

# 2020-2021 Visual Arts Instructional Guidance for Diverse Learning Settings

Office of Standards and Instructional Support  
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**CO L O R A D O**  
Department of Education

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### Attribution

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### Full Document and Other Support

For the full version of this document that contains all content areas, and for other standards, content, and instructional support, see [the website for the Office of Standards and Instructional Support](#)

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## Purpose

When CDE describes **best, first instruction**, it is assumed that instruction is occurring in a traditional environment: teachers and students gathered together in a classroom, working in small groups, large groups, and individually, and that there are no safety risks posed by having people in close proximity of each other or touching shared objects. Due to COVID-19, we can no longer assume that this traditional environment is possible or preferable under the current circumstances. Districts and schools have had to consider other options, including hybrid/blended learning, online-only options, or switching to remote learning on an emergency basis when circumstances require it. For most educators, this has created challenging teaching conditions—not only is teaching under these non-traditional settings challenging compared to the classroom environments teachers are accustomed to, but the uncertainty of the moment makes long-term planning and preparation especially difficult.

The purpose of this document is to provide some guidance under these uncertain times for each of the content areas addressed by the Colorado Academic Standards. While some compromises are inevitable when shifting instruction to non-traditional settings, maintaining high-impact instruction (or the highest-impact instruction under the circumstances) requires adherence to certain principles, practices, and strategies. Teaching is a very complex endeavor and while it isn't possible to cover every approach, tool, or practice for every situation, this document aims to inform educators about what teaching should ideally look like given a variety of instructional settings.

## Teaching and Learning in Diverse Learning Settings

In March of 2020, schools in Colorado made on-the-fly decisions and took quick action to change the way teaching and learning worked across the state. Several terms emerged to describe the different settings school was happening in, such as *online*, *virtual*, *remote*, and *at home*. To attempt to clarify the language used to describe these settings, this document refers to the following categories:

- **In-person learning:** Face to face instruction within a brick and mortar structure.
- **Hybrid/blended learning:** A combination of in-person learning and remote learning.
- **Online-only learning:** Online learning in Colorado refers to schools that are providing online course offerings on a full or part-time basis. Students who engage in online learning in this context are enrolled in an approved school or program or may be taking an online course to supplement.
- **Remote learning:** Education that occurs away from a school building in response to emergency situations such as COVID-19 or natural disaster. Remote learning seeks to offer continuous educational opportunities that may or may not build upon previously taught content. Remote learning is both a temporary and longer-term option. Remote learning may include digital resources and/or hard copy resources and may include synchronous or asynchronous instruction and/or self-paced independent study work.

Even with these categories and definitions, other variations are possible. For example, in-person learning *with* an enforcement of social/physical distancing will certainly have some constraints that in-person learning *without* social/physical distancing. Similarly, online and remote learning looks very different when it is conducted synchronously rather than asynchronously.

## Content-Specific Resources to Support Diverse Learning Settings

CDE's top priority continues to be the health and safety of all students, educators, and communities in Colorado. To help schools plan for educational continuity while the suspension of in-person learning is in effect, we have curated a list of best practices for remote learning and teaching including free web-based resources to help keep students academically engaged. We recognize that the multitude of resources for remote learning can be overwhelming so we have collected and organized material by content area and grade level that may be useful as educators develop plans for their students. While remote learning through the Internet provides a great deal of flexibility in learning opportunities, educators should also consider utilizing hard copy resources (e.g., packet work, textbooks).

There is no requirement for districts to offer remote learning via the Internet, but if educators decide to go this path, they should strive to include equitable access to instruction for all students. Equitable access does not require that all students receive instruction in the same format e.g., online instruction). Districts should consider the individual learning needs of students in determining how to best meet individual needs. Click [here](#) for a curated list of resources across content areas.

## Equity Considerations for Learning Across Settings

Regardless of the instructional setting, or how it changes in 2020-2021, we suggest you consider the following do support students and their families:

- Support **flexible scheduling and limited technology access when shifting to hybrid/blended or remote** learning settings. Student learning should not be solely dependent on access to devices and the internet. Encourage approaches that can be pursued without technology and/or asynchronously to set students up for success.
- Engage students in **meaningful** explorations, investigations, inquiries, analysis, and/or sense-making. Equitable learning experiences should be both responsive to the current need as well as meaningful to learners.
- When in remote or hybrid settings, encourage students to engage in **activities that already happen in their homes with materials that families already have** (especially so families do not need to purchase additional supplies). Families in poverty may be experiencing several of the considerations described above, along with additional concerns including regular access to meals, utilities, health services, or shelter. Undocumented students and students receiving special education services may face challenges in accessing resources that they need. Encourage educators to prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of all students.
- Help students make **explicit connections to their interests and identities**.
- **Invite family members to be a partner** in students' learning. Students and families may need to juggle home, caretaking, school, and work responsibilities. Consider a menu of options for learning experiences that allow for different types and levels of engagement during remote learning.
- Provide students with **choices for how they engage, what they investigate/research, or how they demonstrate learning**.
- Support students in **self-reflection** related to content and process to support their learning.
- **Exercise sensitivity** when referencing the current pandemic as a topic for instruction.
- Encourage, support, and facilitate **first-language family participation** in the learning across multiple settings. Take steps to bridge the gap in access to bilingual and native language resources that support learning for students and their families.



## General Considerations for Standards-Aligned Instruction

The guidance provided below gives educators insights into “traditional” teaching practices and how shifts in those teaching practices can lead to student learning experiences that are more authentic and engaging in diverse learning settings. These shifts support instructional alignment with the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards.

Learning experiences should look less like...	Learning experiences should look more like...
<p><b>An attempt to recreate school at home during learning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assuming a <b>strict “school day” schedule</b></li> <li>• <b>requiring special materials</b> (e.g. materials not commonly found at home)</li> <li>• pacing with the <b>planned scope and sequence in remote learning environment</b></li> <li>• assigning <b>readings</b> to stay “caught up”</li> <li>• packet of <b>worksheets and busy-work</b></li> <li>• all learning experiences happen <b>virtually</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Flexible goals and structures for learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>extended time</b> for learning and reflection</li> <li>• use of <b>commonly available materials</b></li> <li>• <b>purposeful selection of learning targets</b></li> <li>• allowing students to <b>explore their interests</b></li> <li>• <b>meaningful, manageable tasks and projects</b></li> <li>• <b>opportunities to learn without the use of devices or the internet</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Teacher-centered instruction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• virtual lectures/classes that all students <b>synchronously</b> attend</li> <li>• teachers <b>delivering information and assignments</b></li> <li>• teacher instruction and feedback as the <b>primary mode</b> of facilitating learning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Purposeful teacher-student interactions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>optional</b> opportunities to connect with teachers and peers <b>virtually and at a variety of times</b></li> <li>• teachers providing <b>coaching, feedback, and encouragement</b></li> <li>• encouraging <b>students to engage in learning and reflection with their families and communities</b></li> <li>• encouraging <b>self-reflection</b> on what students learn and how they learn it</li> </ul>
<p><b>Assignments to “get through” content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>emphasizing memorizing content</b> or “checking off” tasks on lists</li> <li>• asking students to <b>complete tasks that are irrelevant, lack authenticity, or are redundant in nature</b> (e.g., “busy work”)</li> <li>• trying to cover content through a volume of activities or skipping from topic to topic</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assignments that promote authentic learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>connecting experiences to household activities</b>, like cooking, fixing things, or gardening, community interactions</li> <li>• asking students to <b>identify relevant problems</b> in their lives and <b>leverage content knowledge</b> to address them</li> <li>• allowing students to <b>deeply explore concepts, topics, phenomena (science), and/or problems of interest</b> through investigation, analysis, research, and other sense-making strategies to build understanding and practice over time</li> </ul>

## Instructional Guidance by Content Area

CDE's Office of Standards and Instructional Support stands behind the saying, "All Students, All Standards." The Colorado Academic Standards define learning goals in each content area. By providing a high-quality, standards-based educational experience for students in each of the content areas, schools open doors of opportunity to students' futures. By experiencing high-quality teaching and learning in a variety of content areas, upon graduation students should be prepared to seek out and find success in multiple career fields, college majors, or other future endeavors connecting to any one or more of the content areas for which Colorado has academic standards.

Unlike other sources of guidance for the 2020-2021 school year, the guidance below gives equal preference to each content area. **This is not a guide for narrowing the curriculum down to mathematics and English language arts.** Instead, it is our goal that schools consider the guidance provided and strive to offer well-rounded, enriching, opportunity-creating educational experiences for all students, regardless of the instructional setting.

## Visual Arts

### Considerations for the Visual Arts in the time of Covid-19.

This document offers suggestions for visual arts teachers and administrators to use when organizing and leading instruction in different learning environments. Additionally, the National Art Education Association (NAEA) has provided quality resources [here](#).

Topics that may be considerations in various learning environments:

- Consider student supply or art kits (for home and/or classroom): If able, consider providing each student a kit of individual “high touch” supplies such as pencils, erasers, drawing materials, scissors, and brushes that are carried with them or they will have in case of remote learning. Or consider multiple class sets of high touch tools with enough for each student in the class that go into a “to be cleaned” tub after each use. Sanitize according to [state and local guidelines](#).
- Limit supply/tool or device sharing. Avoid media that may need to be re-used or reconstituted. Consider providing storage bags for individual portions of such material and for students to transport their own tools which may include personal keyboards or devices in cases of media arts.
- Determine the essential learning outcomes your students need during this time, not necessarily the project you intended for them to complete which may need to be flexible. Construct art syllabi in terms of reflecting the essential skills, processes, ideas, and concepts found in the 2020 CAS in visual arts. Consider allowing students to take an assignment into a direction that might express their views, interests, and experiences. What is essential to know and be able to do? What is the transferable learning that is important?
- Learning may look differently for a while, it is okay to reimagine teaching strategies and/or lessons to see what works best for students that may be out of our familiar teaching zones. See below for tips and ideas related to high-impact instruction in a variety of environments.
- Facilitate connections to students and their personal life experiences to engage creative idea making and take into consideration elements of Social Emotional Learning (e.g., [Habits of Mind](#), [RULER](#), [CASEL Competencies](#)).
- Include a variety of artists of different backgrounds, cultures, and areas from contemporary art and from art history that are culturally responsive. Include local artists and galleries that connect to student lives as much as possible. [Here](#) is a place to start finding contemporary art; copy and add to as needed for your own context.
- Incorporate the use of devices that are currently accessible and available to students including their cell phones if applicable.
- This may be a good time to visit using images as inspiration and not image plagiarism. Provide on-going feedback, encouragement, and validation based on the evidence within their artwork and/or reflections or discussions that could help students process their experiences.

## High-Impact Instructional Strategies in Art for Diverse Learning Settings

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Tools to Try
Primarily emphasizing individual self-expression	Considering personal expression within a broader realm of human experience that has the potential to affect change to self and community	<p><b>Choice boards:</b> Teachers may consider structuring lessons with <a href="#">bingo</a> and <a href="#">choice-boards</a> and <a href="#">lists</a> that allow students to self-select based on personal and community interests as well as matching their existing <a href="#">supplies options</a> and/or materials from home. These can be adapted to work for face to face, online, and remote learning options.</p>	<p><a href="#">Google Tools</a> for Art Education: A variety of platforms and ideas for remote and online learning</p> <p><a href="#">Amplifier Art</a></p> <p><a href="#">K-6 Art Home Learning Choice Boards</a></p> <p><a href="#">Art and Community Activism</a></p> <p><a href="#">Sample Project Ideas</a></p>
Memorization and recall of art terms as evidence of learning	Art terms and academic vocabulary learned through process while developing plans, working through iterations, and determining when a work of art is finished	<p><b>Art Adventures:</b> Similar to choice boards around a specific concept, studio skill, or learning goal. <b>Think-aloud:</b> As teachers are modeling and students are working (in person, online, or through remote interactive handouts), point to and encourage reflection on decision making and processes, identifying ways works of art are constructed and deconstructed and using academic vocabulary as it is happening.</p>	<p><a href="#">Whitney Museum Resources</a></p> <p><a href="#">The Art Assignment</a></p> <p><a href="#">Projects for Postmodern Principles</a></p> <p><a href="#">Depth of Knowledge in the Arts</a></p>

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Tools to Try
<p>Creating works of art designed to adhere to a particular aesthetic</p>	<p>Works of art created in response to big ideas, conceptual understandings, and areas of inquiry that cross content and are meaningful to the student artist</p>	<p><u><a href="#">Inquiry Questions:</a></u> Posing questions in person in whole or small groups that have no clear yes or no answer but that require deep or critical thought around an idea or concept. A work of art, issue, or idea may be used as a starting point or point of comparison.</p> <p><u><a href="#">Conceptual Inquiry:</a></u> Works of art created, inspired by, and in response to big ideas, conceptual understandings, and areas of inquiry that cross content and are meaningful to the student artist.</p>	<p><u><a href="#">Big Ideas in Art from SFMOMA</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Teaching with Contemporary Art</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Arts in Distance Learning</a></u></p>
<p>Providing sequential steps to design problems that students follow</p>	<p>Students finding problems, experimenting, and engaging in the artistic process with teacher guidance and support</p>	<p>Thinking Prompts: Ideation/ <u><a href="#">Brainstorming</a></u></p> <p>Imagination Prompts: <u><a href="#">Beginning steps</a></u> and ideas to <u><a href="#">spark imagination</a></u>. While guided drawing activities are a great place to catch interest and initiate drawing skill, focus on how those skills are transferable and not developed into a possible crutch.</p>	<p><u><a href="#">Remote learning resources for sketchbooks</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Sketchbooks</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Planning</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Brainstorming and other ways to ideate</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">An Evening of Music and Doodling with Yo-Yo Ma and Mo Willems.</a></u></p>

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Tools to Try
<p>Posing project assignments to students with known and predictable outcomes</p>	<p>Multiple investigations driven by student’s questions and interests with a range of possible outcomes where teacher guidance toward the application of the artistic process is the goal</p>	<p><u><a href="#">Universal Design:</a></u>          Allowing multiple access points to learning</p> <p><u><a href="#">Explorative Inquiry/Problem Finding:</a></u> Allowing students to discover rather than telling them what will happen or the answer. In-person learning involves using materials in the classroom following state and local safety guidelines. If students are not face to face, allow choice relative to their curiosity or give a range of topics to explore on their own through experimentation with materials found at home or provided through a take home kit. Results can be shared through online discussion boards or documented to share face to face upon returning.</p>	<p><u><a href="#">Building Creative Thinkers</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">From Theory to Practice</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Curiosity in action</a></u></p>

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Tools to Try
Learning objectives based on completing a specific activity	Learning objectives based on transferrable skill gained in the process of artistic creation	<p><a href="#">Studio Habits in Action</a>: broad thinking dispositions, or habits of mind, that visual arts teachers teach in their classes.</p> <p><a href="#">Design Thinking</a>: Stanford’s D.School Bootleg</p>	<p><a href="#">Purpose of the Visual Arts</a></p> <p><a href="#">Arts and the Scientific Method</a></p> <p><a href="#">Getty Museum ideas</a></p> <p><a href="#">Conceptual Framework NCCAS</a></p>
Lectures about master artists, styles, or interpretation of a work of art or content	Students exploring a work of art as a “text” through deep reading of an image or object and determining meaning through their own investigations and schema of understanding and expanding these things	<p><a href="#">Stories</a>: Allow students to share their own stories in small groups or one on one as inspiration for a work of art. Or, use stories to introduce a work of art by concept or by biography. Use stories to link to background and cultural knowledge as well as a <a href="#">pedagogical teaching tool</a>.</p> <p><a href="#">Visible Thinking</a>: This can also be done through distance learning; specific examples in link along with a variety of online platforms that work best.</p> <p><a href="#">Disciplinary Literacy</a>: Using authentic literacy elements and academic vocabulary while communicating, thinking, listening, writing, reading, and speaking as an artist.</p>	<p><a href="#">Artful thinking routines</a></p> <p><a href="#">Visual thinking strategies</a></p> <p><a href="#">Continua of artful thinking</a></p> <p><a href="#">Cultures of thinking continuum</a></p> <p><a href="#">Stories of Art in Place by Children’s Book Illustrator</a></p>

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Tools to Try
Working in the style of a master artist or culture	Exploring an artist's inspiration and response to their time, culture, and context then transferring this artistic behavior as students develop their own artistic responses	<p><a href="#">Personal Relevance and Linking Background Knowledge:</a> Considering personal expression within a broader realm of human experience and real world application. <a href="#">Examples</a></p> <p>Make artistic connections to students' prior life experience <a href="#">acknowledging the variety of backgrounds</a> and building on that knowledge as an asset and not a deficit.</p> <p><a href="#">Google Arts &amp; Culture:</a> Explore museums and historical sites around the world</p>	<p><a href="#">Student Directed Meaning</a></p> <p><a href="#">Traditional and Contemporary Culture A Study in Change</a></p> <p><a href="#">Native Knowledge Resources</a></p> <p><a href="#">Virtual Museums to visit</a></p> <p><a href="#">Making Art Helps Your Brain</a></p>

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Tools to Try
Teaching artistic skill and technique as the primary end result	Students applying artistic skills and techniques as best fits their intended meaning in a work of art to be able to transfer this learning to multiple situations in the future	<p>Direct Instruction: Teaching and <a href="#">Modeling</a> a specific skillset and technique where the application of transferable artistic learning is the eventual result. Instruction may be recorded to view or done live via an electronic platform in addition to face to face. <a href="#">Students could also model and demonstrate</a> their understanding either live through video or recorded if not possible face to face.</p>	<p><a href="#">Free Design Software options</a></p> <p><a href="#">Documenting artwork/phone camera</a></p>

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Tools to Try
<p>The idea that creativity happens in an isolated mind with little input from outside sources</p>	<p>Creativity inspired by collaborating with others and incorporating ideas and inspiration from multiple sources and <a href="#">points of view</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Cooperative/Collaborative Learning</a>: Group students, using guidelines for safety, to work towards a joint, productive activity in which each member of the group plays a valued part in the goal. A variety of fun grouping strategies to consider <a href="#">here</a>. Some group work could be done outdoors if not possible face to face indoors. Online platforms with breakout rooms could be incorporated.</p> <p><a href="#">Creativity through Limitation</a>: Limitations are crucial to achieving breakthrough innovation. Use them to your advantage. <a href="#">Obstacles boost brainpower.</a></p>	<p><a href="#">Connecting Creativity to Understanding</a></p> <p><a href="#">Mural</a>: a digital workspace for visual collaboration</p> <p><a href="#">Flipgrid</a>: a free program that will allow you and your students to post short videos online in response to different prompts, and to converse with each other via video. <a href="#">Here's a "how to" video</a></p> <p><a href="#">Screencastify</a>: Capture, edit and share videos in minutes!</p> <p><a href="#">Padlet</a>: Allows students to collaborate by posting notes and ideas on a bulletin board type platform</p> <p><a href="#">Getting creative with distance art lessons</a></p> <p><a href="#">Steal Like an Artist</a></p> <p><a href="#">Embrace the Shake</a></p>

Moving from less like...	Moving to more like...	Instructional Strategies	Resources and Tools to Try
Grading a work of art at the end of the assignment	Giving feedback and encouraging reflection throughout the process of making at each stage of the creative process, not just at the end.	<p><a href="#">Formative assessment</a>: Combine strategies for evaluating and critiquing work and process by self, in peer groups, and in final presentations. Consider providing guiding rubrics. Feedback provides students with tools for successfully engaging and creating in the arts. This can be done face to face, in a hybrid model incorporating technology or remotely through interactive handouts or telephone conversations.</p> <p><a href="#">Feedback</a> and <a href="#">Critique</a>: Important for this to be by self, peers, and the teacher.</p>	<p><a href="#">Making time for reflection</a></p> <p><a href="#">Arts Assessment for Learning</a></p>

**Resources to Support Diverse Learning Settings in Visual Arts**

Consider the neuro-emotional needs that students and teachers have that can be connected to art. [Resources.](#)

- [Virtual Art Show Resources](#)
- Links to [Arts Instructional Resources](#) from each state department of education
- [Adapting Arts to Online Learning](#) Resources
- NAEA [Remote Learning Toolkit](#)
- [ArtLab at Home](#)
- CDE’s [Learning Resource at Home](#) per content and [2020-2021 Planning Toolkit](#)
- [EQUITY RESOURCES](#), [SOCIAL JUSTICE](#), and [ANTI-RACIST RESOURCES](#) for Visual Art