

Recommendations for Fine Arts TEKS Revisions – August 2012
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“Historical and Cultural Relevance” strand:

It is recommended that “Relevance” be replaced with “Relationships” or “Connections” to create a stronger strand. “Relevance” seems to introduce a nebulous concept while the term “relationships” (or “connections”) introduces a more concrete, measureable, and “touchable” concept.

2. Have the correct vocabulary and terminology been used? Where could changes be made for accuracy and/or clarity?

The terms “diverse” and “diverse cultures” are used excessively throughout the TEKS in a “cut and paste” standard that is vague thus giving no direction to publishers, teachers, parents, or students as to what is expected to be learned.

“Others” is a vague term while “family, school, and community” is a specific term for those with whom the child has life experiences. Children view those who rear them--whether biological parents-- as “family.”

Art: Grade 4. Creative Expression. (2)(A)

Reword as follows: *“integrate ideas drawn from life experiences, including self, family, and community, to create original works of art.”*

“Others” is a vague term while “family, school, and community” is a specific term for those with whom the child has life experiences. Children tend to view those who rear them as “family.”

Art: Grade 5. Foundations: observation and perception. (1)(A)

Reword as follows: *“develop and communicate ideas drawn from life experiences, including self, family, and community, and from the imagination as sources for original works of art.”*

“Others” is a vague term while “family, school, and community” are specific terms for those with whom the child has life experiences. Children tend to view those who rear them as “family.”

The use of “global community” is not age appropriate since it is the family and not the global community with whom the young child identifies and has life experiences.

3. Are there specific areas that need to be reworked?

Dance TEKS for Grades K-8 are written in clusters. TEKS should be grade level specific with a progression of the mastery of skills so that publishers, teachers, parents, and students will know what knowledge and skills the student is to master each year.

It is recommended that Dance K-5 not be added because there already is little time for the current Fine Arts courses in the daily routine of students. More is not necessarily better.

If Dance 6-8 is added, it is recommended that it be a voluntary program rather than a required one.

For Music 6-8 it is recommended that, for clarity in SEs, separate TEKS be written for Vocal and for Instrumental.

4. Are the fine arts concept/content statements grade-level appropriate? Are important concepts missing at any grade level?

The Music TEKS are grade level appropriate but are still generic and vague in grades 6-8 and in the “Historical and Cultural” strand throughout. For detailed information, please refer to Question #5 and 8.

5. Are the Student Expectations (SEs) clear and specific?

The SEs in the Historical and Cultural Relevance are often vague and repetitive. To provide clarity about the SE, suggestions can be added at age appropriate levels to create progression in mastery of skills.

These suggestions can be preceded by the phrase “such as” when the learning activity is recommended and by the phrase “including” when the activity is required.

Suggestions for specificity are shown as follows:

MUSIC

“Historical and Cultural Relevance: the student relates music to history, society, and culture.”

- *Understand the development of American music (including country, country western, blues, folk, spiritual, jazz, musicals, rock and roll, stage or film, and gospel).*
- *Trace the evolution of American music (including country western, blues, spirituals, gospel, folk, jazz, Tejano, musicals, and rock and roll) and identify well-known musicians associated with each.*
- *Sing/play musical selections from American music (including jazz, blues, country western, folk, gospel, spirituals, Tejano, jazz, stage or film) and describe how they were influenced by the historical events of that era.*
- *Sing or play a variety of folk, ethnic, classical, and contemporary musical compositions*
- *Listen and describe music from a variety of*
 - *a. Styles (jazz, mariachi band, opera, musicals);*
 - *b. Periods (Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionism and Contemporary);and*
 - *c. Cultures including European, Native American, African American, Hispanic, and Asian.*
- *Identify and describe roles of musicians in various music settings and cultures.*
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- *Recognize key developments in the entertainment industry in the U.S., such as the introduction of silent movies, animation, radio and television broadcasting, and interactive video.*
- *Analyze ways in which theatre, television, and film play a part in our daily lives.*
- *Identify and compare how film, theatre, television, and electronic media productions influence values and behaviors.*
- *Identify types of early American theatre, such as melodrama and musical theatre.*
- *Describe the ways in which American history has been reflected in theatre (e.g., the ways in which the Industrial Revolution and slavery were portrayed in the minstrel show, the melodrama, and the musical).*
- *Identify and explain how technology has changed American theatre (e.g., how stage lighting has progressed from candlelight to gaslight to limelight to electrical light to digital light).*
- *Identify key figures, works, and trends in world theatrical history from various cultures and time periods.*
- *Analyze the impact of traditional and nontraditional theatre, film, television, and electronic media on society.*

ART

“Historical and Cultural Relevance: the student relates art to history, society, and culture.”

- *After reviewing a pre-selected work of art the student is asked: “How can you tell that these works of art belong to different places, cultures, and/or times?”*
- *After reviewing a pre-selected work of art the student is asked: “Where is this work of art taking place? What cultures/peoples are represented? What was happening in history at this time?”*
- *How do religion, race, and cultural values affect an art work?*
- *Describe how art plays a role in reflecting life (e.g., in photography, quilts, architecture).*
- *Identify and discuss the content of works of art in the past and present, focusing on the different cultures that have contributed to Texas’ history and art heritage.*
- *Research and describe the influence of religious groups on art and architecture, focusing primarily on buildings in Texas both past and present.*
- *Research and describe the influence of religious groups on art and architecture, focusing primarily on buildings in the U.S. both past and present.*
- *Identify and describe various fine, traditional, and folk arts from historical periods worldwide.*
- *Identify and compare works of art from various regions of the United States.*
- *View selected works of art from a major culture and observe changes in materials and styles over a period of time.*
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- *View selected works of art from a culture and describe how they have changed or not changed in theme and content over a period of time.*
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- *Understand the relationships between art and other academic disciplines (including history, science, language, math, literature, technology). For example:*
 - (1) How is a theatre production like a play?
- *Understand the relationships between theatre and other academic disciplines (including history, science, language, math, literature, technology). For example:*
 - (1) Identify the origin and development of various forms of dramatic literature throughout world history when viewing or reading a play.
- *Understand the relationships between dance and other academic disciplines (including history, science, language, math, literature, technology). For example:*
 - (1) How can an understanding of human anatomy and principles of physics help a dancer in his/her development of dance technique?

6. Are the subject areas aligned horizontally and vertically?

Music: Levels I-IV and Music Studies, Introduction paragraph #2

Remove the following statement: *“By reflecting on musical periods and styles, students understand music’s role in history and are able to participate successfully in a diverse society. Students analyze and evaluate and develop criteria for making critical judgments and informed choices.”*

This states that unless we understand the role of music, we are incapable of successfully surviving in the modern day world. This concept is not only an inaccurate statement but also is subjective and not measurable.

This entire paragraph was removed in grades K-8 but remains in Levels I-IV and Music Studies. It should be removed completely from the Music TEKS.

Music: Grades I-V and Music Studies. “Historical and Cultural Relevance” strand

“The student relates music to history, society and cultures.”

“Society” should be deleted so this description aligns with the other Music TEKS.

Dance: All levels. “Critical Evaluation and Response” strand

The standard for the integration of dance with other academic areas is listed under this strand while other Fine Arts courses are under “Historical and Cultural.” It is recommended that this standard be moved to “Historical and Cultural” for alignment with other Fine Arts courses.

7. Should consideration be given toward adding other courses at the high school level to provide more options for students?

The addition of Music Theory and Music History and other non-performance courses as separate TEKS under Music Studies strengthens the Fine Arts program.

After reviewing current offerings, I do not see a need to add further courses. We have an extensive array of course offerings.

8. Do you have any other suggestions for ways in which the Fine Arts TEKS can be improved?

American Contributions to the Arts

American artists have made major contributions in all areas of the Fine Arts yet almost nothing is found in the TEKS about the study of American...or Texan...arts and artists. However, much is said about studying the contributions of other “diverse cultures” yet is quite vague as to what that means.

America is a melting pot of immigrants who have brought rich heritages to our shores and become immersed in American culture. Those heritages have become interwoven into a beautiful, complex tapestry that is uniquely American. In the early years of our nation, America was considered a cultural second rate. Today we can feel proud of our cultural arts and our own artists. We should honor those who have been inspired by the broad range of heritages within our own borders and created our own world class American Fine Arts.

The TEKS need to be specific about studying the impact of immigration on the creation of American arts. Students should understand the evolution of American arts and some of the key artists in that evolution.

Following are several examples of how various cultures have influenced our arts.

Jewish immigrants influenced the American musical culture by implementing idioms from folk dances of their heritage. Aaron Copland, child of Lithuanian Jewish immigrants, used folk music in his “Fanfare of the Common Man.”

Elvis Presley’s Rock n’ Roll music was influenced by the gospel singing he heard in the African American churches as a child.

Cuban and Latin idioms were incorporated into Ernesto Lecuona’s “Malagueña From ‘Andalucia (Suite Espagnole).”

Melodies from Native American songs and the melody from the African American Spiritual, “Goin’ Home,” which was written during the years he lived in America.

Other American styles that have evolved from our varied cultural influences include jazz, blues, country, country western, and Tejano.

Fusion or Integration of Academic Content

The Fine Arts studies should be integrated or “fused” so that learning is not isolated to the facts taught in a class.

American culture, religion, politics, social, wars, education, and history have influenced and been influenced by the arts.

American music, art, dance, and theatre are inextricably linked. Students should explore and understand the relationships.

For example, Broadway musicals combined acting, dance, and singing in a new type of movie and play.

The musical film by MGM in 1951, “An American in Paris,” was inspired by George Gershwin’s symphonic tone poem by the same name. The film employed dance, music, and technology.

From the Jazz Age in the Roaring Twenties came the Charleston which changed the way that Americans danced.

Country and Country Western music inspired the popular Country Western dancing.

Melodies from classical music from previous periods and other countries are found in American pop music and theme songs for TV shows and movies yet few recognize the derivation of the melodies. For example, “I’m Always Chasing Rainbows” is a melody from Chopin’s “Fantasie Impromptu in C Sharp Minor,” while the theme music of “The Lone Ranger” TV/radio episodes is from Rossini’s “William Tell Overture.”

It is recommended that Fine Arts teachers work in tandem with teachers from other academic fields to integrate student learning. It is important for students to understand the connection of their studies to the larger perspective of the “real world.”

The Curriculum Standards should specify the integration of such subjects as music, ELAR, and Social Studies (American history for grades 5, 8, and 11 and Texas history for grades 4 and 7, World History, etc.). The same can be done with the other Fine Arts areas. The suggestions can be modified to suit various grade levels and available class time.

- *Research and write a summary about the impact of immigration on the American arts including these well known music composers: Scott Joplin (“Maple Leaf Rag”), Aaron Copland (“Fanfare for the Common Man”), Ernesto Lecuona (“Malagueña From ‘Andalucia [Suite Espagnole]”), George Gershwin(“Rhapsody in Blue”--“Three Piano Pieces”-“Porgy and Bess”), William Grant Still (“Afro-American Symphony”--“Five Piano*
- *Using writing skills learned in ELAR classes, prepare a short written summary on the life and works of famous American musicians from selected periods in American history, such as Samuel Barber, Aaron Copland, John Philip Sousa, Stephen Foster, Irving Berlin, Duke Ellington, W.C. Handy, George Gershwin, Leonard Bernstein, and Scott Joplin (Texan).*
- *Sing/play important examples of music from various periods throughout American history including “Yankee Doodle” and “Star Spangled Banner.”*
<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter113/ch113a.html>)-u0

