arts should be presented as an authentic learning experience with clear objectives and measurable student outcomes.

When an art task is presented to students, the teacher should present criteria. Work with the students to develop a rubric which can measure their success in achieving the criteria. Then, students are clear on what they are working toward, the elements and principles which should be included in the project, and other pertinent information.

Experience demonstrates that when the students understand the criteria for an assignment and how it will be measured, they are more focused and motivated to do their best. Criteria also objectify the work so that students themselves can see what they need to work on.

Criteria:

The term *criteria* means a standard of judgment. It is very important that the *specific* criteria components established for a task, study or other assignment are the same for each scoring level of the rubric. The term *rubric* means notes of explanation or a direction of how something must be done. The same notes or ingredients must be measured at each level of the rubric, but with differing degrees of fulfillment and quality standards for completing the task.

In the Addenda for dance, music and theatre, there is an example of the general criteria components which are appropriate for each artform. It is important that each major assignment has specific criteria to describe what is being asked for and identifies what students should strive to achieve.

