Artistic Literacy for All!

Introducing the
Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts

What comes to mind when you consider the word, literacy?

If you are like most people, your thoughts immediately jump to numerous verbal-linguistic ideas and concepts, such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

But is mastery of language skills the only way someone can demonstrate literacy? Of course not! Literacy can be established in a near-infinite array of disciplines and undertakings, such as numerical literacy, cultural literacy, informational literacy – and, of course, artistic literacy.

On May 18, 2015, the Arizona State Board of Education, recognizing that the Arts provide students with the means to think, feel and understand the world in ways unique and distinct from other academic disciplines, approved a new slate of Academic Standards in the Arts – standards which embrace the life-changing and life-affirming concept of Artistic Literacy: the ability of students to create Art, perform, present, and produce Art, respond to and critique Art, and connect Art to their lives and the world around them.
The Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts are structured around four Artistic Processes designed to answer the question, “What do artists do?” The Artistic Processes are consistent across all Arts disciplines: Dance, Media Arts, Music, Theatre, and Visual Arts.

- **Creating**
  - Artists conceive and develop new artistic ideas and work

- **Performing/Presenting/Producing**
  - Artists realize artistic ideas and work through interpretation and presentation

- **Responding**
  - Artists understand and evaluate how the Arts convey meaning

- **Connecting**
  - Artists relate artistic ideas and work with personal meaning and external context

Under each Artistic Process are Anchor Standards which serve as the “big ideas” embodied within each Artistic Process. As with the Artistic Processes, the Anchor Standards are consistent across all Arts disciplines.
• Artists **create** by...
  o Generating and conceptualizing artistic ideas and work
  o Organizing and developing artistic ideas and work
  o Refining and completing artistic work

• Artists **perform/present/produce** by...
  o Analyzing, interpreting, and selecting artistic work for presentation
  o Developing and refining artistic work for presentation
  o Conveying meaning through the presentation of artistic work

• Artists **respond** by...
  o Perceiving and analyzing artistic work
  o Interpreting intent and meaning in artistic work
  o Applying criteria to evaluate artistic work

• Artists **connect** by...
  o Synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences to make Art
  o Relating artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding

Finally, under each **Anchor Standard** are **Performance Standards** which describe grade-by-grade student learning in each of the specific Arts disciplines.

Collectively, the design of the **Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts** reflects a cohesive and aligned system that allows for commonality across and specificity within each Arts discipline, therefore establishing the appropriate level of breadth and depth required for students to develop true Artistic Literacy.
The Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts address grade-by-grade level Performance Standards for students in grades K-8. Research has established that this is the best practice for instructional delivery in that it provides ease of differentiating instruction over time as well as ease of measuring student progress.

The Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts provide three levels of Performance Standards for high school:

- Proficient
  - One year of study

- Accomplished
  - Two to four years of study

- Advanced
  - Honors or college-level study
The Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts provide five levels of Performance Standards for Music:

- **General Music**
  - K-8, grade-by-grade Performance Standards

- **Performing Ensembles**
  - Novice through High School Advanced

- **Harmonizing Instruments (Guitar & Piano)**
  - Novice through High School Advanced

- **Music Theory and Composition**
  - Novice through High School Advanced

- **Music Technology**
  - Novice through High School Advanced

The Arizona Academic Standards in the Arts provide Arizona’s K-12 students with exciting opportunities, including improved access to culturally relevant Arts disciplines and genres, enhanced depth and breadth of instruction in real-world, multi-discipline Artistic Processes, and increased opportunities to engage intellectually and emotionally with their own art as well as that of other students and artists.