



Visual Arts

Standards and Benchmarks
Approved on April 8, 1999

Annotated Edition for Teachers
Including Instructional Examples

Division of Learning Services
April, 1999

Background

This document describes the proposed standards and benchmarks for visual arts for the Boulder Valley School District in grades kindergarten through twelve. The proposed standards closely parallel the Colorado Model Content Standards which were adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education on November 13, 1997.

Colorado Standards are general statements of what a student should know or be able to do relative to a particular academic area. A key components and rationale statement accompanies each content standard. Benchmarks describe what most students should understand and be able to do at specified grade levels to meet each standard. The development and implementation of state content standards were mandated in May 1993, by Colorado HV 93-1313.

Boulder Valley teachers from all levels had input on the standards and benchmarks. Teachers have reviewed, discussed, and refined the document. The Visual Arts Curriculum Council and teacher writing teams have further crafted the contents. High quality delivery standards have been the norm for Boulder Valley teachers and this document formalizes an excellent process that has been in place for some time.

This document includes specific descriptions of what students should know and be able to do at the end of 4th, 8th, and 12th grade. These descriptions for each level, stated as benchmarks, are included with each of the five standards. The document includes a list of key components and a rationale for each standard.

Future work will include a more focused alignment of the curriculum to the standards. Essential learning outcomes will be determined for each level. Student performance levels will be developed. District performance assessments will be established as required by the Colorado Department of Education. The interplay of standards, instruction, and assessment will ensure an accountability process that provides learning for all Boulder Valley School District students in a high quality visual arts program.

As required by the 1992 "Rules (for the) Administration of Accreditation of School Districts," specific consideration will be taken in all aspects of the development and implementation of standards-based education to address the special learning needs of all exceptional children, including but not limited to students with disabilities and gifted and talented students.

Format of the Visual Arts Standards

The Boulder Valley Visual Arts Standards are based upon **the Colorado Model Content Standards for Visual Arts** and the **1994 National Standards for Art Education**. These five Boulder Valley Visual Arts Standards provide a guide for what visual arts students should know and be able to do at varying levels of their art education. These standards are not meant to be independent. In many cases, a visual arts standard will overlap with another visual arts standard and/or with standards in other content areas. Each of the five standards is essential to the achievement of the goal of providing all Boulder Valley School District children with knowledge and experience in the visual arts that they can utilize in their adult lives for both appreciation and participation. This document contains

- an introduction, including a philosophy and rationale, for visual arts education;
- standards which provide a framework from which a certified/licensed art teacher can create a comprehensive art curriculum using a wide variety of instructional strategies;
- benchmarks, written in a sequential manner, that build from one instructional level to the next;
- a matrix linking visual arts standards to other content area standards; and
- a glossary which defines words used in this document.

Philosophy and Rationale for Visual Arts Education

Arts education is a vital and basic component in the development of all human beings. It is a necessary and legitimate part of public education for all students, regardless of their innate talent or academic ability.

Visual arts education provides experience and knowledge not found in any other area of the curriculum. Education in the visual arts enhances our perception by teaching us to use our senses qualitatively. The visual arts allow us to develop and use our creative potential, to see the value of our own ideas and feelings, and to respect those of others. The visual arts give us a chance to think divergently, to search out beyond the boundaries of what is known. The visual arts language is an avenue of expression not addressed or taught in other areas of the curriculum. It is a basic and unique part of education.

The visual arts involve students intellectually, personally, physically, and emotionally like no other subject in the curriculum. When students are engaged and involved in the educational process, they learn! Art offers all students the opportunity to express their own unique visions of the world. Art allows students to have expectations for dealing with divergent outcomes as well as opportunities to reflect upon the differences among people.

The standards and benchmarks found in this document apply to all students, not just a talented few. Visual arts education does not provide the expectation that all students will become great artists, any more than we teach math and science to make each child an engineer or scientist. The basic competencies gained through experiences in art are necessary and fundamental components in realizing our fullest human potential. Art education provides all learners with opportunities to seek out creative solutions beyond the boundaries of accepted wisdom.

While the visual arts have their own intrinsic value, they also have many attributes with other content areas. For example, in social studies, students begin to appreciate cultural differences and similarities by examining the arts of the culture. Both art and science encourage students to observe and analyze content critically. In reading and writing, the learner interprets meaning from a symbol system. Likewise, in the visual arts learners "read," "write," and construct meaning with visual images or symbols.

The generative power of the visual arts makes it basic to all educational programs. Through visual arts education, students are able to learn more about themselves and the world around them. Studies have shown, that through arts education, students develop thinking and perceptual skills and their own intellectual abilities to discover images of possibility. This wealth of experiences and intellectual abilities provide a strong and rich allusionary base from which to draw upon future creative experiences.

It is critical to recognize the importance of visual art as its own discipline. Visual arts education is much more than making things. It enables students to develop and

creatively express their ideas and solve problems. The Boulder Valley Visual Arts Standards define visual arts education as sequential development in these five areas: communication, perception, analysis, use of materials and techniques, and understanding history and culture. The visual arts must be taught by a qualified and effective licensed visual arts instructor.

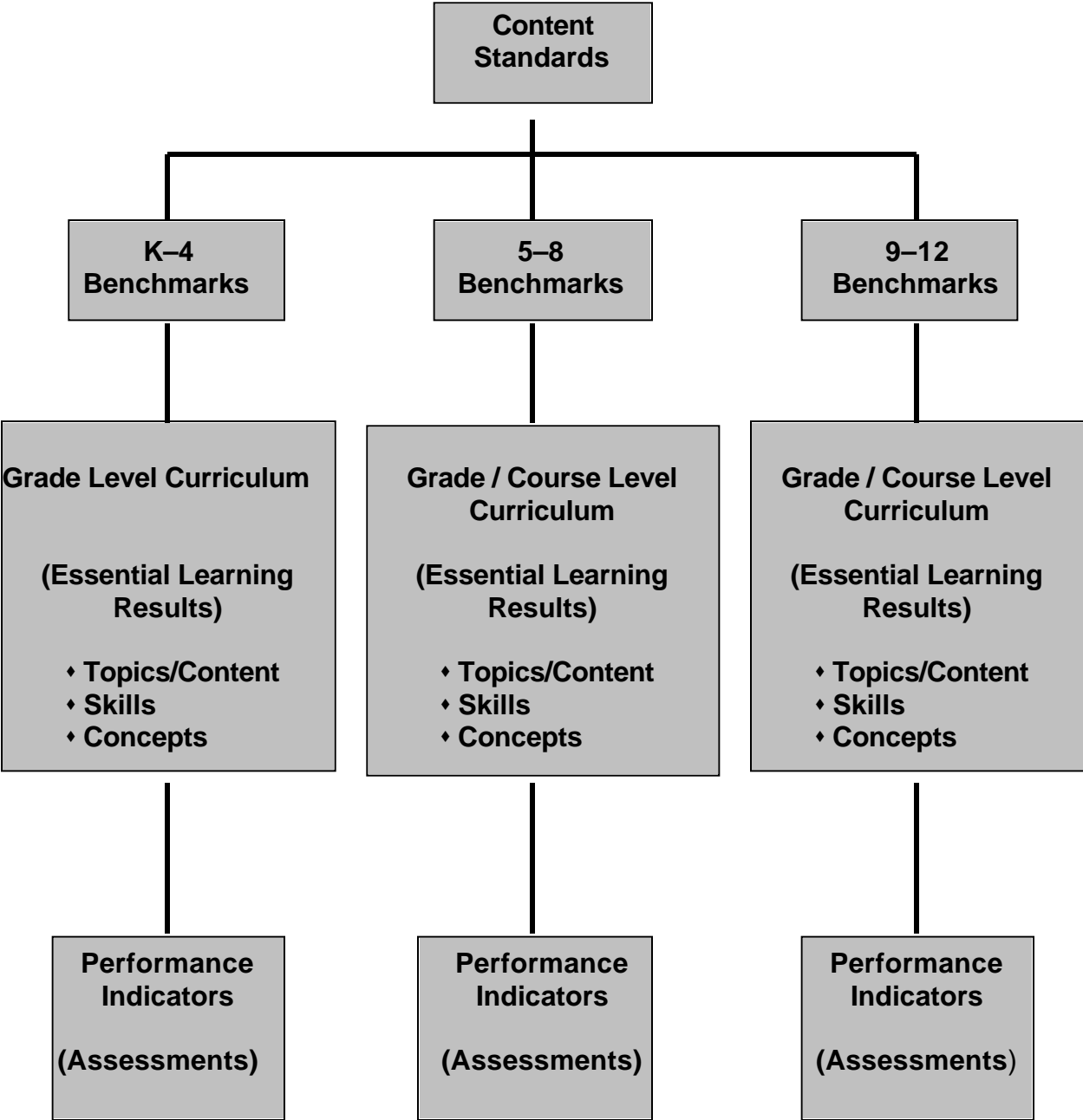
The inventive spirit is an important attribute of humankind; in fact, our society depends on the ability to create new and better solutions to the challenges that continue to face us. Individuals who can think creatively, feel sensitively, and see clearly will be our greatest resource for the future. These individuals will invent the future. Visual arts education contributes to the development of the individual inventive spirit, provides a means for understanding oneself, and provides a means for understanding the diverse world in which we live.

Comparison of Colorado and BVSD Content Standards

Comparison of Colorado and BVSD Content Standards

Colorado Content Standards (Adopted 11/13/97)	BVSD Content Standards (Proposed 3/99)
Standard #1: Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of communication.	Standard #1: <u>Communication</u> – Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of communication.
Standard #2: Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features.	Standard #2: <u>Perception</u> – Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features for visual arts.
Standard #3: Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, and processes.	Standard #3: <u>Materials and Techniques</u> – Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technology.
Standard #4: Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions.	Standard #4: <u>History and Culture</u> – Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions.
Standard #5: Students analyze and evaluate the characteristics, merits, and meanings of works of art.	Standard #5: <u>Analysis</u> – Students analyze and evaluate the characteristics, merits, and meaning of works of art.

How Standards and Curriculum Fit Together



BVSD Content Standards and Proposed Benchmarks

Visual Arts Standard **#1**: Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of communication.

Key Components: In order to meet this standard, students will

- 1.1 identify and interpret the visual images, themes, and ideas in works of art;
- 1.2 communicate and express themes and ideas through the use of visual images in creating works of art; and
- 1.3 evaluate the effective use of the language of art in communication.

RATIONALE: *Art is a universal language that encompasses all forms of communication to express a variety of viewpoints, ideas, and feelings. Success in the age of information requires that students make informed choices in the communication of ideas by observations, critical thinking, and problem solving.*

*In **Grades K–4**, what the students know and are able to do includes*

- a. identifying visual images, themes, and ideas in works of art;
- b. selecting and using visual images, themes and ideas to communicate meaning; and
- c. comparing the use of visual images and ideas.

*As students in **Grades 5–8** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. identifying and discussing how and why visual images, themes, and ideas communicate;
- b. selecting, organizing, and employing visual images, themes, and ideas in works of art to express an intended meaning; and
- c. evaluating meaning and communication in works of art.

*As students in **Grades 9–12** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. interpreting and distinguishing intended meanings of visual images, themes, and ideas in works of art;

- b. researching and synthesizing visual images, themes, and ideas to create works of art which reflect personal experiences and intended meanings;
and
- c. evaluating and defending the use of visual images, themes, and ideas to communicate intended meanings.

Visual Arts Standard #2: **Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features of visual arts.**

Key Components: In order to meet this standard, students will

- 2.1 identify and apply the elements of art (line, shape, texture, color, value, and space) in a variety of media;
- 2.2 identify and apply the principles of design (rhythm, movement, balance, proportion, variety, emphasis, and unity) in a variety of media; and
- 2.3 use a variety of problem solving and decision making skills to apply the elements of art and principles of design a work of art.

RATIONALE: *The discipline of art requires the use of design, problem solving, and invention. The elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features are the building blocks that cohesively organize a work of art. All students should know and apply a variety of methods and strategies to solve visual arts problems. Students increase their knowledge as they evaluate works of art and judge the effective use of these components.*

*In **Grades K–4**, what the students know and are able to do includes*

- a. identifying elements of art and principles of design in works of art; and
- b. applying elements of art and principles of design to create works of art.

*As students in **Grades 5–8** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. describing and discussing characteristics of elements of art, principles of design, and styles of art;
- b. using elements of art, principles of design, and styles of art to communicate ideas and experiences; and
- c. analyzing and evaluating the use of elements of art, principles of design, and styles of art that express ideas and experiences.

*As students in **Grades 9–12** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. comparing and contrasting elements of art, principles of design, sensory and expressive features, and functions of art;

- b. creating multiple solutions to visual arts problems by applying elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features; and
- c. evaluating the use of elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features in developing and solving visual arts problems.

Visual Arts Standard #3: Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technology.

Key Components: In order to meet this standard, students will

- 3.1 identify materials, tools, and processes;
- 3.2 apply materials, tools, and processes to create a well-crafted work of art; and
- 3.3 use materials, tools, and processes in a safe and responsible manner.

RATIONALE: *The exploration and application of materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technology are essential to the visual arts. Student experiences with materials, tools, techniques, and processes in combination with concepts and ideas result in works of art. Technological developments in materials, tools, techniques, and processes provide students with new forms of expression. Learning and using good craftsmanship is a necessary step in the creative process. The safe and responsible use of materials and tools is essential for environmental and personal safety.*

In Grades K–4, what the students know and are able to do includes

- a. identifying and describing different materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technologies;
- b. applying materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technologies to create works of art;
- c. recognizing and beginning to develop the techniques for a well-crafted work of art; and
- d. using art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner.

As students in Grades 5–8 extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes

- a. identifying and experimenting with materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technologies;
- b. selecting and using materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technologies that enhance communication of ideas through art;
- c. evaluating the selection and use of materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technologies;

- d. practicing and demonstrating the techniques for a well-crafted work of art;
and
- e. using art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner.

*As students in **Grades 9–12** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. demonstrating skills with a variety of materials, tools, techniques, processes, and technologies resulting in the creation of works of art;
- b. evaluating the relationship between ideas and materials, tools, techniques, and processes used;
- c. mastering the fundamental skills and disciplines that result in a well-crafted work of art; and
- d. using art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner.

Visual Arts Standard #4: Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions.

Key Components: In order to meet this standard, students will

- 4.1 identify and examine works of art from different cultures, times, and places;
- 4.2 examine the roles and purposes of art and artifacts on cultures;
- 4.3 create art works based on different cultures or time periods; and
- 4.4 evaluate the impact and influence that periods of art and cultures have had on the world of art and the world in general.

RATIONALE: *Art is a powerful force in the everyday life of people around the world. It is one of humankind's most notable contributions throughout history and within all cultures. When students examine works of art from their own and other cultures, places, and times, they understand the role of the visual arts in shaping cultures and building civilizations. The exploration of art, history, and culture teaches students to understand their own expression in relation to the expression of others.*

*In **Grades K–4**, what the students know and are able to do includes*

- a. identifying works of art as belonging to various cultures, times, and places;
- b. describing the roles and purposes of art and artifacts on cultures;
- c. creating art based on historical and cultural ideas of diverse peoples; and
- d. recognizing that art impacts our world.

*As students in **Grades 5–8** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. identifying and comparing the characteristics of works of art from various cultures, times, and places;
- b. demonstrating how history and culture of various people influence the creation, meaning, and style of works of art;
- c. creating art based on personal interpretation of various historical and cultural contexts; and
- d. recognizing that art impacts the world and the world impacts art.

*As students in **Grades 9–12** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. describing the functions, meanings, and significance of works of art within various cultures;
- b. evaluating, analyzing, and interpreting works of art as related to the history and culture of various people;
- c. creating works of art based on comparison and evaluation of various historical and cultural contexts; and
- d. explaining from different cultural perspectives the importance and influence the world has on art and art on the world.

Visual Arts Standard #5: Students analyze and evaluate the characteristics, merits, and meanings of works of art.

Key Components: In order to meet this standard, students will

- 5.1 describe the characteristics in works of art;
- 5.2 analyze the organization and interrelationship of the characteristics;
- 5.3 interpret the meanings of works of art using knowledge gained from description and analysis; and
- 5.4 evaluate the merit of works of art based on critical analysis and aesthetic inquiry.

RATIONALE: *The study of art develops citizens who make informed critical judgments. Through thoughtful observations, descriptions, and analysis, students gain knowledge about visual communications. Critical analysis and aesthetic inquiry teach students to define differences among works of art. Students learn to respect their own ideas and artistic expressions and those of others.*

*In **Grades K–4**, what the students know and are able to do includes*

- a. observing and describing a variety of works of art, including their own;
- b. analyzing works of art using elements of art and principles of design;
- c. interpreting works of art using description and analysis; and
- d. evaluating works of art using specific criteria.

*As students in **Grades 5–8** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. describing works of art including information such as subject matter, symbols, style, elements of art, medium, artist, title, period, and culture;
- b. analyzing works of art using elements of art and principles of design and similarities and contrasts;
- c. interpreting works of art using description, analysis, feelings and historical, cultural, and personal points of view; and

- d. evaluating works of art using description, analysis, interpretation, and personal experience.

*As students in **Grades 9–12** extend their knowledge, what they know and are able to do includes*

- a. describing works of art including information such as subject matter, symbols, style, elements of art, medium, artist, title, period, and culture;
- b. analyzing works of art using elements of art and principles of design and similarities and contrasts;
- c. interpreting works of art using description, analysis, artist's intent, feelings and historical, cultural, and personal points of view; and
- d. evaluating using critical analysis, judgment, and aesthetic inquiry.

Glossary

Aesthetics – A discipline in the visual arts and a branch of philosophy focused on the nature and value of art; pertaining to how we see things and what they mean. Aesthetic theories generally include mimetic, formalist, expressive, instrumental, institutional, and postmodern.

Aesthetic Inquiry – Asking questions about works of art, describing and evaluating the media, processes, and meanings of works of art, and making comparative judgments.

Architecture and Environmental Arts – Urban, interior, and landscape design.

Artifact – Any simple object showing human workmanship and aesthetic modification.

Critical Analysis – A higher level thinking strategy, such as Feldman's model for description, analysis, interpretation, and judgment.

Culture/Cultural – A style of social and artistic expression unique to a particular community of people.

Design and Communication Arts – Film, television, graphics. Illustration, photography, product design, and electronic imagery.

Elements of Art – The components of visual arts, such as line, shape, value, texture, color, form, space, and time, etc.

Expressive Features – Components of works of art which effect the emotions, such as anger, sadness, and joy.

Fine Arts – Traditional art forms, such as drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, fibers, jewelry, and photography. This term is often used to refer, collectively, to dance, music, theater, and the visual arts.

Folk Arts – Art that expresses a cultural connection between ethnic forms and traditions and contemporary life experiences.

Fundamental Skills – The principle of design and the elements of art in a compositional format using appropriate materials and techniques.

Historical – Refers to what is concerned with history; having importance or influence on history.

Interpretation – To find meaning and understanding in a particular way.

Judgment – Evaluate work using the following criteria: Craftsmanship, design quality, expressiveness, personal response, originality, and/or comparison.

Language of Art – The aesthetic components of any art object which defines the object as an integrated site of visual, emotional, cultural, and transcendental meaning.

Materials – Resources used in the creation and study of visual art, such as paint, clay, paper, canvas, film, videotape, watercolors, wood, and plastic.

Media – Broad categories for grouping works of visual art according to the art materials used, for example, the painting media are water color, oil, tempera, acrylic, etc.

Multiple Solutions for Visual Arts Problems – Such as designing three different kinds of containers using paper, clay, and/or cardboard.

Principles of Design – Characteristics in the visual arts such as repetition, balance, emphasis, harmony, rhythm, contrast, unity, and proportion, etc.

Process – A sequential operation involving a number of methods or techniques, such as the carving process in sculpture, the etching process in printmaking, or the casting process in making jewelry.

Sensory Features – Components of works of art that affect the five physical senses.

Specific Criteria – A means by which judgments can be made, such as analyzing a work of art by assigning it an artistic style such as realism, abstraction, etc.

Style – The artistic character of art movements during specific periods of history. Style also refers to an individual artist's use of media which gives the work an individual character.

Synthesis/Synthesizing – The combination of separate parts or elements to form something new.

Techniques – Specific methods or processes used in making art, such as carving wood, developing film, or weaving yarn.

Technologies – A term which includes not only electronic advancements, but any material, tool, or pedagogical practice which has been thoroughly reevaluated and redefined to address new conceptual problems.

Tools – Instruments and equipment used by students to create and learn about art, such as brushes, scissors, cameras, digital technology, etc.

Visual Art – Creation, expression, or communication based on visual form.

Visual Image – A representation of the form and features of someone or something.

Visual Literacy – The ability to perceive and respond to visual symbols and images, for example, recognizing and understanding the international signs for no smoking or highway rest stops.

A Matrix Illustrating Cross-Disciplinary Connections among Colorado Model Content Standards

	G e o g r a p h y	H i s t o r y	M a t h e m a t i c s	R e a d i n g a n d W r i t i n g	S c i e n c e	C i v i c s	F o r e i g n L a n g u a g e	M u s i c	P h y s i c a l E d u c a t i o n
Standard #1: Students recognize and use the visual arts as a form of communication.	1, 2, 6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 3, 4	1, 3, 4, 5	1, 5		1, 2	4, 5	1
Standard #2: Students know and apply elements of art, principles of design, and sensory and expressive features.	1	1, 3, 4	4	4	1, 2, 3, 5, 6			4, 5	
Standard #3: Students know and apply visual arts materials, tools, techniques, and processes.	1	4	4, 5, 6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1, 5	1, 2	5	2
Standard #4: Students relate the visual arts to various historical and cultural traditions.	1, 2, 4, 5, 6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6		3, 4, 5, 6	1, 3, 6	2, 3	1, 2	5	
Standard #5: Students analyze and evaluate the characteristics, merits, and meanings of works of art.	2, 4, 5, 6	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	1, 4	1, 4, 6	1, 6			4, 5	

From the Colorado Model Content Standards

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