

## Arts

### Visual Art

The sixth grade visual arts curriculum quickly reviews knowledge, communication and technical skills and successful learning behaviors explored during the year-long fifth grade fine arts program and then assertively moves to extend student visual arts understanding by exploring the expressive "Power of the Artist". The curriculum is constructed to encourage students to investigate ways in which seemingly "non-visual" phenomena become the subject matter of visual expression and are given artistic form. This is accomplished by exploring the formal ways in which artists create meaning in their work. Success is evaluated by the artist's ability to clearly communicate their meaning/s to an audience.

- **Honing Observational Skill:**  
Following-up on our fifth grade program, students extend their ability to observe their world closely and accurately. Students are encouraged to continuously check the validity of their observations.
- **Skill and Subtlety in Recording Observations:**  
Students review and extend their skills and increase their craftsmanship while manipulating various media with increasing accuracy, sensitivity and expressiveness.
- **Expressing the Non-Visible; the Real Subject of the Work of Art:**  
Students are directed to create compositions which express particular emotions, ideas, non-visual sensory perceptions (olfactory, textural, aural, taste and/or temperature), personalities and character by controlling the ways in which observable phenomena can be variously drawn (or painted or sculptured) to evoke disparate meanings. Creating the "character" of an imaginary creature is one way that students have addressed this inquiry. Students move beyond the literal to express ideas in symbolic form.
- **Connecting the Imagined to the Student's Experience of their World:**  
Investigating the emotions of mythological characters and connecting these with one's own experiences, especially in regard to the physical manifestation and appearance of various emotional states.
- **The Attitude and Atmosphere of Space--Background as Context:**  
Knowingly choosing the elements of the composition to refine and extend meaning. Manipulating each (and every) element of a composition in order to heighten meaning. Awareness and use of proportion and scale, texture and pattern, light and shadow, clarity and obscurity, direction, shape, tonal emphasis and color, to increase expressive accuracy and depth.

- **Clarity of Communication: The Role of the Audience in the Artistic Experience:**  
Using the visual arts to create substance for imaginary phenomena. Creating a sense of believability for the absurd. Allowing others to share in the power of the artist's ideas and imaginings. Knowing when a work is finished and expression is complete.
- **The Illusion of Depth on a 2-Dimensional Surface:**  
Becoming cognizant of and creating shallow and deep space and an object's volume/mass on a 2-dimensional surface. Identifying the light source and its "effect" on all elements of a composition.
- **Connections to Other Art Forms:**  
How the artistic potential and lessons of drama, literature, dance and music shed light on visual expression.
- **Student Investment/Behavior:**  
Promoting respectful and productive interactions among students. Using the room, its tools and materials, appropriately. Setting-up for the period's work and cleaning- up after oneself. Using class time effectively and efficiently.  
Approaching work with increasing self-motivation and independence. Meeting deadlines. Active participation during critiques and discussions. Making a personal investment in the outcome of one's artwork, going beyond the minimum requirements of a project: Creating personal meaning in the activity of art making. Taking the time to fully express an idea, exceeding pre-conceived limitations.