

LCAS Appendix B – VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Assessment Summaries, Strengths, and Limitations

The tables below offer information, observations, and recommendations regarding the purpose and implementation of specific arts assessments utilized at the local level (provider, school, district, supervisory union/district). This resource is included to further support supervisory unions/districts (SU/SDs) in the provision of local comprehensive assessment systems (please see the AOE’s Strengthening and Streamlining Local Comprehensive Assessment Systems: Guidelines and Support for Leadership Teams for additional information) and to meet the goals of [Act 173 of 2018](#).

This document is intended to provide a high-level overview of a sampling of assessments, including assessments known to be in use by LEAs in Vermont, to support local systems and schools in making informed decisions and investment requests. This appendix is not an exhaustive list, does not represent the full breadth and depth of information about the included assessments, and is not an endorsement of the assessments reviewed. LEAs are encouraged to evaluate assessments before purchasing or utilizing an assessment. For guidance on how to evaluate assessments, please refer to the Agency’s [LCAS Defining Essential Components](#).

Assessment Name:	NCAS Model Cornerstone Assessments
Type/Purpose/Uses:	<p><i>Type:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benchmark • Formative • Summative <p><i>Purpose:</i> The primary purpose of the cornerstone assessments is to actively involve students in utilizing their knowledge and skills within genuine and meaningful situations. These assessments specifically emphasize higher order thinking and the cultivation of essential habits of mind, ultimately leading to successful outcomes.</p> <p><i>Uses:</i> Cornerstone tasks are crafted to connect to classroom instruction making essential learning objectives and significant achievements visible to learners. The cornerstone assessments aligned with the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) represent recurring performance tasks, advancing in complexity as students progress through different grade levels.</p>

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Assessment Name:	NCAS Model Cornerstone Assessments
Summary of Tool/ Assessment:	<p>The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards developed the model cornerstone assessments to serve as both instructional and assessment frameworks for visual and performing arts teachers. These assessments aim to provide a set of performance tasks that enable students to showcase their proficiency in the artistic processes outlined in the NCCAS, encompassing creation, connection, response, and presentation/performing/producing.</p> <p>The model cornerstone assessments guide instructional decisions for arts educators and cater to various educational contexts. The model cornerstone assessments have templates with strategies for integrating the assessments into instruction, assessment procedures, focus areas for assessment, required knowledge, skills, and vocabulary, differentiation techniques, and evaluation tools.</p> <p>For each arts discipline, there are model cornerstone assessments available for 2nd, 5th, and 8th grades, along with proficiency levels for high school, including accomplished and advanced levels. These assessments are adaptable and cover content skills and knowledge in four arts disciplines, encompassing media- and instrument-specific tasks as well as art and music. Tools, resources, and sample assessments are made accessible to support the teaching and learning process.</p>
Evidence and/or Research:	<p>The Model Cornerstone Assessment (MCA) has undergone several pilot programs, involving numerous schools and teams. The results of these pilots have provided evidence that MCAs effectively foster student engagement by applying knowledge and skills in relevant real-world scenarios.</p> <p>For further information on the pilot project conducted by the NCCAS, you can explore the dedicated Wikispace created specifically for this purpose.</p> <p>No external evidence base or research on the effectiveness, validity, or reliability of this assessment could be found at the time of this publication.</p>
Technical Specifications:	<p>The document "Students with Disabilities and the Core Arts Standards: Guiding Principles for Teachers" presents arts educators with comprehensive guiding principles encompassing policies, processes, and instructional methodologies for effectively integrating students with disabilities into the core arts standards.</p> <p>For additional information please see the sites below:</p> <p>The National Core Arts Standards Inclusion Strategies</p> <p>N2KN: Need to Know Now- How can Model Cornerstone Assessments Inform Teaching & Learning?</p>

Assessment Name:	NCAS Model Cornerstone Assessments
Strengths:	The model assessments are aligned with the NCCAS domains and their corresponding skills. They encompass assessments tailored for various grade levels, showcasing the interconnectedness between these domains. Furthermore, the assessments provide supportive elements to aid teachers in both preparing students for the assessment and aligning their instruction with the assessment requirements.
Limitations:	Although the assessments are intended to be flexible and applicable in various contexts, the evaluation tools might lack specificity. While some tools are tailored to specific performance tasks, others are more general, leading to substantial room for interpretation by evaluators and for overall assessment of NCAS-based instruction. Additionally, the assessments are extensive and, if carried out comprehensively, could consume a considerable amount of time.
Recommendation(s):	This assessment is in alignment with Vermont's adopted Arts Standards by the NCCAS. It has undergone extensive piloting in schools throughout the nation. The assessment is highly adaptable, allowing for customization to meet specific local requirements. As a result, it serves as a choice for Vermont schools aiming to deliver meaningful and effective arts assessment opportunities. When using the Model Cornerstone Assessments, the standards-based rubric should be used in conjunction with a calibration process.