

Arts in the Primary Years Programme

Arts are integral to the PYP. They are a powerful mode of communication through which students explore and construct a sense of self and develop an understanding of the world around them. Arts provide students with a wide range of opportunities and means to respond to their experiences and engage with historical, social and cultural perspectives. Learning about and through arts is fundamental to the development of the whole child, promoting creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving skills and social interactions.

In the PYP, arts are identified as dance, drama, music and visual arts. Arts promote attitudes such as empathy and appreciation, and skills such as analysis, that help us to see the uniqueness of each person as well as explore the commonalities that connect us. Through engaging with and creating artworks, learners are encouraged to reconsider familiar concepts and think about issues of culture and identity. By responding to the work of other artists, they are invited to situate their own creativity within a broader context. (International Baccalaureate Organization 126)

Two common strands – creating and responding – have been identified that apply across the different art forms and define the critical artistic processes. These intrinsically connected strands are concept-driven and have been designed to interact with each other, working together to support the overall development of the students. Between each of these interconnected strands, there is a balance between the acquisition of knowledge and skills, and the development of conceptual understanding. (International Baccalaureate Organization 132)

At OSC Primary students have specialist classes in Visual Arts from Kindergarten to Grade 5; and Performing Arts from Preschool to Grade 5. Learning is organized into Units of Inquiry which are designed to promote students inquiring into a variety of art specific skills and concepts. While most of the units are taught separate from the Programme of Inquiry, some units are building on the learning that is taking place within the homeroom. The purpose for this is to promote a transdisciplinary programme that enriches students' conceptual understandings in a variety of contexts. Please visit the OSC Primary School websites available on www.osc.lk for more detailed information about each unit.

The art curriculum provides opportunities for students to:

- develop proficiency as artists
- acquire audience skills such as listening and viewing responsively
- interpret and present their own or others' works to a range of audiences
- evaluate the different roles of artists in society such as to entertain, provoke debate or challenge views and perceptions
- create and critique art work and performances using a selection of tools and techniques
- express feelings, ideas, experiences and beliefs in a variety of ways
- improve gross and fine motor skills

Arts concepts and skills

Arts concepts and skills are divided into two arts strands briefly described below.

Arts strands	
Responding	<p>The process of <i>responding</i> provides students with opportunities to respond to their own and other artists' works and processes, and in so doing develop the skills of critical analysis, interpretation, evaluation, reflection and communication. Students will demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the concepts, methods and elements of visual arts and music, including using specialized language. Students consider their own and other artists' works in context and from different perspectives in order to construct meaning and inform their own future works and processes.</p> <p>The <i>responding</i> strand is not simply about reflecting; responding may include creative acts and encompasses presenting, sharing and communicating one's own understanding. By responding to their own artwork and that of others, students become more mindful of their own artistic development and the role that arts play in the world around them.</p>
Creating	<p>The process of <i>creating</i> provides students with opportunities to communicate distinctive forms of meaning, develop their technical skills, take creative risks, solve problems and visualize consequences. Students are encouraged to draw on their imagination, experiences and knowledge of materials and processes as starting points for creative exploration. They can make connections between their work and that of other artists to inform their thinking and to provide inspiration. Both independently and collaboratively, students participate in creative processes through which they can communicate ideas and express feelings. The <i>creating</i> strand provides opportunities for students to explore their personal interests, beliefs and values and to engage in a personal artistic journey.</p>

(International Baccalaureate Organization 2)

Learning continuum

The IBO recognizes that learning in arts is a developmental process and that the phases through which a learner passes are not always linear or age related. For this reason, overall expectations are presented in a continuum divided into phases for each of the two strands of arts: responding and creating. The overall expectations provide a summary of the understandings and subsequent learning being developed in each phase within a strand.

Responding, overall expectations

Phase 1

Learners show an understanding that the different forms of arts are forms of expression to be enjoyed. They know that dance, drama, music and visual arts use symbols and representations to convey meaning. They have a concept of being an audience of different art forms and display awareness of sharing art with others. They are able to interpret and respond to different art forms, including their own work and that of others.

Phase 2

Learners show an understanding that ideas, feelings and experiences can be communicated through arts. They recognize that their own art practices and artwork may be different from others. They are beginning to reflect on and learn from their own stages of creating arts. They are aware that artworks may be created with a specific audience in mind.

Phase 3

Learners show an understanding that issues, beliefs and values can be explored in arts. They demonstrate an understanding that there are similarities and differences between different cultures, places and times. They analyse their own work and identify areas to revise to improve its quality. They use strategies, based on what they know, to interpret arts and understand the role of arts in our world.

Phase 4

Learners show an understanding that throughout different cultures, places and times, people have innovated and created new modes in arts. They can analyse different art forms and identify common or recurring themes or issues. They recognize that there are many ways to enjoy and interpret arts. They accept feedback from others. (International Baccalaureate Organization 9)

Creating, Overall expectations

Phase 1

Learners show an understanding that they can express themselves by creating artworks in dance, drama, music and visual arts. They know that creating in arts can be done on their own or with others. They are aware that inspiration to create in arts comes from their own experiences and imagination. They recognize that they use symbols and representations to convey meaning in their work.



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Phase 2

Learners show an understanding that they can use arts to communicate their ideas, feelings and experiences. They use strategies in their work to enhance the meaning conveyed and to make it more enjoyable for others. They are aware that their work can provoke different responses from others. They understand the value of working individually and collaboratively when creating different art forms.

Phase 3

Learners show that, as artists, they can influence thinking and behavior through the arts they create. They think critically about their work and recognize that their personal interests, beliefs and values can inform their creative work. They show an understanding of the relationship between their work and that of others.

Phase 4

Learners show an understanding that their own creative work in dance, drama and visual arts can be interpreted and appreciated in different ways. They explore different media and begin to innovate in arts. They consider the feedback from others in improving their work. They recognize that creating in arts provide a sense of accomplishment, not only in the process, but also in providing them with a way to understand the world. (International Baccalaureate Organization 14)



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Works Cited

Making the PYP happen: A curriculum framework for international primary education. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization, 2009.

Primary Years Programme Arts scope and sequence. Cardiff: International Baccalaureate Organization, 2009.