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Curriculum

Frequently Used Terms in Fine Arts For Grades K-5

Dance

Choreographer—a person who creates the sequence of movements of a dance

Choreography—many sequences of movement that add together to produce a whole dance (used interchangeably with the term *dance*)

Dance—many sequences of movement that add together to produce a whole; a dance has organization, progression and development, including a beginning, a middle and end (used interchangeably with the term *choreography*)

Downstage—movement toward the front of the stage, closer to the audience

Energy—one of the elements of dance; energy propels or initiates movement or causes changes in movement or body position

Folk dance—a form of dance that represents specific nationalities or ethnic origins and is passed on from generation to generation

Following—the act of coming after or copying a movement without a plan or time for reflection

Improvisation/improvise—a process producing spontaneous movements stemming from specific stimulus

Leading—the act of providing structure and/or direction for movement

Level—one of the aspects of the movement element space—in dance there are three basic levels: high, middle, and low

Locomotor—a term used to describe dance movements that cross space

Mirroring—to copy the movements of another while facing that individual

Space—one of the elements of dance, the dancer moves in and through space

Stage left—a direction indicating movement to the performer's left side while the performer is facing the audience

Stage right—a direction indicating movement to the performer's right side while the performer is facing the audience

Technique—the learning of movement skills; the ability to use specific methods to create a dance

Time—one of the elements of dance, choreography develops a form through time

Upstage—a term indicating movement toward the back of the stage away from the audience

Theatre

Acting—portrayal of a character (pretending to be a character)

Actor—the person who portrays a character

Audience—the people who come to see a performance

Character—the person or thing the actor pretends to be; the role or part

Costumes—the clothing worn by the actor to help in the portrayal of the character

Critic—the person who writes judgments of plays

Director—the person responsible for putting on the play

Gesture—movements with the hand or upper arm which expresses an idea or feeling

Improvisation/improvise—making up action and dialogue of a scene at the spur of the moment

Lighting—visibility on stage; also sets the mood for the play

Lighting director—person who determines lighting requirements for the play

Makeup—products applied to the face or body to change the appearance of the actor

Playmaking—putting together the elements of a play

Playwright—the person who writes the play

Props—moveable objects used on stage; can be hand, set or dress props

1. Hand props—small objects that are touched and moved around by the actor
2. Set props—decorate the set of the play, such as pictures or furniture
3. Dress props—part of a costume that doubles as a prop, such as purses or watches

Performance—a formal exhibition of the play, a show

Rehearsal—practice for a performance

Scenery—the stage environment; the actual piece of furniture, platforms or other items on the stage

Scenes—a part of the play's dramatic action

Set—all the scenery for the play

Setting—place in which the play occurs

Stage—the place where the actors perform

Theater—the place where plays are performed

Theatre—the art and craft of putting on a play

Time—historical era of the play

Visual Arts

Abstract—art that exaggerates, is simplified or distorted

Architecture—an art form: the built environment

Asymmetrical or informal balance—two sides of a composition have the same visual weight but the lines, shapes and colors are not the same

Background—the part of a picture farthest from the viewer, closest to the horizon line

Balance—an arrangement that has equal visual weight on both sides of a composition

Center of interest—the focal point or area of emphasis; part of an artwork that gets your attention

Ceramics—sculpture or objects made with clay

Color—the reflected quality of light

Color wheel—colors of the rainbow turned into a circle

Cool colors—colors around blue on the color wheel: green, blue, violet

Contrast—a difference between elements in an artwork

Drawing—using lines to show forms or figures

Fantasy—art that shows imaginary or unreal people, places or things

Figure—an artwork that shows a whole body of a person

Foreground—area in a painting that appears closest to the viewer, usually positioned at the bottom of the artwork

Form—3-dimensional or fat (versus flat shapes)

Geometric-- shapes/forms with mathematical names: circle, triangle, square

Image—objects, people or recognizable parts in a picture

Landscape—an artwork that shows an outdoor picture or scene

Light—a source of illumination such as the sun or a lamp

Line—the path of a moving dot

Negative space—the area around the object; is not there

Organic shapes/forms—living things shapes/forms; free form shapes/forms

Painting—to make a picture using wet media such as tempera or watercolor paints

Pattern—repetition of line, shape and/or color

Perspective—a way of making a flat surface look like it goes back in space; illusion of depth

Point of view—shows where the artist is compared to what is being drawn or painted

Portrait—an artwork that shows a specific person or animal (often shows only the face)

Positive space—the object itself; is there

Proportion—the size relationships of parts to a whole and to each other

Primary colors—the first colors from which others are mixed: red, yellow, blue

Realistic—art that shows life as it is

Sculpture—three-dimensional artwork

Seascape—an artwork that shows an outdoor scene of water

Secondary colors—colors made when 2 primary colors are mixed: orange, violet, green

Shade—the dark value of a color, made by mixing black with the color

Shape—two-dimensional or flat

Space—the distance around and between things, an area that can be filled with an art element

Still life—an arrangement of objects that do not move

Style—the look of artwork with characteristics similar to others by an artist, period or culture

Symmetrical or formal balance—two sides of a composition are identical, mirror images

Texture—the way a surface feels or looks like it would feel: rough, smooth, shines

Three-dimensional—(3-D) some thing that has height, width, and depth

Tint—light value of a color, made by mixing white with the color

Two-dimensional—(2-D) some thing that has length and width

Value—lightness or darkness of gray or color

Warm colors—colors are orange on the color wheel: red, orange, yellow

Weaving—to interlace yarn into cloth

Music

Accelerando—to gradually get faster

Band—a large instrumental group consisting primarily of wind (brass and woodwind) and percussion instruments

Call and response—a song style that follows a simple question-and-answer pattern in which a soloist “calls” out the melody and a group responds

Ceremonial—an established custom or formal actions connected with an occasion

Choir—a group of singers organized and trained to sing together

Classical music—in its broadest sense this refers to a style of music as distinguished from folk, jazz or popular music

--in a more specific sense it refers to European music of the Classical period (1750-1820)

Composer—a person who writes musical works

Conductor—a person who leads a musical group

Crescendo—get gradually louder

Decrescendo—get gradually softer

Duet—two people play or sing

Dynamics—the volume of sound, the loudness or softness of a musical passage

Fermata—a hold; hold the note as long as the conductor indicates

Folk song—uncomplicated music that speaks directly of everyday matters, the first popular music

Form—overall structure or organization of a musical composition

Harmony—the sounding together of two or more tones

Improvisation/improvise—to compose music while performing it; commonly associated with jazz

Instrumentation—the general knowledge of orchestral instruments

Legato—a smooth articulation of a series of tones, each connected to the next

Lullaby—a sleep song

Lyrics—the words that are sung in a song

March—music with a steady beat suitable for a parade or procession

Melody—an element of music: a logical succession of musical tones

Orchestra—a music grouping of string, brass, woodwind and percussion instruments

Phrase—a complete musical idea, comparable to a sentence

Pitch—the highness or lowness of sound

Popular music—American music that has wide appeal, is immediately communicative and relatively short

Rhythm—an element of music: a regular recurrence of grouped strong and weak beats

Ritardando—gradually slowing down

Sacred—religious music

Secular—non-religious music

Sequence—repetition of a melodic idea or phrase at a higher or lower pitch

Solo—one person plays or sings

Spiritual—a sacred song that evolved from the period of slavery in the United States

Staccato—played in a detached (separate) manner, as opposed to legato

Style—quality that is characteristic of a culture, individual or historical period

Tempo—the speed of the beat

Texture—the character of the different layers of sound in music

Timbre/tone color—the distinctive sound of an instrument or voice

Trio—three people play or sing

Waltz—a dance in triple meter (3/4 time)

Work song—songs in which the text describes the task of the worker

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