

# Princeton Charter School

## 8 The Arts Curriculum

### 8.1 The Arts Program Overview

The arts are a fundamental component of the educational program at PCS. The curriculum includes visual arts, music, theater/drama, and dance. Creative writing as well as some elements of drama are integrated into the language arts curriculum. Following the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for the Visual and Performing Arts, our goal is to achieve art literacy for all students, i.e., to educate not only providers, but also recipients of the arts [*Literacy in the Arts: An Imperative for New Jersey Schools*, October 1989].

Arts education is best accomplished through participatory experiences. All PCS students actively “make art” from the earliest years. For example, in music students are provided with choral singing experience, as well as age-appropriate instrumental instruction. All students learn to read music and the rudiments of music theory. They learn composed music and also explore the principles of combining sounds through their own improvisation and composition activities. In visual arts, students learn the elements of drawing, painting, and sculpture. A variety of techniques for creating two or three-dimensional art are taught; creative explorations coexist with instruction in specific techniques.

In addition to the “art making” component, students learn the elements of each art form’s language – the vocabulary, the grammar, and the syntax of music, visual art, drama, and dance. Differences and similarities among examples of the arts from around the world are analyzed. Uses of the arts, and conventions and fashions in the arts are discussed in conjunction with the study of art history. Students learn how to use the acquired knowledge, art vocabulary, and analytical skills to develop an aesthetic appreciation of the arts.

Princeton is fortunate to have McCarter Theater, the Princeton University Art Museum, the Westminster Conservatory of Music, the Princeton Ballet School, the Arts Council of Princeton, and world-class artists. Whenever possible and appropriate, these resources are used in the Arts curriculum.

## 8.2 New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in the Visual and Performing arts

The Princeton Charter School program in the arts complies with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in the visual and performing arts. These standards are listed below, together with some examples of associated activities.

**Standard 1.1: Aesthetics** *All students will use aesthetic knowledge in the creation of and in response to dance, music, theater, and visual art.*

By the end of 4th grade, PCS students learn basic vocabulary, grammar, and syntax of the arts. By the end of 8th grade, students use the languages of the arts to evaluate aesthetic qualities of art works.

**Standard 1.2: Creation and Performance** *All students will utilize those skills, media, methods, and technologies appropriate to each art form in the creation, performance, and presentation of dance, music, theater, and visual art.*

**Standard 1.3: Elements and Principles** *All students will demonstrate an understanding of the elements and principles of dance, music, theater, and visual art.*

PCS students receive instruction in and actively participate in making music, dancing, staging theatrical productions, and creating two- and three-dimensional art works.

**Standard 1.4: Critique** *All students will develop, apply and reflect upon knowledge of the process of critique.*

PCS students use the languages of the arts to describe and evaluate art works based on observation, analysis, and interpretation.

**Standard 1.5: History/Culture** *All students will understand and analyze the role, development, and continuing influence of the arts in relation to world cultures, history, and society.*

Art history is an integral part of the history curriculum at PCS. By the end of 4th grade, students learn about the arts in different parts of the world during various historical periods. By the end of the 8th grade, students learn about significant artists and art works in dance, music, theater, and visual arts.

**Standard 1.6** *All students will develop design, artistic, and technological skill for planning the form and function of space, structures, objects, sound, and events.*

PCS students participate in designing elements of the indoor (classrooms and common areas) and outdoor (garden and playground) spaces.

### **8.3 The Arts - Draft Student Outcomes by Grade Level**

The following list encapsulates what each student will be able to do at the end of the specified grade level.

#### **8.3.1 Arts Outcomes: Grade Three**

By the end of grade three all students will be able to:

##### **Aesthetic Awareness**

- Discuss the music they heard at a concert attended as a field trip;
- Demonstrate body movement skills they learned at school;
- Explain why they like a piece of artwork;
- Discuss how the illustrations in a folk tale enrich the story;

##### **Artistic Skill**

- Sing in unison and in rounds in a choir concert;
- Read, sing, and play a treble clef piece on a classroom instrument;
- Show improved attention to composition and form in their visual artwork;
- Follow directions during body movement instruction;

##### **Creating Art**

- Enter a two-dimensional visual artwork in a school art show;
- Create a three-dimensional form through paper folding;
- Improvise a piece on a classroom instrument;

##### **Critiquing Art**

- Discuss how well the illustrations in a folk tale match the story;
- Recognize when that when all the students in the class are singing in unison it sounds better than if a few members lag behind or charge ahead;

##### **Art History**

- Read a biography of an artist and comment on the artist's work;

##### **Elements of Design**

- Design a piece of artwork using a rough draft followed by a final draft;
- Discuss the difference between singing in unison and in rounds;
- Demonstrate good use of space performing a sequence of body movement steps;

### **8.3.2 Arts Outcomes: Grade Four**

By the end of grade four all students will be able to:

#### **Aesthetic Awareness**

- Discuss the music they heard at a concert attended as a field trip;
- Demonstrate body movement skills they learned at school;
- Discuss the composition of a visual artwork and explain what they believe the artist is trying to convey;
- Discuss what Native American art reveals about their culture;

#### **Artistic Skill**

- Master a six-note song on their recorder;
- Read, sing, and play a treble clef piece on a classroom instrument;
- Show improved attention to composition and form in their visual artwork;
- Sketch different types of lines with a pencil;
- Follow directions during body movement instruction;

#### **Creating Art**

- Enter a piece of visual artwork in a school art show;
- Improvise a piece on a recorder or classroom instrument;

#### **Critiquing Art**

- Discuss the differences between two artists from different periods interpretations of similar objects;
- Recognize when that when all the students in the class are playing their recorders in unison it sounds better than if a few members lag behind or charge ahead;

#### **Art History**

- Identify three artists studied and their styles or periods;

#### **Elements of Design**

- Design a piece of artwork using a rough draft followed by a final draft;
- Discuss the difference between singing in unison and in rounds;
- Demonstrate good use of space performing a sequence of body movement steps;
- Play a recorder in a group to accompany a singer;

### 8.3.3 Arts Outcomes: Grade Five

By the end of grade five all students will be able to:

#### **Aesthetic Awareness**

- Discuss the artwork they saw at a museum attended on a field trip;
- Demonstrate body movement skills they learned at school;
- Discuss the visual artwork from different ancient cultures including what the art reveals about the culture;
- Discuss what Native American art reveals about their culture;
- Discuss what emotions they believe a musician is trying to convey in a piece listened to by the class;

#### **Artistic Skill**

- Perform in a public concert singing *divisi* and in unison;
- Read, sing, and play on a classroom instrument, treble and bass clef parts;
- Show improved attention to composition and form in their visual artwork;
- Hold a drawing pencil correctly to sketch different types of lines;
- Follow directions for longer sequences during body movement instruction;

#### **Creating Art**

- Enter a work of art in a school art show;
- Improvise a piece on a classroom instrument;

#### **Critiquing Art**

- Discuss the differences between two artists from different periods interpretations of similar objects;
- Recognize when that when all the students in the class are singing their part in time, it sounds better than if a few members lag behind or charge ahead;

#### **Art History**

- Identify three artists studied and their styles or periods;
- Identify three composers and their compositional styles;
- Recognize the differences among the ancient art of the Egyptians, other Mediterranean cultures, the Chinese, the Indian subcontinent, and the Americas;

#### **Elements of Design**

- Design a piece of artwork using a rough draft followed by a final draft;
- Discuss the roles of the different parts in a choral piece;
- Demonstrate good use of space performing a sequence of body movement steps;
- Sing or play a solo piece during a music class;

### 8.3.4 Arts Outcomes: Grade Six

By the end of grade six all students will be able to:

#### **Aesthetic Awareness**

- Discuss the elements of a dramatic production they attended as a field trip;
- Discuss the action of a play read in English class;
- Demonstrate body movement skills they learned at school;
- Discuss the visual artwork of the Greeks and Romans and how it differed from the art of more ancient Mediterranean cultures;
- Discuss how the dynamics of a piece of music are used to convey different backgrounds and emotions;

#### **Artistic Skill**

- Perform in a public concert singing *divisi* and in unison;
- Read, sing, and play on a classroom instrument, treble and bass clef parts;
- Show improved attention to composition, form, and technique in their visual artwork;
- Hold a drawing pencil correctly to sketch different types of lines;
- Follow directions for longer sequences during body movement instruction;

#### **Creating Art**

- Enter a drawing or painting in a school art show;
- Improvise a piece on a classroom instrument;

#### **Critiquing Art**

- Discuss the differences between two artists from the same period's interpretations of similar objects;
- Recognize when that when all the students in the class are singing their part in time, it sounds better than if a few members lag behind or charge ahead;
- Discuss how the scenery and choreography of a dramatic production enhance its effectiveness;

#### **Art History**

- Identify three artists studied and their styles or periods;
- Identify three composers studied and their compositional styles;
- Discuss ancient Greek sculpture and architecture;

#### **Elements of Design**

- Design a piece of artwork using a rough draft followed by a final draft;
- Design a tessellation;
- Discuss the roles of the different parts in a choral piece;
- Demonstrate good use of space performing a sequence of body movement steps;
- Sing or play a solo piece during a music class;

### 8.3.5 Arts Outcomes: Grade Seven

By the end of grade seven all students will be able to:

#### **Aesthetic Awareness**

- Discuss the elements of a dramatic production they attended as a field trip;
- Discuss the action of a play read in English class;
- Demonstrate body movement skills they learned at school;
- Discuss the visual artwork of the Greeks and Romans and how it differed from the art of more ancient Mediterranean cultures;
- Discuss how the dynamics of a piece of music are used to convey different backgrounds and emotions;

#### **Artistic Skill**

- Perform in a public concert singing *divisi* and in unison;
- Read, sing, and play on a classroom instrument, treble and bass clef parts;
- Show improved attention to composition, form, and technique in their visual artwork;
- Hold a drawing pencil correctly to sketch different types of lines;
- Compose and paint a watercolor;
- Follow directions for longer sequences during body movement instruction;

#### **Creating Art**

- Enter a drawing or painting in a school art show;
- Create two-dimensional art in two different media;
- Improvise a piece on a classroom instrument;

#### **Critiquing Art**

- Discuss the differences between two artists from the same period's interpretations of similar objects;
- Recognize when that when all the students in the class are singing their part in time, it sounds better than if a few members lag behind or charge ahead;
- Discuss how the scenery and choreography of a dramatic production enhance its effectiveness;

#### **Art History**

- Identify three artists studied and their styles or periods;
- Identify three composers studied and their compositional styles;
- Discuss ancient Greek sculpture and architecture and compare it with the artwork and architecture of Medieval Europe;
- Discuss how the artwork of the Islamic world illuminates some of the religious beliefs of Islam;

#### **Elements of Design**

- Design a piece of artwork using a rough draft followed by a final draft;
- Design a tessellation;
- Discuss the roles of the different parts in a choral piece;
- Demonstrate good use of space performing a sequence of body movement steps;
- Sing or play a solo piece during a music class;

## 8.4 The Arts: Studio Art and Art History

### Studio Art

Each year, students explore the elements of art, focusing on line, texture, space, shape/form, and color/value. In each year of study, students learn techniques specific to three main areas of studio art: drawing, painting, and sculpting. Having gained mastery of the techniques essential to these main areas, students may also be introduced to other areas of studio art, such as printmaking, ceramics, and design. Students are expected to produce, in each successive year, works of art worthy of exhibit in a student art show. In addition, in each year of study, students will produce a work of art linked to their studies in another humanities course at PCS: in grades K to 3, students will illustrate a folk tale (from the Americas, Africa, and other cultures), producing in each successive year illustrations of increasing sophistication and complexity; in grades 4 to 7, students will reproduce an element of the art from each of the following cultures: Egypt, Greece, China or Japan, and India; in grade 8, students will produce sculptures of historical figures or forms.

### Drawing

**Objective:** To develop the ability to draw using a variety of techniques and materials. To meet this objective, class time is devoted to perspective, value, line quality, and composition.

**Grades K to 3:** Students in these grades learn the techniques necessary to creating a self-portrait, a still life, a story illustration, and a figure drawing. Students learn pencil, colored pencil, and craypas techniques in grades K to 3. Discrete projects, such as creating masks, stencils, montages, collages, hand puppets, and so forth, may be undertaken as a means of developing small motor skills in artistic expression. These projects serve to deepen studies of folklore and culture undertaken in other PCS courses.

**Grades 4 to 6:** Students in these grades learn the techniques necessary to creating value studies, realistic (landscapes, portraits, etc.) and still life drawings, and gesture drawings. Students continue learn pencil, colored pencil, craypas techniques in grades 4 to 6.

**Grades 7 to 8:** Students in these grades students learn the techniques necessary to perspective drawing (one and two point), portrait drawing, and line drawing. Students learn pencil, colored pencil, charcoal, craypas, and pen and ink techniques.

### Painting

**Objective:** To develop the ability to paint as a visual means of communicating and recording images and designs. To meet this objective, class time is devoted

to the study of color and color mixing, the use of brushes and other tools, and the use of different media such as tempera, acrylic, and watercolor.

**Grades K to 3:** Students in these grades learn the rudiments of painting with brush utilizing tempera paints. In these grades students may paint realistic portraits of animals and either landscapes, cityscapes, or seascapes.

**Grades 4 to 6:** Students in these grades refine their brush technique and begin to utilize watercolor and acrylic paints and expand their repertoire of approaches to include hard and soft edge, realist and abstract representation. In these grades students may paint either interiors and exteriors, or still life, and further develop their ability to paint animals and landscapes.

**Grades 7 to 8:** Students in these grades continue to refine their brush technique and to utilize watercolor and acrylic paints and may add either impressionist, cubist, or surrealist representation to their repertoire of approaches.

## **Sculpture**

**Objective:** To develop the ability to render three-dimensional art projects in clay and in various media. Students will learn to incorporate the elements and principles of art as it applies to sculpture, such as: line, shape, value, texture, form, balance, movement, positive and negative space.

**Grades K to 3:** Students in these grades will learn to transform two-dimensional objects into three dimensions using paper and clay. Students will begin to acquire basic techniques and skills such as cutting, gluing, and bonding; to create with clay through ‘pinch, pull, and pat,’ and to begin to understand the rudiments of solid construction.

**Grades 4 to 6:** Students in these grades will work primarily in clay but will also be introduced to other media (wire, wood, and cardboard). Students will refine their techniques and learn both additive and subtractive sculpture techniques.

**Grades 7 to 8:** Students in these grades will learn to convert drawings into three-dimensional forms. Students will refine their techniques and learn to create objects of aesthetic value.

## **Art History**

Art history is an integral part of the PCS art course. In studio art, students learn about the artwork of acknowledged masters to gain insight into established artistic techniques and forms. Great works of art are also used as models, and may be copied by the students as they hone and develop their own art skills. In studying art history, students learn about works of art as ‘cultural artifacts,’ examining art

works in relationship to the historical factors that shaped them. Finally, through the study of art history, PCS seeks to develop in students a firm sense of aesthetics.

**Grades K to 8:** Utilizing an extensive collection of slides, PCS exposes all its students to a range of masterworks from Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Far East. Each year, the art teacher, in consultation with the Art Curriculum Committee, chooses a set of representative slides. These slides are shown to all students in all grades, though to achieve different objectives. Thus, whereas children in grades K to 3 might examine a particular work of art, e.g., Monet’s “The Artist’s Garden at Giverny,” for its use of color and brush technique, students in grades 6 to 8 will be expected to understand the work in terms of its place within the history of art, its specific cultural context, its intrinsic value and the ‘market forces’ that create its present value.

**Museum Trips:** Utilizing the extensive museum resources in Princeton and in the Princeton area (e.g., Princeton University Art Museum; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Metropolitan Museum of Art), students will gain direct exposure to masterworks from different periods of history and executed in a variety of media. These visits will be carefully integrated with discussion and activities held in the school’s art classroom.

## 8.5 Music Program

In the music program at Princeton Charter School, students study different musical traditions, with an emphasis on the elements of music and musical forms. Through listening to, performing, and studying music, students develop a basic understanding and appreciation of music. The curriculum is based on the music curriculum in the *Core Knowledge Sequence* developed by the Core Knowledge Foundation. The goals of the program are to encourage the musical interests and talents of every child by:

- fostering an interest in and love of music;
- helping children develop the ability to express themselves musically;
- promoting sensitivity to musical beauty and basic understanding of musical form; and
- acquiring the ability to read music and understand basic music theory.

Students learn to recognize rhythms and melodies, and to reproduce them. They learn musical notation not only as a way of recording music, but also as a way of revealing the structure of a musical piece. They learn how patterns of repetition, variation, counterpoint, and harmony develop simple melodies into more complex ones. Students study the essentials of western musical history and will be able to associate a musical piece from their repertoire with the composer and with the period to which it belongs. They are introduced to music from other cultures and its influence on our own.

Students gain basic music literacy through ear training, sight singing, singing in chorus, learning musical notation and theory, and studying the history of music. Through the years, students develop a listening repertoire of vocal and instrumental compositions selected to reinforce the students' knowledge of musical styles, periods, and composers.

Performance components solidify and reinforce musical literacy as they give students the joy of creating their own music.

### **History of Music and Listening Repertoire**

Early grades are introduced to the origins of music through folk music and songs. They study a variety of instruments including, instruments from different cultures. The fourth grade repertoire includes medieval/Renaissance, Baroque, and early classical music. The fifth grade studies the classical period and the early romantic period. The sixth grade studies the romantic period and twentieth century music, including jazz. Seventh and eighth grades concentrate on the development of musical forms: sonata form, orchestral, chamber, and instrumental forms used by different composers in different periods.

Every year, the repertoire includes different composers, musicians, genres and groups of instruments. The variety of compositions include instrumental, orchestral, vocal, and choral pieces. Performance pieces should be chosen to complement and expand the listening repertoire and to build musical knowledge. When teachers introduce a new piece, they emphasize such features as the key, instruments, style, composer, mode, tempo, expression and dynamics.

### **Music Theory and Notation**

Starting with quarter notes in first grade, students accumulate sufficient musical notation so that by grade four, they are able to sing simple melodies from scores. In later grades students continue to learn musical notation; recognize chords and intervals; and learn terms and abbreviations for tempo and dynamics.

### **Ear Training and Rhythmic Training**

Kindergarten students begin ear and rhythmic training by recognizing and moving to a steady beat, by discriminating between high and low pitches, and by recognizing the difference between sounds that are fast or slow, loud or soft, and long or short. As students progress in school they learn to echo and create simple patterns and melodies; to recognize harmony; to sing rounds; and to recognize themes and variations. By grade four, students listen to music with attention to such elements as rhythm, melody, harmony, form, and timbre. As the students in the upper grades study different musical periods and forms, they increase their understanding of how the elements of music create the effect or mood.

## **Vocal and Instrumental Music and Performances**

Students progress from singing nursery rhymes and simple songs in Kindergarten to rounds, canons, and polyharmonic choral singing as they learn to sing and play in unison.

Performances give students the opportunity to apply their knowledge to create music. Singing and playing solidify students' understanding of rhythm, intervals, chords, note values, major and minor scales, and musical notation. Some examples are learning to play a piece in different keys, and playing or singing the individual lines of a polyharmonic piece. Group practices and performances develop ensemble skills as students learn to follow the conductor and to be aware of the other musicians.