

Minneapolis Institute of Art

H
SISTERS

Think Globally, Act Locally

Visual art as a call to action

Grades 3-5

Yarrow
"Sunny Seduction"

MIA



Whether in Mia's galleries or via a slideshow at school, students will begin discussions about local, national, and global issues by looking at works of art from Mia's collection. The seven artworks featured in *Think Globally, Act Locally* will help students explore why issues matter to them personally and inspire their visual art advocacy.

Once they have identified the issues they want to focus on, they will discuss and review with peers before creating works of art that address these issues and reflect the community's needs.

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Education Supporters:



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Cover:

Aliza Nisenbaum (American, born 1977), *Nimo, Sumiya, and Bisharo harvesting flowers and vegetables at Hope Community Garden* (detail), 2017, oil on linen. The Mary Ingebrand-Pohlad Endowment for Twentieth Century Painting 2018.13.3

© Aliza Nisenbaum, courtesy the artist and Mary Mary, Glasgow

Curriculum Guide

Resource for Educators

How this Curriculum Came to Be

In June 2018, the University of Minnesota's Institute for Global Studies and the National Youth Leadership Council hosted a curriculum-writing workshop for teachers centered on service-based learning. Thanks to their facilitation and guidance, educators at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) developed this curriculum to show that art—both art making and art appreciation—can be a call to community action. The National Youth Leadership Council's vision is that young people will become informed and engaged global citizens by participating in service learning while in school. Their lessons more typically take place in standard classroom settings, but Mia wanted to find a way to make visual arts the starting point. The Asia Society's Center for Global Education developed four hallmarks of global leadership, which inspired the framework of this curriculum. Their goal is that students will develop the skills and knowledge to help them investigate the world, recognize other perspectives, communicate ideas, and take action.

We have divided our curriculum into six steps based on this research:

- Investigation**
- Practice and Preparation**
- Advocacy as Action**
- Student Reflection**
- Demonstration**
- Facilitator Reflection**

Partners and Influencers

[Asia Society's Center for Global Education](#)

[Harvard's Project Zero](#)

[Minneapolis Institute of Art](#)

[National Youth Leadership Council](#)

[University of Minnesota's Institute for Global Studies](#)

How to Use this Curriculum

This resource is a starting point for incorporating the visual arts into service-based learning. Classrooms can visit Mia in person for a free school tour or use Mia's online collection to facilitate the following activities.

This curriculum will take time to complete. It can easily be divided into smaller, more time-efficient sections if your schedule requires. Do not try to complete this in one day. Allow students time to ask questions, move at their own pace, and explore the design-thinking process outlined on page 14.

Request a free tour: <https://new.artsmia.org/visit/plan-your-trip/tours/request-a-tour-online/>.

Contact the Tour Office with questions about tours: 612.870.3140.

Contact the Student and Teacher Learning Department with questions about this curriculum: 612.870.3056.

Goals of the Curriculum

Big Ideas

Big ideas are the focus of the curriculum. They are also important for reflection and assessment. They will recur throughout the lesson.

Art teaches us about history and current events.

Art inspires us to make connections to ourselves and our communities.

By creating artworks about local and global issues, we can encourage others to act.

Problem-solving Goals

Goal for Grade 3

Identify and explain a range of local, regional, and global issues and brainstorm ways students can create awareness of these issues.

Goal for Grades 4 and 5

Using knowledge from previous classroom lessons and experiences, identify and explain the challenges people have faced and opportunities they have created in addressing local, regional, and global issues at various times and places.

When students are asked open-ended questions, they are compelled to respond with more than a “yes” or “no” answer. They must find evidence and give reasons for their interpretations and responses. This deeper exploration helps them go beyond identifying a problem and encourages them to examine it more closely. In doing so, students will gain the skills and knowledge needed to become informed and engaged global citizens. They will keep our big ideas in mind as they create their own works of art.

Final Performance Goal

Goals for Grades 3–5

Students will understand that art tells us about history and current events. Students will then identify a community’s issues (their own or another’s) and create art that reflects those issues.

Most service-based learning activities culminate in a “performance” or an action. In this curriculum, the performance or action will be to generate awareness and encourage advocacy.

Minnesota State Standards

In addition to setting problem-solving and final-performance goals, this curriculum supports many of Minnesota’s social studies and arts standards. It is not meant to fulfill requirements but instead will help students and teachers work toward them. You’ll find a list of most applicable standards for both subject areas on pages 22–24.

Step 1

Investigation

Use the Three Whys Thinking Routine below to observe and question an artwork, then consider a person's, community's, or place's issues as raised by the artwork.

Three Whys Thinking Routine

This thinking routine, developed by Veronica Boix Mansilla of Harvard's Project Zero, is meant to help thinkers better understand why an issue matters personally, locally, and globally. Your students will use it to explore why an artwork matters personally, locally, and globally. You can facilitate the Three Whys in the galleries at Mia or in your classroom using Mia's online collections page (see suggested images on pages 15–21).

Ask the Three Whys as stated below, or in reverse order. You should make that decision based on your students, your goals, and the topic of conversation. The exercise will be most accessible if you start with the personal. If you want to take a big topic and make it relevant to an individual student, begin with the global and work toward the personal.

- 1. Why might this issue matter to me?**
- 2. Why might it matter to the people around me? Family? Friends? City? Nation?**
- 3. Why might it matter to the world?**

Situate students in an arrangement that is best for them. If you're in the classroom, this might be at their desks or on the floor in front of the projector. If you're in the museum, find an arrangement that allows everyone a clear view of the artwork. This may mean taking turns for close looking.

When you first begin, don't tell students anything about the artwork. Ask them, "What is going on in this artwork?" Give them time to look quietly without providing context. If you're in the classroom, you can point out details or zoom in to help students see all aspects of the artwork. If you're in the galleries, encourage them to view the work from different positions: close, far, left, right, etc. Give students 30 to 60 seconds of quiet looking.

Ask students to raise their hands when they have something they would like to share. By beginning with the question "What is going on in this artwork?" you've opened the door to your next question, "What do you see that makes you say that?" As your students make observations, provide them with content to support their answers. This may include current or historical events or other class discussions. Conclude the conversation by identifying one key issue raised by the artwork that is most important to the students (for example, migration, healthy communities, diversity). Suggestions are included for each image on pages 15–21. Use this main issue to begin the Three Whys discussion. As students consider each of the Three Whys, make a list of other issues they bring up that might inform their Advocacy as Action projects (see pages 11–13).

Why might what is happening in this artwork matter to you?

Consider: Does this artwork remind you of a personal experience? How does it make you feel?

Why might it matter to the people around you? Family? Friends? City? Nation?

Consider: What events or moments in your own community remind you of this artwork? What is similar? What is different?

Why might it matter to the world?

Consider: Where else have you learned, seen, or heard about issues similar to what you see in this artwork? The news, social media, on television? What was being done to address the issue?

Only ask one question at a time. This will allow the differences among personal, local, and global to become more apparent. If students are hesitant to share out loud, encourage them to "pair and share." After they have an opportunity to discuss with one another, you can ask if any pairs would like to share with the class.

As students answer, be sure to reaffirm what you hear in their answers. Paraphrase for the group. This is important because other students may not have heard their answers, and it also validates each student's opinion. When considering the local and global, students might have overlapping answers. This is OK! Use a hand gesture for "me too" if you have one, or ask the group if anyone else feels the same way.

Once you have explored all three questions, reflect as a group on the list of issues you have identified. With students' input, take time consolidating and marking the answers they are most passionate about. The goal is to identify commonalities across answers and

choose one or two themes that were important to the students so that everyone feels heard.

Following the Three Whys thinking routine, take a few moments to review relevant historical context and make connections to current events. Help students see how their answers to the Three Whys provide evidence and examples of issues people are facing.

With class consensus, write down the issue students wish to focus on. This will guide their decision in Practice and Preparation on page 7.



Yang Yongliang (Chinese, born 1980), *Artificial Wonderland II—Taigu Descendants* (detail), 2016, digital print.
The Friends of Bruce Dayton Art Acquisition Fund, 2018.9 © Yang Yongliang

Step 2

Practice and Preparation

Identify a realistic and meaningful art project with clear goals, timeline, roles, and follow-up.

Design-Thinking Process

Before creating their own artwork, students will use the “design-thinking” process to decide on a focus and core audience. Design thinking helps encourage creative problem solving. There are five stages of design thinking:

1. Empathize: Before drawing attention to the identified issue, students need to have an empathic understanding of it. This allows them to set aside what they think they know and better understand the issue they are trying to highlight.

2. Define: Based on what they learn in “empathize,” students will clearly define the issue they identified in Investigation using the Three Whys, prioritizing their chosen community’s needs, not their desire to help.

3. Ideate: Here students will begin to make a list of their design ideas. Encourage students to get creative and think of alternative ideas that excite them. What do they want to include in their design? What words or images are most important to their issue? Use brainstorming sessions, independent work time, and group work time to generate as many ideas as possible.

4. Prototype: Taking their long list of ideas, students will use the prototyping stage to experiment and determine what the best possible ideas might be.

5. Test: In the final stage, students will test their ideas and, based on peer feedback, revise before completing their final product.

Practice: Before tackling their advocacy artwork, students will practice the design thinking process with a simpler project: they will design the ideal pair of shoes.

Arrange students in pairs, each with their own workspace in front of them. Distribute the student handouts.

Give them three minutes to sketch their ideal pair of shoes in section 1 of the handout “Exploring Design Thinking: Shoes for Your Classmate” (found at the end of the lesson).

Most of the following prompts have time limits. Give your students a one-minute warning so they can be sure to complete their tasks.

1. Empathize/Ask (6 min.): Next, explain that the real challenge is to design the ideal pair of shoes for *someone else*. Ask them to interview their partners about what THEY think is the ideal pair of shoes. Give each student three minutes to talk, one at a time. The interviewer should take notes in section 2 of his or her handout,

2. Define/Imagine (3 min.): Using quiet reflection, have students organize their ideas. In section 3, have them write an answer to the question, “What are your partner’s needs?”

3. Ideate/Plan (6 min.): Next, have your students, still in quiet reflection, brainstorm potential solutions to their partners’ needs. In section 4 they can write, draw, list, etc. all the different ways they could help their partner.

4. Prototype/Create (6 min.): Have students sketch their top three solutions in section 5. Remind them to keep in mind their partner’s needs.

5. Test/Improve (6 min.): Now it is time for partners to share their solutions with one another. Have students present their ideas to their partners and get feedback.

Revise (3 min.): Finally, give students time to revise their final designs in section 6, based on what their partners thought. You may repeat Step 4 (Prototype) and Step 5 (Test) as many times as you like.

Students will use this same process to create a visual art project to promote awareness of the issues they identified during the Three Whys.

Exploring Design Thinking: Shoes for Your Classmate

1. Sketch your ideal pair of shoes.

2. Interview your partner.

Exploring Design Thinking: Shoes for Your Classmate

3. What are your partner's needs?

4. How can your shoes help your partner meet his or her needs?

Exploring Design Thinking: Shoes for Your Classmate

5. Pick your top three ideas. Sketch them.

6. Revised design:

Step 3

Advocacy as Action

You use your voice and talents to help bring awareness to a specific issue, its causes, or its effects.

An important part of making a difference is raising awareness. Helping people understand an issue, and maybe even introducing them to it for the first time, is an important part of working toward a solution. By using their artistic skills to create an artwork—we recommend a poster—the students will help tell an important story. Posters are suitable for small budgets and limited materials and are easy to display in a school setting. If you have the means to do so, a more complicated medium would work too.

The design-thinking process for this art project mirrors the design-thinking process students completed when making shoes: students will work together to narrow their focus and come up with creative ideas.

1. Ask (8 min.): Have students describe the community they have chosen to focus on, using section 1 of “Design Thinking: Awareness Project” (p. 12). You can facilitate this if they need help. If possible, have students speak with a community member who has been impacted by this issue.

Step 4 Pre-Exercise

Before going any further in the design-thinking process, do a pre-activity reflection. Make a T-chart with “Before I” on one side and “Now I” on the other. Give each student a small piece of paper (notecard, Post-It, scratch paper) and ask them to complete the sentence: “Before today, one thing I knew about [insert identified issue] was . . .” Hang the responses on the “Before I” side of your T-chart. You will come back to this reflection later.

2. Imagine (3 min.): In section 2 of “Design Thinking: Awareness Project,” have students pick one aspect of their chosen issue to focus on. Ask them to list important parts of their issue: people, places, needs, etc.

3. Plan (8 min.): What needs to be on my poster to help other people understand the issue? This is an opportunity to be creative and artistic! Use your art supplies to come up with exciting and eye-catching design ideas.

Give students time to sketch on scratch paper. How can they get creative about their issue? What do people need to see to better understand? If someone were to see their poster, what would it tell them? Encourage them to sketch instead of using words.

4. Create (10 min.): It’s time to finalize your design! Draw some practice posters and experiment with different ideas.

Have students use section 3 of “Design Thinking : Awareness Project” on page 13 or give them a piece of sketch paper. An 8½ × 11-inch piece will give them more room to draw and add details, which will help them before they create their final posters.

5. Improve (8 min.): Share your poster ideas with classmates and use their feedback to design your final poster.

Have students pair-and-share their designs using section 4 of their handouts. Give students four minutes to present their ideas, take notes on their partners’ suggestions, and ask them questions. Repeat for the partners.

After **Improve**, you can repeat with **Create** as many times as you think necessary.

Once you have completed the **Create** and **Improve** stages, give students small poster boards or large pieces of cardstock. Give students time to turn their most recent idea into a final artwork using whatever art materials you have on hand. Remind them of the process and encourage them to consider the revisions they’ve made.

Design Thinking: Awareness Project

1. Describe the community you've chosen to focus on.

Who belongs to it?

Where are they?

What are their strengths?

How can I contribute?

2. What issue within this community did you decide to focus on?

3. Sketch your ideas.

4. Share, reflect, and revise.

Step 4

Student Reflection

Reflection assists in understanding the connection between what is being learned and the action taken.

Return to your T-chart. After they've finished their posters, ask your students to finish the sentence: "After today, one thing I now know about [insert identified issue] is . . ." Hang their responses on the "Now I" side of your T-chart. Give students the opportunity to share their responses and reflect out loud with their peers.

You can ask open-ended questions to help facilitate the conversation:

What surprised you most about this activity?

What more do you wish you could have done with your own community about this issue?

If you could test your design one more time, with whom would you want to review and revise?

What did you like about the design-thinking process? What frustrated you? Why?

This type of reflection encourages thoughtfulness throughout the project. It deals with both the artistic process and the issue being addressed. After writing down their responses, allow time for discussion. Sometimes students need more time to explore their own thoughts and get inspiration from others.

Step 5

Demonstration

Show what you have done and learned. Make recommendations for sustaining and expanding on your successes.

A low-cost and time-effective way for students to demonstrate their efforts is to host an exhibition at your school or local community center. Students will talk about what they learned, spread their messages, and advocate for change.

Step 6

Facilitator Reflection

It's important for facilitators to capture their reflections as well. Take time to ask yourself the following questions. Consider your students' responses to their own reflection activities.

Reflection

What are your takeaways?

Evaluation

Did we meet our goals? How do we know?

Recall our problem-solving goals

Goal for Grade 3: Identify and explain a range of local, regional, and global issues and brainstorm some ways students can create awareness of these issues.

Goal for Grades 4 and 5: Using knowledge from previous classroom lessons and experiences, identify and explain the challenges people have faced and opportunities they have created in addressing local, regional, and global issues at various times and places.

First decide if you are going to evaluate your class as a whole or randomly select a handful of students. While you should take their "I can" statements into consideration, also use what you observed throughout the entire process. Think about students' participation during the Three Whys activity, their growth in the practice of the design-thinking process, and how they applied both of those experiences in creating their final product.

Documentation

If another group were to do a similar project, what resources would they need?

Next steps

How would we do things differently next time?

Suggested Artworks from Mia's Collection



Cy Thao (American [born Laos], born 1972), #28, 1993–2001, oil on canvas. Gift of funds from anonymous donors 2010.55.28 © Cy Thao

The Hmong journey was full of forced and unexpected migrations. After the war, their villages bombed out or burned, many Hmong were forced into labor camps or exile. Thousands attempted to flee to Thailand on foot, and countless died of disease and starvation along the way. When they left the refugee camps for good, the Hmong settled throughout Southeast Asia and in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and California.

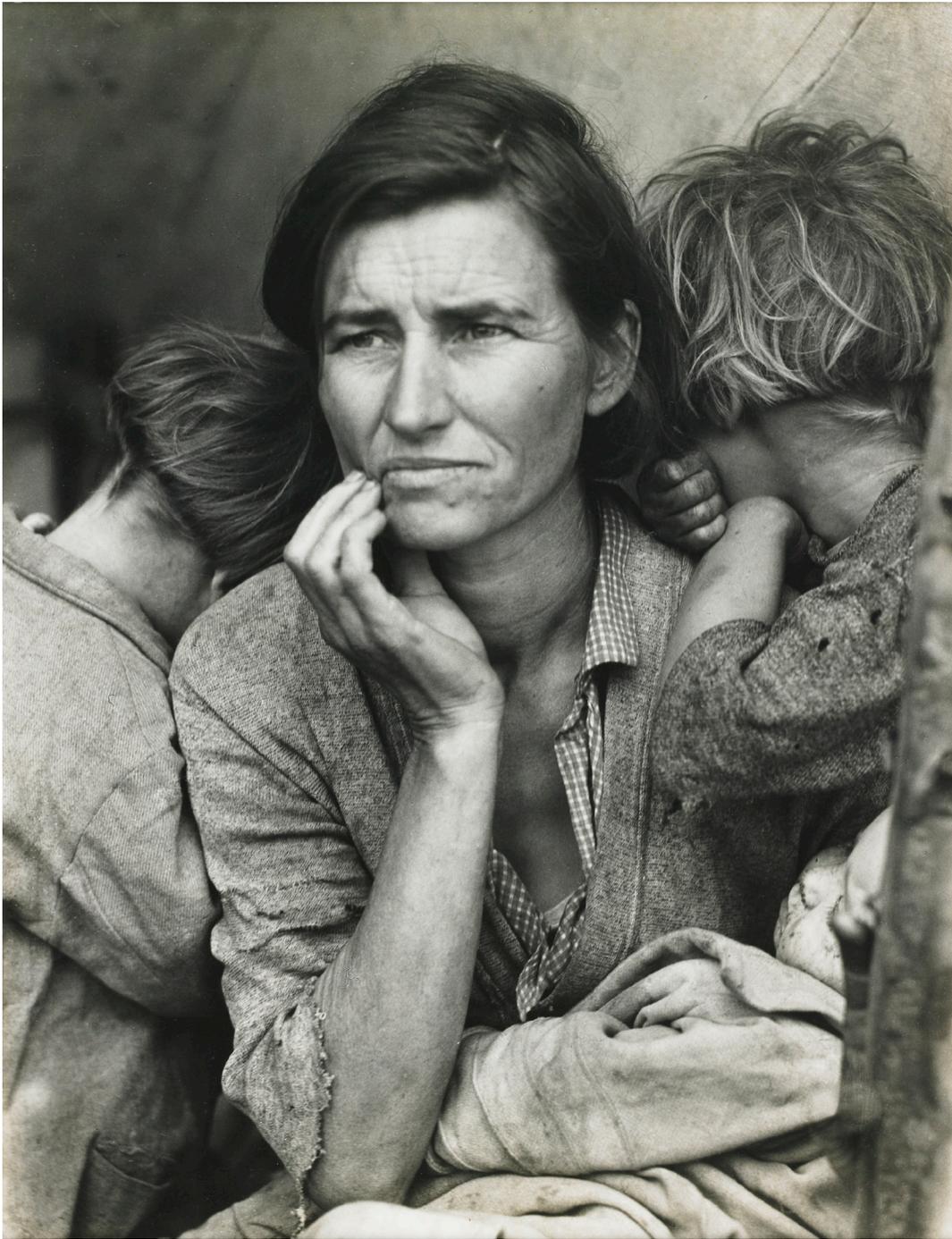
Why does this (forced migration, immigration, refugees, displacement) matter to me, my community, and the world?



Cy Thao (American [born Laos], born 1972), #48, 1993–2001, oil on canvas. Gift of funds from anonymous donors 2010.55.48 © Cy Thao

Younger members of the Hmong community in the United States quickly became advocates for their people. This was not easy, but they managed to do so and still maintain their traditions and culture, even in a new country.

Why does this (activism, positive protests, raising awareness of what is important to you, remembering your past) matter to me, my community, and the world?



Dorothea Lange (American, 1895–1965), *Migrant Mother*, Nipomo, California, 1936, gelatin silver print.
The Alfred and Ingrid Lenz Harrison Fund 92.136

Dorothea Lange was a photographer who documented life during the Great Depression. She was hired by the government to capture this period in history and worked primarily in the West and Southwest, photographing the faces and circumstances of unemployed and displaced farmworkers. This photograph is of a mother and her children.

Why does this (poverty, mass migration, drought, strong families) matter to me, my community, and the world?



Aliza Nisenbaum, (American, born 1977), *Nimo, Sumiya, and Bisharo harvesting flowers and vegetables at Hope Community Garden*, 2017, oil on linen. The Mary Ingebrand-Pohlrad Endowment for Twentieth Century Painting 2018.13.3 © Aliza Nisenbaum, Courtesy the artist and Mary Mary, Glasgow

In the summer of 2017, Aliza Nisenbaum worked closely with people in the Phillips and Whittier neighborhoods to create portraits representing their communities. Nisenbaum uses her portraits to give all communities an artistic presence in—and a sense of ownership of—art museums.

Why does this (healthy communities, caring for the environment, nutritious food, community representation) matter to me, my community, and the world?



Wing Young Huie (American, born 1955), *Two Girls Reading, Frogtown*, 1995, gelatin silver print. Gift of David L. and Mary Parker 99.96.23
© Wing Young Huie

Frogtown is one of St. Paul's oldest and most diverse neighborhoods. It has long served as a haven for immigrants. For decades, Frogtown has become home to Hmong, Latino, and Somali populations. It has one of the largest Hmong communities in Minnesota.

Why does this (literacy, diversity, friendship) matter to me, my community, and the world?



Yang Yongliang (Chinese, born 1980), *Artificial Wonderland II—Taigu Descendants*, 2016, digital print. The Friends of Bruce Dayton Art Acquisition Fund, 2018.9 © Yang Yongliang

At first this digitally manipulated photo collage looks like a traditional Chinese landscape of water and mountains, but when viewed closely one sees images of Shanghai skyscrapers and construction sites. Mountains are taken over by large, contemporary buildings and electrical towers as a way of expressing the relationship between humans today and their natural environment.

Why does this (respecting the environment, economic growth, pollution, loss of cultural heritage) matter to me, my community, and the world?

Minnesota Academic Standards

Social Studies

Third Grade

3.1.1.1.1

Benchmark: Identify ways people make a difference in the civic life of their communities, state, nation, or world by working as individuals or groups to address a specific problem or need.

3.4.1.2.1

Benchmark: Examine historical records, maps, and artifacts to answer basic questions about times and events in history, both ancient and more recent.

3.4.1.2.2

Benchmark: Compare and contrast two different accounts of an event.

3.4.1.2.3

Benchmark: Compare and contrast various ways that different cultures have expressed concepts of time and space.

3.4.2.3.1

Benchmark: Explain how an invention of the past changed life at that time, including positive, negative, and unintended outcomes.

Fourth Grade

4.1.1.1.1

Benchmark: Describe how people take action to influence a decision on a specific issue; explain how local, state, national, or tribal governments have addressed that issue.

4.4.1.2.1

Benchmark: Use maps to compare and contrast a particular region in the United States, and also Canada or Mexico, at different points in time.

4.4.2.4.1

Benchmark: Identify and locate on a map or globe the origins of peoples in the local community and state; create a timeline of when different groups arrived; describe why and how they came.

Fifth Grade

5.1.1.1.2

Benchmark: Identify a public program in the school or community, analyze the issue from multiple perspectives, and create an action plan to address it.

5.4.1.2.2

Benchmark: Explain a historical event from multiple perspectives.

5.4.2.3.1

Benchmark: Analyze multiple cases and outcomes for a historical event.

Visual Arts

Kindergarten–Third Grade

0.1.1.5.1

Benchmark: Identify the elements of visual art, including color, line, shape, texture, and space.

0.1.3.5.1

Benchmark: Identify the characteristics of visual artworks from a variety of cultures, including contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.

0.4.1.5.1

Benchmark: Compare and contrast the characteristics of a variety of works of visual art.

Third and Fourth Grade

4.1.3.5.2

Benchmark: Describe how visual art communicates meaning.

4.4.1.5.1

Benchmark: Justify personal interpretations and reactions to works of visual art.

Visual Arts (Effective 2021)

Third Grade

5.3.2.2.1

Anchor Standard: Generate and develop original artistic ideas.

Benchmark: Modify an original idea for a work of art.

5.3.2.4.1

Anchor Standard: Revise and complete original artistic work.

Benchmark: Discuss feedback about choices made in creating artwork.

5.3.4.8.1

Anchor Standard: Evaluate artistic work by applying criteria.

Benchmark: Determine messages communicated by an image.

5.3.5.10.1

Anchor Standard: Understand that artistic works influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts, including contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.

Benchmark: Recognize that responses to art change depending on the knowledge of the time and place in which it was made.

Fourth Grade

5.4.2.2.1

Anchor Standard: Generate and develop original artistic ideas.

Benchmark: Generate new ideas by combining dissimilar ideas together.

5.4.2.4.1

Anchor Standard: Revise and complete original artistic work.

Benchmark: Revise in-process artwork on the basis of insights gained through peer discussion.

5.4.4.8.1

Anchor Standard: Evaluate artistic work by applying criteria.

Benchmark: Analyze form and content in visual representations that convey messages.

5.4.5.10.1

Anchor Standard: Understand that artistic works influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts, including contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.

Benchmark: Identify how art is used to inform or change beliefs, values, or behaviors of an individual or society.

Fifth Grade

5.5.2.2.1

Anchor Standard: Generate and develop original artistic ideas.

Benchmark: Generate and document an innovative idea for art making.

5.5.2.4.1

Anchor Standard: Revise and complete original artistic work.

Benchmark: Create artist statements to describe choices in art making, using art vocabulary.

5.5.4.7.1

Anchor Standard: Analyze and construct interpretations of artistic work.

Benchmark: Identify and interpret works of art that reveal how people live around the world and what they value.

5.5.4.8.1

Anchor Standard: Evaluate artistic work by applying criteria.

Benchmark: Establish the validity of perceived cultural symbols within an artwork.

5.5.5.10.1

Anchor Standard: Understand that artistic works influence and are influenced by personal, societal, cultural, and historical contexts, including contributions of Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.

Benchmark: Make inferences about time, place, and culture in which a work of art was created, citing evidence.