



## First Steps in Integrating Arts into QPA Tasks

Purpose: To provide guidelines for integrating arts into any performance assessment.

**Arts can be for everyone. QPA can be for everyone.** When done well, arts integrated tasks can increase rigor, deepen understanding, and drive student learning. The goal of arts integrated tasks align strongly with QPA tasks, creating the potential for even higher quality tasks when the two are combined.

The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts defines **Arts Integration** as the following:

*Arts Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.*

The **Quality Performance Assessments (QPA)** model offers a process for designing tasks that allow for a diverse group of students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through their own unique work.

### Arts integrated tasks (✓):

- ✓ **Are interdisciplinary.** The task does not compartmentalize learning into separate subjects such as Math, ELA, Science, and Social Studies. Instead, arts integration encourages the cross pollination of subject areas.
- ✓ **Engage students in experiential learning.** Increase student engagement and growth by centering the task around the student experience of synthesizing and applying key concepts.
- ✓ **Encourage student voice & choice.** The task will allow students to produce their own individual work.
- ✓ **Encourage multiple pathways.** The task will allow students to have their own unique journey. This promotes self-awareness and personal growth because students will learn to see the connection between their own selves and the rest of the world.

### Arts integrated tasks are not (✗):

- ✗ **Time fillers.** Coloring a worksheet does not count as an arts integrated task.
- ✗ **Teacher made.** The products produced by students should contain *only* the work of the student and not of the teacher.
- ✗ **Tasks with an added art component.** Arts integrated tasks involve carefully planned lessons and performance assessments. The arts should be an integral part of the task, not an optional component of the task in which the task could exist without the art component.

## What can I do to start integrating arts into my tasks?

**Drawing inspiration.** What can I do to start thinking about possibilities for arts integrated tasks?

- Refer to real artists: this includes, but is not limited to, contemporary artists, historical artists, etc.
- If applicable, team up with an art teacher at your school to get the creative gears turning
- Artists tend to explore a particular theme; a quick Google search may lead you to an artist exploring a concept that aligns with your task
- Consult the resources listed at the bottom of this page

**Be willing to experience discomfort.** If you have little experience with art, integrating arts may be daunting. Integrating arts into your tasks is not an easy endeavor! It will take time, patience, research and your willingness to “get lost” in the task.

**Remember that you are assessing the quality of the students’ engagement with the subject matter and the arts standards, not how much you personally like the students’ artwork.** Think of art as the means to promote Habits of Learning, such as collaboration, communication, creativity, and self-direction. What you are assessing is the quality of the thinking and engagement with the task, subject matter, and arts standards. Be sure that you are not assessing the quality of the students’ work based on your own subjective standards. If you need input on how student artwork and arts standards should be assessed, collaboration with an arts teacher is highly recommended.

**Get started.** Begin by either (a) focusing on making one of your existing tasks stronger through arts integration or (b) identifying a part of your curriculum that you think would particularly lend itself to an arts integrated task.

## Resources with Task Examples

The following is a list of sites you can visit for examples of arts integrated tasks.

*These resources provide a lists of arts-integrated tasks. Keep in mind that although all the assessments have an art component, the tasks do not necessarily meet the criteria for a QPA task.*

We recommend using **QPA Tools 8** to plan your assessment and **QPA Tools 1-3** to assess the quality of the task.

- <https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons>
- <http://educationcloset.com/arts-integration-lessons/>
- [http://www.moaae.org/artsintegrated\\_performance\\_tasks0.aspx](http://www.moaae.org/artsintegrated_performance_tasks0.aspx)

Learn how to integrate arts more effectively by getting a better background through these videos:

[https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos?page=1&categories=subjects\\_the-arts&q=arts&load=1](https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos?page=1&categories=subjects_the-arts&q=arts&load=1)

## Examples of Arts Integrated Tasks to inspire your creativity:

- (1) Students will propose & design street art in which they will advocate for a social issue. As a final product, students will produce original artwork, along with an artist statement that explains artistic choices backed by careful research on their chosen social issue.
- (2) Throughout US History, political cartoons have been a medium of providing a political commentary. After examining and analyzing political cartoons, students will choose either a presidency, era, or a particular moment in US History to critique or satirize. Students will then create and present a cartoon to depict the criticism or satire of the time.
- (3) Learn about angles, symmetry, and perpendicular lines through examining the art concept of vanishing points and one-point perspective.

