

Kindergarten Through 4th Grade National Standards for Arts Education

Visual Arts

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Drama

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Kindergarden

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

GRADES K-4

These standards provide a framework for helping students learn the characteristics of the *visual arts by using a wide range of subject matter, symbols, meaningful images, and visual *expressions, to reflect their *ideas, feelings, and emotions; and to evaluate the merits of their efforts. The standards address these objectives in ways that promote acquisition of and fluency in new ways of thinking, working, communicating, reasoning, and investigating. They emphasize student acquisition of the most important and enduring ideas, concepts, issues, dilemmas, and knowledge offered by the visual arts. They develop new *techniques, approaches, and habits for applying knowledge and skills in the visual arts to the world beyond school.

The visual arts are extremely rich. They range from drawing, painting, sculpture, and design, to architecture, film, video, and folk arts. They involve a wide variety of *tools, techniques, and processes. The

standards are structured to recognize that many elements from this broad array can be used to accomplish specific educational objectives. For example, drawing can be used as the basis for creative activity, historical and cultural investigation, or *analysis, as can any other fields within the visual arts. The standards present educational goals. It is the responsibility of practitioners to choose appropriately from this rich array of content and processes to fulfill these goals in specific circumstances and to develop the curriculum.

To meet the standards, students must learn the vocabularies and concepts associated with various types of work in the visual arts and must exhibit their competence at various levels in visual, oral, and written form.

In Kindergarten – Grade 4, young children experiment enthusiastically with *art materials and investigate the ideas presented to them through visual arts instruction. They exhibit a sense of joy





and excitement as they make and share their artwork with others. Creation is at the heart of this instruction. Students learn to work with various tools, processes, and *media. They learn to coordinate their hands and minds in exploration of the visual world. They learn to make choices that enhance communication of their ideas. Their natural inquisitiveness is promoted, and they learn the value of perseverance.

As they move from kindergarten through the early grades, students develop skills of observation, and they learn to examine the objects and events of their lives. At the same time, they grow in their ability to describe, interpret, evaluate, and respond to work in the visual arts. Through examination of their own work and that of other people, times, and places, students learn to unravel the essence of artwork and to appraise its purpose and value. Through these efforts, students begin to understand the meaning and impact of the visual world in which they live.

Terms identified by an asterisk (*) are explained in the glossary. The standards in this section describe the cumulative skills and knowledge expected of all students upon exiting grade 4. Students in the earlier grades should engage in developmentally appropriate learning experiences designed to prepare them to achieve these

standards at grade 4. Determining the curriculum and the specific instructional activities necessary to achieve the standards is the responsibility of states, local school districts, and individual teachers.

1. Content Standard: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

- a. know the differences between materials, techniques, and processes
- b. describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses
- c. use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories
- d. use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

2. Content Standard: Using knowledge of *structures and functions

- a. know the differences among visual characteristics and purposes of art in order to convey ideas
- b. describe how different *expressive features and *organized principles cause different responses
- c. use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas

3. Content Standard: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

- a. explore and understand prospective content for works of art
- b. select and use subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning

4. Content Standard: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

- a. know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationships to various cultures
- b. identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places
- c. demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art

5. Content Standard: Reflecting upon and *assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

- a. understand there are various purposes for creating works of visual art
- b. describe how people's experiences influence the development of specific artworks
- c. understand there are different responses to specific artworks

6. Content Standard: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

- a. understand and use similarities and differences between characteristics of the visual arts and other arts disciplines
- b. identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum





Glossary

Analysis. Identifying and examining separate parts as they function independently and together in creative works and studies of the visual arts.

Art materials. Resources used in the creation and study of visual art, such as paint, clay, cardboard, canvas, film, videotape, models, watercolors, wood, and plastic.

Art media. Broad categories for grouping works of visual art according to the *art materials used.

Assess. To analyze and determine the nature and quality of achievement through means appropriate to the subject.

Expressive features. Elements evoking affects such as joy, sadness, or anger.

Expression. A process of conveying ideas, feelings, and meanings through selective use of communicative possibilities of the visual arts.

Ideas. A formulated thought, opinion, or concept that can be represented in visual or verbal form.

Organizational principles. Underlying characteristics in the visual arts, such as repetition, balance, emphasis, contrast, and unity.

Structures. Means of organizing the components of a work into a cohesive and meaningful whole, such as sensory qualities, organizational principles, expressive features, and functions of art

Techniques. Specific methods or approaches used in a larger process; for example, graduation of value or hue in painting or conveying linear perspective through overlapping, shading, or varying size or color.

Tools. Instruments and equipment used by students to create and learn about art, such as brushes, scissors, brayers, easels, knives, kilns, and cameras.

Visual Arts. A broad category that includes the traditional fine arts such as drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture; communication and design arts such as film, television, graphics, product design; architecture and environmental arts such as urban, interior, and landscape design; folk arts; and works of art such as ceramics, fibers, jewelry, works in wood, paper and other materials.

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National Standards for Theatre Education

GRADES K-4

Theatre, the imagined and enacted world of human beings, is one of the primary ways children learn about life – about actions and consequences, about customs and beliefs, about others and themselves. They learn through their *social pretend play and from hours of viewing television and film. For instance, children use pretend play as a means of making sense with the world; they create situations to play and assume *roles; they interact with peers and arrange *environments to bring their stories to life; they direct one another to bring order to their *drama; and they respond to one another's dramas. In other words, children arrive at school with rudimentary skills as playwrights, actors, designers, directors, and audience members; theatre education should build on this solid foundation. These standards assume that theatre education will start with and have a strong emphasis on *improvisation, which is the basis of social pretend play.

In an effort to create a seamless transition from the natural skills of pretend play to

the study of theatre, the standards call for instruction that integrates the several aspects of the art form: script writing, acting, designing, directing, researching, comparing art forms, analyzing and critiquing, and understanding contexts. In the kindergarten through fourth grade, the teacher will be actively involved in the students' planning, playing, and evaluating, but students will be guided to develop group skills so that more independence is possible. The content of the drama will develop the students' abilities to express their understanding of their immediate world and broaden their knowledge of other cultures.

Terms identified by an asterisk (*) are explained in the glossary. The standards in this section describe the cumulative skills and knowledge expected of all students upon exiting grade 4. Students in the earlier grades should engage in developmentally appropriate learning experiences designed to prepare them to achieve these standards at grade 4. Determining the curriculum and the





specific instructional activities necessary to achieve the standards is the responsibility of states, local school districts, and individual teachers.

1. Content Standard: Script writing by planning and recording improvisations based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history

- a. collaborate to select interrelated characters, environments, and situations for *classroom dramatizations
- b. improvise dialogue to tell stories, and formalize improvisations by writing or recording the dialogue

2. Content Standard: Acting by assuming roles and interacting in improvisations

- a. imagine and clearly describe characters, their relationships, and their environments
- b. use variations of locomotor and non-locomotor movement and vocal pitch, tempo, and tone for different characters
- c. assume roles that exhibit concentration and contribute to the *action of classroom dramatizations based on personal experience and heritage, imagination, literature, and history

3. Content Standard: Designing by visualizing and arranging environments for classroom dramatizations

- a. visualize environments and construct designs to communicate locale and mood using visual elements (such as space, color, line, shape, texture) and aural aspects using a variety of sound sources
- b. collaborate to establish playing spaces for classroom dramatizations and to select and safely organize available materials that suggest scenery, properties, lighting, sound, costumes, and makeup

4. Content Standard: Directing by planning classroom dramatizations

- a. collaboratively plan and prepare improvisations and demonstrate various ways of staging classroom dramatizations

5. Content Standard: Researching by finding information to support classroom dramatizations

- a. communicate information to peers about people, events, time, and place related to classroom dramatizations

6. Content Standard: Comparing and connecting art forms by describing theatre, dramatic media (such as film, television, and *electronic media), and other art forms

- a. describe visual, aural, oral, and kinetic elements in theatre, dramatic media, dance, music and visual arts
- b. compare how ideas and emotions are expressed in theatre, dramatic media, dance, music, and visual arts
- c. select movement, music, or visual elements to enhance the mood of a classroom dramatization

7. Content Standard: Analyzing and explaining personal preferences and *constructing meanings from classroom dramatizations and from theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

- a. identify and describe the visual, oral, and kinetic elements of classroom dramatizations and dramatic performances
- b. explain how the wants and needs of characters are similar to and different from their own

- c. articulate emotional responses to and explain personal preferences about the whole as well as the parts of dramatic performances
- d. analyze classroom dramatizations and, using appropriate terminology, constructively suggest alternative ideas for dramatizing roles, arranging environments, and developing situations along with means of improving the collaborative processes of planning, playing, responding, and evaluating

8. Content Standard: Understanding context by recognizing the role of theatre, film, television, and electronic media in daily life

- a. identify and compare similar characters and situations in stories and dramas from and about various cultures, illustrate with classroom dramatizations, and discuss how theatre reflects life
- b. identify and compare the various settings and reasons for creating dramas and attending theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions





Glossary

Action. The core of a theatre piece; the sense of forward movement created by the sense of time and/or physical and psychological motivations of characters.

Classroom dramatizations. The act of creating character, dialogue, action, and environment for the purpose of exploration, experimentation, and study in a setting where there is no formal audience observation except for that of fellow students and teachers.

Constructed meaning. The personal understanding of dramatic/artistic intentions and *actions and their social and personal significance, selected and organized from the aural, oral, and visual symbols of a dramatic production.

Drama. The art of composing, writing, acting or producing plays; a literary composition intended to portray life or character or to tell a story usually involving conflicts and emotions exhibited through action and dialogue, designed for theatrical performance.

Electronic media. Means of communication characterized by the use of technology, e.g., radio, computers, e.g., virtual reality.

Environment. Physical surroundings that establish place, time, and atmosphere/mood; the physical conditions that reflect and affect the emotions, thoughts, and actions of characters.

Improvisation. The spontaneous use of movement and speech to create a character or object in a particular situation.

Role. The characteristic and expected social behavior of an individual in a given position (e.g., mother, employer). Role portrayal is likely to be more predictable and one-dimensional than character portrayal.

Social pretend play. When two or more children engage in unsupervised enactments; participants use the play to explore social knowledge and skills.

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National Standards for Dance and Movement Education

GRADES K-4

Children in grades K-4 love to move and learn through engagement of the whole self. They need to become literate in the language of dance in order to use this natural facility as a means of communication and self-expression, and as a way of responding to the expression of others. Dancing and creating dances provide them with skills and knowledge necessary for all future learning in dance and give them a way to celebrate their humanity.

Dance education begins with an awareness of the movement of the body and its creative potential. At this level, students become engaged in body awareness and movement exploration that promote a recognition and appreciation of self and others. Students learn basic movement and *choreographic skills in musical/rhythmic contexts. The skills and knowledge acquired allow them to be working independently and with a partner in creating and performing dances.

Experiences in perceiving and responding to dance expand students' vocabularies, enhance their listening and viewing skills, and enable them to be thinking critically about dance. They investigate questions such as "What is it? How does it work? Why is it important?" Practicing attentive audience behavior for their peers leads to describing movement *elements and identifying expressive movement choices. Students learn to compare works in terms of the elements of space, time, and force/energy and to experience the similarities and differences between dance and other disciplines.

Through dance education, students can also come to an understanding of their own culture and begin to respect dance as a part of the heritage of many cultures. As they learn and share dances from around the globe, as well as from their own communities, children gain skills and knowledge that will help them participate in a diverse society.





1. Content Standard: Identifying and demonstrating movement elements and skills in performing dance

- a. accurately demonstrate nonlocomotor/*axial movements (such as bend, twist, stretch, swing)
- b. accurately demonstrate eight basic *locomotor movements (such as walk, run, hop, jump, leap, gallop, slide, and skip), traveling forward, backward, sideward, diagonally, and turning
- c. create shapes at low, middle, and high *levels
- d. demonstrate the ability to define and maintain *personal space
- e. demonstrate movements in straight and curved pathways
- f. demonstrate accuracy in moving to a musical beat and responding to changes in tempo
- g. demonstrate *kinesthetic awareness, concentration, and focus in performing movement skills
- h. attentively observe and accurately describe the *action (such as skip, gallop) and movement elements (such as *levels, directions) in a brief movement study

2. Content Standard: Understanding choreographic principles, processes, and structures

- a. create a sequence with a beginning, middle, and end, both with and without a rhythmic accompaniment; identify each of these parts of the sequence
- b. improvise, create, and perform dances based on their own ideas and concepts from other sources
- c. use *improvisation to discover and invent movement and to solve movement problems
- d. create a dance *phrase, accurately repeat it, and then vary it (making changes in the time, space, and/or force/energy)
- e. demonstrate the ability to work effectively alone and with a partner
- f. demonstrate the following partner skills: copying, leading and following, mirroring

3. Content Standard: Understanding dance as a way to create and communicate meaning

- a. observe and *discuss how dance is different from other forms of human movement (such as sports, everyday gestures)

- b. take an active role in class discussion about interpretations of, and reactions to, a dance
- c. present their own dances to peers and discuss their meanings with competence and confidence

4. Content Standard: Applying and demonstrating critical and creative thinking skills in dance

- a. explore, discover, and realize multiple solutions to a given movement problem; choose their favorite solution and discuss the reasons for that choice
- b. observe two dances and discuss how they are similar and different in terms of one of the *elements of dance (such as space) by observing body shapes, levels, pathways

5. Content Standard: Demonstrating and understanding dance in various cultures and historical periods

- a. perform *folk dances from various cultures with competence and confidence
- b. learn and effectively share a dance from a resource in their own community; describe the cultural and/or historical context

- c. accurately answer questions about dance in a particular culture and time period (for example: In colonial America, why and in what settings did people dance? What did the dances look like?)

6. Content Standard: Making connections between dance and healthful living

- a. identify at least three personal goals to improve themselves as dancers
- b. explain how healthy practices (such as nutrition, safety) enhance their ability to dance, citing multiple examples

7. Content Standard: Making connections between dance and other disciplines

- a. create a dance project that reveals understanding of a concept or idea from another discipline (such as a pattern in dance and science)
- b. respond to a dance using another art form; explain the connections between the dance and the response to it (such as stating how their paintings reflect the dance they saw)





Glossary

Action. A movement event.

Axial movement. Any movement that is anchored to one spot by a body part using only the available space in any direction without losing the initial body contact. Movement is organized around the axis of the body rather than designed for travel from one location to another; also known as nonlocomotor movement.

Choreographic. Describes a dance sequence that has been created with specific intent.

Discuss. To engage in oral, written, or any other appropriate form of presentation.

Elements. The use of the body moving in space and time with force/energy.

Folk. Dances that are usually created and performed by a specific group within a culture. Generally these dances originated outside the courts or circle of power within a society.

Improvisation. Movement that is created spontaneously, ranging from free-form to highly structured environments, but always with an element of chance. Provides the dancer with the opportunity to bring together elements quickly, and requires focus and concentration. Improvisation is instant and simultaneous choreography and performance.

Kinesthetic. Refers to the ability of the body's sensory organs in the muscles, tendons, and joints to respond to stimuli while dancing or viewing a dance.

Levels. The height of the dancer in relation to the floor.

Locomotor movement. Movement that travels from place to place, usually identified by weight transference on the feet. Basic locomotor steps are the walk, run, leap, hop, and jump, and the irregular rhythmic combinations of the skip (walk and hop), slide (walk and leap) and gallop (walk and leap).

Personal space. The “space bubble” or the kinesphere that one occupies; it includes all levels, planes, and directions both near and far from the body's center.

Phrase. A brief sequence of related movements that has a sense of rhythmic completion.

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National Standards for Music Education

GRADES K-4

Performing, creating, and responding to music are the fundamental music processes in which humans engage. Students, particularly in grades K-4, learn by doing. Singing, playing instruments, moving to music, and creating music enable them to acquire musical skills and knowledge that can be developed in no other way.

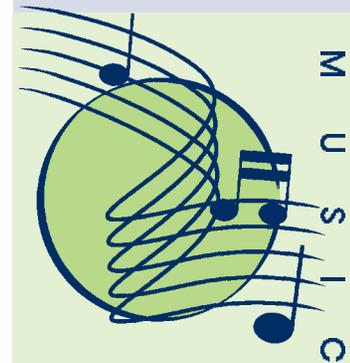
Learning to read and notate music gives them a skill with which to explore music independently and with others. Listening to, analyzing, and evaluating music are important building blocks of musical learning. Further, to participate fully in a diverse, global society, students must understand their own historical and cultural heritage and that of others within their communities and beyond. Because music is a basic expression of human culture, every student should have access to a balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of study in music.

Terms identified by an asterisk (*) are explained in the glossary. The standards in this section describe the cumulative skills

and knowledge expected of all students upon exiting grade 4. Students in the earlier grades should engage in developmentally appropriate learning experiences designed to prepare them to achieve these standards at grade 4. Determining the curriculum and the specific instructional activities necessary to achieve the standards is the responsibility of states, local school districts, and individual teachers.

1. Content Standard: Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

- a. sing independently, on pitch and in rhythm, with appropriate timbre, diction, and posture, and maintain a steady tempo
- b. sing *expressively, with appropriate dynamics, phrasing, and interpretation
- c. sing from memory a varied repertoire of songs representing *genres and *styles from diverse cultures
- d. sing ostinatos, partner songs, and rounds





- e. sing in groups, blending vocal timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor

2. Content Standard: Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music

- a. perform on pitch, in rhythm, with appropriate dynamics and timbre, and maintain a steady tempo
- b. perform easy rhythmic, melodic, and chordal patterns accurately and independently on rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic *classroom instruments
- c. perform expressively a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres and styles
- d. echo short rhythms and melodic patterns
- e. perform in groups, blending instrumental timbres, matching dynamic levels, and responding to the cues of a conductor
- f. perform independent instrumental parts¹ while other students sing or play contrasting parts

3. Content Standard: Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

- a. improvise “answers” in the same style to given rhythmic and melodic phrases
- b. improvise simple rhythmic and melodic ostinato accompaniments
- c. improvise simple rhythmic variations and simple melodic embellishments on familiar melodies
- d. improvise short songs and instrumental pieces, using a variety of sound sources, including traditional sounds, nontraditional sounds available in the classroom, body sounds, and sounds produced by electronic means²

4. Content Standard: Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

- a. create and arrange music to accompany readings or dramatizations
- b. create and arrange short songs and instrumental pieces within specified guidelines
- c. use a variety of sound sources when composing³

5. Content Standard: Reading and notating music

- a. read whole, half, dotted half, quarter, and eighth notes and rests in 2/4 , 3/4 , and 4/4 meter signatures
- b. use a system (that is, syllables, numbers, or letters) to read simple pitch notation in the treble clef in major keys
- c. identify symbols and traditional terms referring to dynamics, tempo, and articulation and interpret them correctly when performing
- d. use standard symbols to notate meter, rhythm, pitch, and dynamics in simple patterns presented by the teacher

6. Content Standard: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

- a. identify simple music *forms when presented aurally
- b. demonstrate perceptual skills by moving, by answering questions about, and by describing aural examples of music of various styles representing diverse cultures
- c. use appropriate terminology in explaining music, music notation, music instruments and voices, and music performances

- d. identify the sounds of a variety of instruments, including many orchestra and band instruments, and instruments from various cultures, as well as children’s voices and male and female adult voices
- e. respond through purposeful movement⁴ to selected prominent music characteristics⁵ or to specific music events⁶ while listening to music

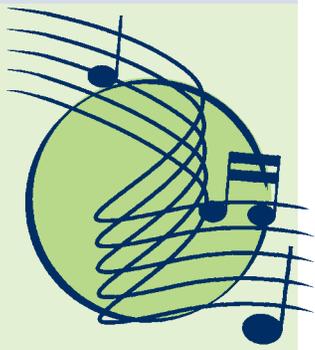
7. Content Standard: Evaluating music and music performances

- a. devise criteria for evaluating performances and compositions
- b. explain, using appropriate music terminology, their personal preferences for specific musical works and styles

8. Content Standard: Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

- a. identify similarities and differences in the meanings of common terms⁷ used in the various arts
- b. identify ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with those of music⁸





9. Content Standard: Understanding music in relation to history and culture

- a. identify by genre or style aural examples of music from various historical periods and cultures
- b. describe in simple terms how *elements of music are used in music examples from various cultures of the world⁹
- c. identify various uses of music in their daily experiences¹⁰ and describe characteristics that make certain music suitable for each use
- d. identify and describe roles of musicians¹¹ in various music settings and cultures
- e. demonstrate audience behavior appropriate for the context and style of music performed

Notes:

1. E.g., simple rhythmic or melodic ostinatos, contrasting rhythmic lines, harmonic progressions and chords.
2. E.g., traditional sounds: voices, instruments; nontraditional sounds: paper tearing, pencil tapping; body sounds: hands clapping, fingers snapping; sounds produced by electronic means: personal computers and basic *MIDI devices, including keyboards, sequencers,

- synthesizers, and drum machines.
3. E.g., a particular style, form, instrumentation, compositional technique
4. E.g., swaying, skipping, dramatic play
5. E.g., meter, dynamics, tempo
6. E.g., meter changes, dynamic changes, same/different sections
7. E.g., form, line, contrast
8. E.g., foreign languages: singing songs in various languages; language arts: using the expressive elements of music in interpretive readings; mathematics: mathematical basis of values of notes, rests, and meter signatures; science: vibration of strings, drum heads, or air columns generating sounds used in music; geography: songs associated with various countries or regions
9. E.g., Navajo, Arabic, Latin American
10. E.g., celebration of special occasions, background music for television, worship
11. E.g., orchestra conductor, folksinger, church organist

GLOSSARY

Classroom instruments. Instruments typically used in the general music classroom, including, for example, recorder-type instruments, chorded zithers, mallet instruments, simple percussion instruments, fretted instruments, keyboard instruments, and electronic instruments.

Elements of music. Pitch, rhythm, harmony, dynamics, timbre, texture, *form.

Expression, expressive, expressively. With appropriate dynamics, phrasing, *style, and interpretation and appropriate variations in dynamics and tempo.

Form. The overall structural organization of a music composition (e.g., AB, ABA, call and response, rondo, theme and variations, sonata-allegro) and the interrelationships of music events within the overall structure.

Genre. A type or category of music (e.g., sonata, opera, oratorio, art song, gospel, suite, jazz, madrigal, march, work song, lullaby, barbershop, Dixieland).

Level of difficulty. For purposes of these standards, music is classified into six levels of difficulty:

- * Level 1-Very easy. Easy keys, meters, and rhythms; limited ranges.

- * Level 2-Easy. May include changes of tempo, key, and meter; modest ranges.
- * Level 3-Moderately easy. Contains moderate technical demands, expanded ranges, and varied interpretive requirements.
- * Level 4-Moderately difficult. Requires well-developed *technical skills, attention to phrasing and interpretation, and ability to perform various meters and rhythms in a variety of keys.
- * Level 5-Difficult. Requires advanced technical and interpretive skills; contains key signatures with numerous sharps or flats, unusual meters, complex rhythms, subtle dynamic requirements.
- * Level 6-Very difficult. Suitable for musically mature students of exceptional competence.

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MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface). Standard specifications that enable electronic instruments such as the synthesizer, sampler, sequencer, and drum machine from any manufacturer to communicate with one another and with computers.





GLOSSARY (continued)

Style. The distinctive or characteristic manner in which the *elements of music are treated. In practice, the term may be applied to, for example, composers (the style of Copland), periods (Baroque style), media (keyboard style), nations (French style), *form or type of composition (fugal style, contrapuntal style), or *genre (operatic style, bluegrass style).

Technical accuracy, technical skills.

The ability to perform with appropriate timbre, intonation, and diction and to play or sing the correct pitches and rhythms.

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