An overview of the standards

Creation

The Core Art Theatre Standards were written collaboratively by members of the Educational Theatre Association and the [American Alliance for Theatre and Education](#), both of whom are [leadership organizations of the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards](#) (NCCAS). For more general information about the standards read the [NCCAS FAQ](#). To create customized workbook pages that meet your student and classroom needs, visit the [NCCAS website](#).

Organization

The Core Arts Standards feature two levels of standards: anchor standards and performance standards. Anchor standards are overarching statements of what students should know and do in all of the arts as a result of their PreK-12 education. All the arts discipline—dance, media arts, music, theatre, and visual arts—have adopted the eleven anchor standards. Performance standards state what students should know and be able to do in a particular artistic discipline by the end of a specific grade or level.

The theatre performance standards are divided into four artistic processes: Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting. The standards are further divided into process component categories within each artistic process—three in Creating, Performing, Responding, and two in Connecting. The standards are grade-by-grade PreK through 8, and feature three levels in high school: proficient, accomplished, and advanced. In each component, there are a range of one to three "strands" of standards—sequential grade-by-grade learning outcomes that are intended to build towards student proficiency or better by the end of high school. To learn more about the philosophy and strategies behind the structure of strategies visit the [NCCAS Conceptual Framework](#).

Glossary

The theatre standards glossary includes terms that are referenced in the performance standards and the Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs); it is not intended as a comprehensive compendium of all theatre terminology. The words that are defined in the standards are highlighted in red; the glossary words in the MCAs are listed in a subhead vocabulary section of each assessment.

Model Cornerstone Assessments

The Model Cornerstone Assessments provided at the benchmark grades of 2, 5, 8, and the high school levels of proficient, accomplished, and advanced are examples of how theatre teachers can measure student growth. These assessment tools will be piloted in classrooms across the United States and revised by teachers in future years, eventually generating student work that will be posted on the NCCAS website as "benchmarks" to illustrate the expectations of the standards. Teachers may adopt, adapt, and create their own MCAs as appropriate for their own students and classrooms. To better understand the Understanding by Design (UbD) methodology used to create the theatre MCAs, read the interview with UbD co-creator Jay McTighe in the [curriculum section](#) of the instructional resources article archives.

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Guide to standards notation

The performance standards employ a notation system for quick and easy reference to a particular standard within each artistic processes. In sequence, the system references arts discipline, artistic process, anchor standard, process component, and grade. Here are a few examples of how to read the numbering system:

> **TH:Cr1.1.PK.**—the **TH** is common to all theatre standards; **Cr** refers to the artistic process of Creating; **1** references anchor standard number one; the second **1** is the process component; and **PK** is pre-kindergarten.

> **TH:Pr5.1.4.**—**Pr** is the artistic process of Performing; **5** is anchor standard five; **1** is the process component; and **4** is grade four.

> **TH:Re8.1.6.**—**Re** is the artistic process of Responding; **8** is anchor standard eight; **1** is the process component; and **6** is grade six.

TH:Cn10.1.II—**Cn** is the artistic process of Connecting;**10** is anchor standard ten; **1** is the process component; and the roman numeral **II** is high school level of accomplished.