

# Media Arts

## What are Media Arts

Media Arts involves students engaging with communication technologies and cross-disciplinary art-forms to design, produce, distribute and interact with a range of print, audio, screen-based or hybrid artworks.

List the different types of media arts that you can identify.

Compare different types of media arts in different cultures, places and times

List the media arts teaching you have seen in schools.

Compare your experiences of media arts in schools with what is in the *Australian Curriculum: The Arts*.

## What do we teach about Media arts?

Learning in Media Arts involves students learning to engage with communication technologies and cross-disciplinary art-forms to design, produce, distribute and interact with a range of print, audio, screen-based or hybrid artworks. Students explore, view, analyse and participate in media culture from a range of viewpoints and contexts. They acquire skills and processes to work in a range of forms and styles. Students learn to reflect critically on their own and others' media arts experiences and evaluate media artworks, cultures and contexts. They express, conceptualise and communicate through their media artworks with increasing complexity and aesthetic understanding.

Making in Media Arts involves using communications technologies to design, produce and distribute media artworks.

Responding in Media Arts involves students learning to explore, view, analyse and participate in media culture.

In both Making and Responding students engage with the key concepts, story principles and media elements (technical and symbolic).

<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/thearts/learning-in-media-arts>

In Media Arts students learn to use:

- ◆ Key concepts
- ◆ Technical and Symbolic Elements of Media Arts within established and emerging media conventions and technologies
- ◆ Story Principles
- ◆ Viewpoints\*
- ◆ Media Forms

Students develop knowledge and understanding of five key concepts:

<b>Key Concepts</b>	
<b>media languages</b>	<b>Media languages</b> The ways we tell stories in media arts through codes and conventions
<b>technologies</b>	<b>Technologies</b> The tools and processes which are essential for producing, accessing and distributing media
<b>institutions</b>	<b>Institutions</b> The organisations that enable and constrain media production and use
<b>audiences</b>	<b>Audiences</b> Audiences for whom media arts products are made and who respond as consumers, citizens and creative individuals
<b>representation</b>	<b>Representation</b> The act of representing or constructing a character, place, idea or image based on shared social values and beliefs

Each Media Arts lesson needs to engage directly with making and responding.

Each Media Arts lesson needs to engage directly with some or all of these five key concepts.



## Elements of Media Arts (Technical and Symbolic)

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<b>space</b>	working together to create meaning in different contexts and forms for different purposes.
<b>time</b>	
<b>movement</b>	
<b>sound and lighting</b>	

### Elements of Media Arts

Fundamental building blocks of Media Arts learning

## Principles of Story

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The elements of media arts are combined and shaped using story principles of structure, intent, characters, setting, points of view and genre conventions.

Review other units where you have explored the Principles of Story.

Story is also important in Drama. Connect with the way story is described there.

## Media Forms

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In Media Arts students create and analyse forms such as film, news report, documentary, advertisement, music video, animation, video games and/or a combination of these.

## Viewpoints

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In both Making and Responding, students learn that meanings can be generated from different viewpoints and that these shift according to different world encounters.

As students make, investigate or critique media artworks, as producers and consumers of media arts they may ask and answer questions to interrogate the producers' meanings and the consumers' interpretations. Meanings and interpretations are informed by contexts of societies, cultures and histories, and an understanding of how elements, materials, skills and processes are used. These questions provide the basis for making informed critical judgments about their own media artworks and the media artworks they see, hear, interact with and consume as audiences.

Each Media Arts lesson needs to engage directly with these Elements of Media Arts, the Principles of Story and Viewpoints.

## Skills, Techniques and Processes

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Skills	Techniques	Processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Three stages of production:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ pre-production (including scriptwriting, storyboarding, sketching designs, planning, research)</li><li>◆ production (including capturing, recording, directing)</li><li>◆ post-production: (including mixing, editing, assembling, laying out, distributing)</li></ul></li><li>◆ Critical thinking and creative processes</li><li>◆ Collaborate in creative teams</li><li>◆ Analytically respond to, and interact with context and audience</li><li>◆ apply key concepts, story principles, and media (symbolic and technical) elements</li><li>◆ design, produce and distribute and analyse media artworks</li><li>◆ learn and use the established and emerging techniques and practices for creating within different media forms, known as the media convention</li></ul>		

## Materials

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<b>Materials of Media Arts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ images, sound and text and the technologies used to create them.</li><li>◆ equipment, props, costumes and sets in production.</li></ul>
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Build on and extend media as viewing in English and as Technology process in Technology and Enterprise

Recognise what is distinctive about the arts in an aesthetic frame

## Unpacking Media Arts Technical and Symbolic Elements

A text may be defined as multi-modal when it combines two or more semiotic systems.

There are five semiotic systems in total:

1. Linguistic: comprising aspects such as vocabulary, generic structure and the grammar of oral and written language
2. Visual: comprising aspects such as colour, vectors and viewpoint in still and moving images
3. Audio: comprising aspects such as volume, pitch and rhythm of music and sound effects
4. Gestural: comprising aspects such as movement, speed and stillness in facial expression and body language
5. Spatial: comprising aspects such as proximity, direction, position of layout and organisation of objects in space.'

Michèle Anstey and Geoff Bull

[http://www.curriculum.edu.au/leader/helping\\_teachers\\_to\\_explore\\_multimodal\\_texts\\_31522.html?issueID=12141](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/leader/helping_teachers_to_explore_multimodal_texts_31522.html?issueID=12141)

It is important that our students develop:

- ◆ Knowledge and understanding about reading and writing multimodal texts that are delivered in different ways (paper, live and digital electronic).
- ◆ Knowledge of the five semiotic systems from which a multimodal text can be composed.
- ◆ Metalanguage that facilitates the analysis, discussion and understanding of how multimodal texts work.
- ◆ Explicit pedagogies that make the processes of reading and writing multimodal texts transparent.
- ◆ Ensure that the school has a balanced, school-wide approach to the teaching of literacy and multimodal texts.

## Examples of visual language

Film, television and moving images use different ways of showing us visual information. For example they use framing, angles and shots:

Wide Shot	Low Angle	Movement
Medium	High	Pan
Two shot	Eye level	Tilt
Close up		Track
Extreme Close up		Zoom

We teach students this symbolic language.



As with the Visual Arts in Media Arts we teach students to use in their Media Arts making and Responding:

Visual Elements: line, shape, texture, colour, tone/value, 2D, 3D and 4D form and space

Principles of Design: balance, contrast, emphasis, harmony, repetition, unity, variety, movement, scale/proportion, pattern, rhythm, contrast

Students may not be consciously aware of these semiotic conventions and you will need to teach them explicitly.

Learning the technical and symbolic elements of the Media Arts is learning Media Language

## Unpacking Key Understandings in Media Arts

The five Key Understandings of Media Arts need to be taught in age and development appropriate ways.

For example, we can unpack the concepts

### Institutions

Focusing on the Institutions of the Media considers:

- ◆ Who controls the media?
- ◆ Who makes the decisions about what is seen/heard/valued?
- ◆ Why is this important?

### Audience

Each media product has a specific audience and purpose

'audience members, as well as creators, will bring their own perspective to the creation and interpretation of the text. Gender, cultural background, ethnicity, age, religion and experience all play their part.' (Dinham, 2011)

### Representation

All forms of media are representations or constructions of

- ◆ character
- ◆ place
- ◆ idea
- ◆ image

based on shared social values and beliefs.

They are perceived not just received understandings.

Understanding the Media also involves knowing the institutions of the Media

Learning to be an audience – a discerning and knowledgeable audience – is at the heart of all the Arts

Students recognise and understand how media representations are constructions of reality

Students recognise the differences between their own experiences and the ways the media represent similar experiences

Representation is also a feature of other arts subjects.

A representation is a visual (or actual) rendering or someone or something – a picture or photograph or film or play or dance about them or it.

When we represent (re-present) something we see or experience, we translate our experience using another medium. For example, if we take a photograph of someone, we use the medium of analogue or digital technology to share how we saw that person through a different medium.

In a drama performance, an actor can represent someone too.

You can't assume that your students know how to *read* – *understand* – the Media.

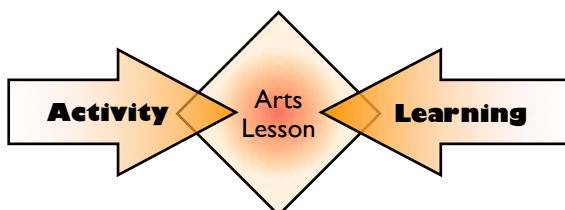
They need to be taught these processes.

## Shape of Media Arts lessons

Media Arts lessons follow similar patterns to those discussed in other arts subjects:

- ◆ warm up and orientation to the concept(s) being taught
- ◆ purposeful practical activities designed to engage students with concepts, knowledge, skills, techniques and processes, viewpoints of Media Arts
- ◆ sharing and reflection
- ◆ warming down/conclusion

In designing your lessons with students you need to clearly identify what you will do (the activity) and the learning you intend.



Consider how this example from Early Childhood addresses this issue.

Activity	What will students learn through these activities?
<p>The Pre-Primary (Foundation) teacher is working on the concept of family groups. She asks her students to bring in some family photos: of three generations: themselves, their parents and their grand parents (or older).</p> <p>The students make a wall display of these images grouping families together.</p> <p>Each day they spend ten minutes of so talking about different concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ different family groupings etc.</li> <li>◆ the stories of the pictures e.g. this was when we went on a picnic to ...; this is my big sister just after she was born and my mum and dad lived in...; etc.</li> </ul>	<p>The Media Arts activity is integrated into the fabric of learning.</p>
<p>They also talk informally about the different sorts of pictures: e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ photos of themselves are likely to be digital images taken on phone cameras; they are likely to be informal, on the spur images.</li> <li>◆ photos of their grand parents are likely to be black and white images taken in formal settings and “best” clothes</li> <li>◆ teacher and students talk about why these images might be different.</li> </ul>	<p>Students are focusing on observing, analysing and discussing Media images.</p>
<p>On the days when parents are in the class room, they share their memories of photos and why they are important ways of passing on stories from one generation to the next</p>	<p>Students place their discussion of an aspect of Media Arts in context of their personal history – and beyond that to broader social and culture concepts</p>

You teach your students to

To teach these Content Descriptions you engage your students with

**5-6 Content Descriptions**

6.1 Experiment with story principles and manipulate images, sounds and text, settings, ideas, stories and genre structures to create representations

6.2 Develop skills in composition by using media technologies, images, sounds and text to manipulate meaning

6.3 Plan, produce and present media artworks for a variety of purposes and audiences using media arts production processes

6.4 Explain how story structures or particular technical or symbolic elements communicate meaning within regulatory media practices, comparing media artworks from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media artworks

The Australian Curriculum: The Arts includes content descriptions at each band. These describe the knowledge, understanding, skills and processes that teachers are expected to teach and students are expected to learn.

**Knowledge and skills 5-6**

**Representation and Story principles**

- Structure: organising ideas, using story structures and tension to engage an audience
- Intent: communicating ideas and stories with a purpose
- Points of view: the perspective of who tells the stories or constructs the ideas
- Character: the characteristics of fictional and non-fictional roles portrayed through physicality, the voice, costumes and props.
- Settings: the real or imagined environments and situations for characters and ideas
- Genre conventions: the established and accepted rules for constructing stories and ideas in a particular style

**Language and Media Elements**

- Composition: the arrangement and sequence of images, sounds and texts to support the purpose of communicating ideas or stories from different points of view using framing, audio effects, editing and lay out.
- Time: the order, duration and depiction of events and ideas
- Space: the distance and relationship between objects, sounds or text or the depiction of place
- Sound: loudness, softness, ambient noise and music for effect
- Movement: the way the eye discovers image or text, the suggestion of movement through sound, and the perception and depiction of moving action, the design of interactivity
- Lighting: light, shade and colour for effect

**Technologies**

- Compose, edit and produce images, sounds and text or a combination of these with selected media technologies

**Audience**

- Explain a variety of audiences and purposes for which media artworks are made.

**Institutions: individuals, communities and organisations**

- Identify purpose and processes to produce media artworks and consider individual ethical behaviour and the role of communities and organisations in regulating access to media artworks.

Examples of key questions and level of complexity for this band:

**Meanings and interpretations**

- What is the story and the ideas in the Media Arts you watch and listen to?
- Which of the characters do you identify with?
- What relationships and situations do you recognise (or not recognise)?

**Forms and elements**

- How can I change the meaning of a story by adding or changing a sound track to my images?
- How can I use framing to demonstrate a power relationship?

**Societies and cultures**

- How are values demonstrated in this media representation?
- Can we judge a culture from popular media images?
- What cultural images can or cannot be used when making and publishing my artwork?

**Evaluations**

- How well did you collaborate to make Media Arts?
- What worked best in the Media Arts production?

This is an excerpt from the Australian Curriculum: The Arts for Year 5-Year 6  
 You must read the complete curriculum document.

Check out Knowledge and skills for Media Arts for Foundation to Year 2 band Band and Years 3 and 4 Band.

