

The Bulgarian School Curricula in Fine Arts

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I. Introduction

This article deals with the accents in the contents of school curricula in fine arts for the primary stage of school education in Bulgaria; the goals and expected results according to the Bulgarian national educational standards; the global themes and competences as an anticipated outcome.

At school, art is presented by the school subjects of *Music* and *Fine Arts*. According to the present school syllabus regarding secondary education, which has been in force since 2012 and which is based on a project of the Bulgarian Ministry of Education, *Fine Arts* as a school subject is studied throughout all stages as *compulsory*, *compulsory selective*, and *optional training*. The contribution of fine arts concerning the pupils' development is related to the formation of their art culture, aesthetic taste and their need to be in contact with art. The acquisition of knowledge and skills for widely applicable artistic activity develops the creative potential of the pupils and their capacities to express themselves visually.

II. MAIN PART

The overall system of education and training in fine arts at school is organized in the form of an obligatory school subject from the first to the fourth grade with a total number of 222 school classes for a period of four years. The table that follows is an illustration of the total number of classes for this school subject.

School subject: FINE ARTS
Main educational degree – PRIMARY EDUCATION stage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1-st grade: 2/62• 2-nd grade: 1, 5/48• 3-rd grade: 2/62• 4-th grade: 1, 5/48
Total: 222

Table No. 1: Number of classes for the school subject of *Fine Arts*.

The structure of the syllabus content in fine arts is presented in Table No. 2, from which it is clear that there are three sections – *perception of reality*, *perception of art* and *art activity* which provide the knowledge, skills and competences in the sphere of art.

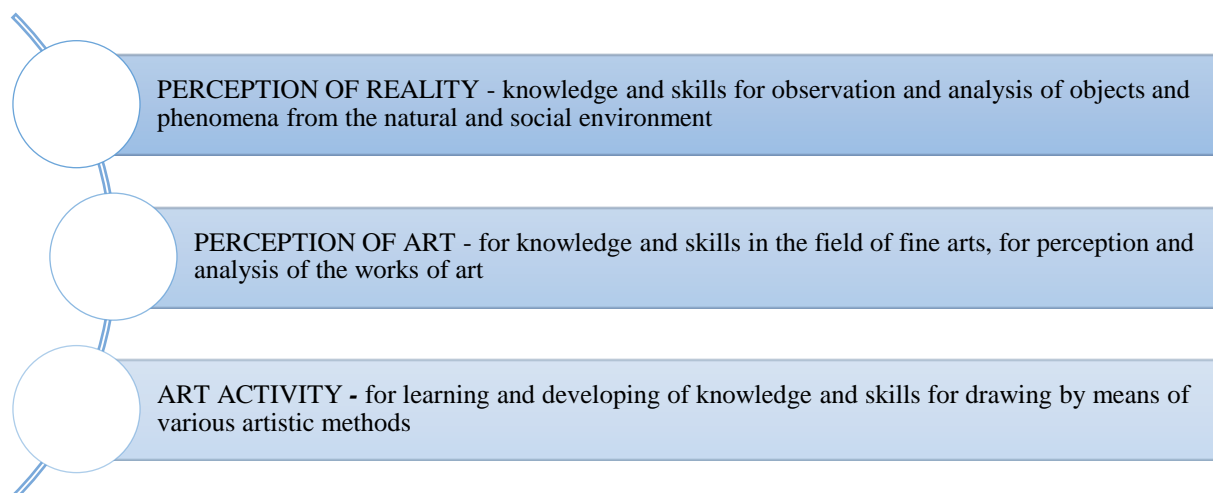


Table No. 2: Structure of the school syllabus contents in fine arts in three sections – perception of reality, perception of art and art activity.

The general goals of teaching and education in fine arts are formation of drawing skills and competences in the field of artistic painting, sculpture, graphics, decorative arts, etc. And the specific goals of the school subject of fine arts for the primary stage of school education are formulated in the National Standard of Education (NSE). By virtue of Table No. 3, I illustrate the specific goals for development of the creative abilities and imagination of pupils according to the standard.

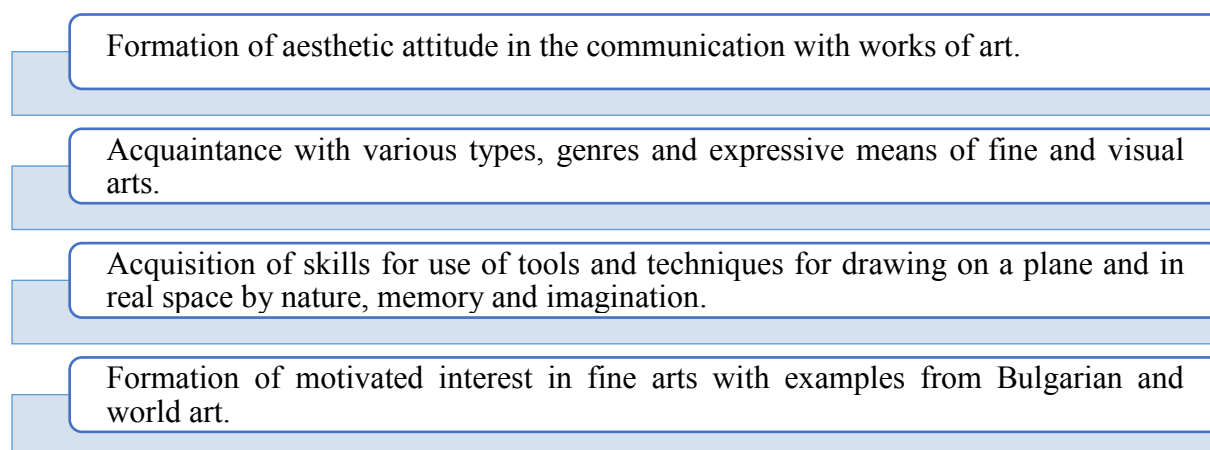


Table No. 3: Specific goals of the school subject of fine arts for the primary stage of school education, according to the national standard of education.

The standard most generally determines the knowledge, skills and attitudes that the pupils should have upon finishing the relevant school grade. Its validity is nationwide and it fixes the volume and level of basic preparation of pupils in all regions of the country. The school syllabus content in fine arts reviewed from the perspective of the standard of education has been determined by means of the *areas of competence*, which are presented in Table No. 4.

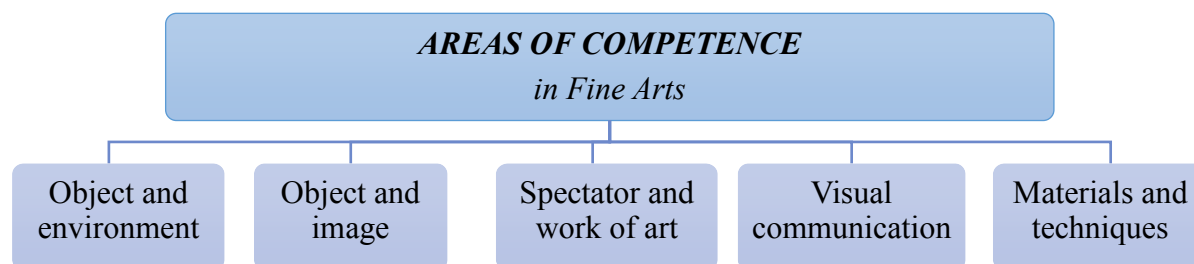


Table No. 4: Areas of competence in fine arts.

The objectives of education by grades are formed as expected results to be accomplished by the end of the relevant grade, valid for the relevant areas of competence (Дамянов 2018: 38). The school syllabus content in fine arts from the first to the fourth grade is specified by means of *global themes* and *new concepts* related to them.

➤ SCHOOL SYLLABUS for the **FIRST grade**

1. **Global themes:** Richness of imagination; Real and fantastic heroes; Images and shapes – type of shapes; Images and colours – types of colours; Fine art works; Illustrations in children's books, communication and signs; Materials and tools.
2. **New concepts:** Drawing; Image; Shape; Silhouette; Fine arts; Picture; Illustration; Image and sign; Drawing materials; Painting; Drawing techniques.
3. **Accents in education:** Real and fantastic images of objects by using various materials and drawing tools; Perception of works of fine arts and illustrations of literary works; Knowledge and use of visual signs in various spheres of life.

➤ SCHOOL SYLLABUS for the **SECOND grade**

1. **Global themes:** The beauty of nature; Real and fantastic world; Images and shapes; Shapes and colours; The artist's profession; Types and genres in art; Human activities and signs; Drawing techniques.
2. **New concepts:** Image portrayal or depiction; Decorative imagery; Fantastic imagery; Figural imagery; Figural composition; Light and dark colour; Artist; Artist's studio; Painting; Graphic; Sculpture; Still life; Landscape; Portrait; Visual sign; Mixed techniques.
3. **Accents in education:** Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the creation of real and fantastic images of natural objects and environment; Knowledge of colours; Knowledge of types and genres in fine arts and the artist's creative work; Knowledge of basic visual law systems in various spheres of life.

➤ SCHOOL SYLLABUS for the **THIRD grade**

1. **Global themes:** Public and residential buildings; Internal and external architectural environment; Cities of the future; Images and shapes – decorative images; Images and colours – cold and warm colours; Folk art and crafts; Applied arts; Images and signs; Imaging technologies.
2. **New concepts:** Architectural environment; Exterior; Interior; Green architecture; Stylization; Rhythm; Symmetry; Cold and warm colours; Ritual objects; Folk crafts; Folk arts; Folk (traditional) costumes; Ceramics; Textile; Wood carving; Visual information; Monotype; Application printout; Artistic construction.
3. **Accents in education:** Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to the architectural environment; Knowledge of the main principles for creation of decorative imagery; Knowledge of folk creative works and applied arts learned on a practical basis; Application of drawing and imagery technologies for printing, drawing and modelling, as well as experimenting with materials and techniques; Knowledge of basic visual law systems in various spheres of life.

➤ SCHOOL SYLLABUS for the **FOURTH grade**

1. **Global themes:** Images from the past and from the modern world; The world of myths and legends; Images and shapes – drawing from various perspectives; Images and colours – local colour; Themes and plots in art; Art museums and galleries; Conventional and unconventional materials and techniques; Expressiveness of drawing materials and techniques.
2. **New concepts:** Cultural and historical heritage; Monument of culture; Mythological image; Perspective (point of view); Local colour; Themes and plots in art; Art museums and galleries; Conventional and unconventional materials and techniques; Collage; Mosaic; Model.
3. **Accents in education:** Knowledge, skills and attitudes related to cultural and historic heritage and monuments of culture; Mythological images and symbols, subjects and plots in art; Orientation through visual signs and symbols in various spheres of life; Expressive capacities of traditional and

unconventional materials and techniques; Experimenting and expressive influence of the means of expression, materials and techniques as a result of the process of creation.

III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I would say that the modern school curricula in fine arts have created a comprehensive cultural and educational context providing all necessary conditions for development of rich artistic culture among pupils, which, however, depends on the level of teaching preparation of the teacher in drawing.

The conclusions from the review of the current school syllabi in fine arts for the primary stage of school education – compulsory training are these: they enable the implementation of creative initiatives of the teacher, granting freedom in the selection of methods and means to accomplish the expected results. They offer a rich variety of themes for work with the pupils, which assist them in the process of discovery of the visual specifics of figures, the understanding and interpretation of major relations between objects and environment, for distinguishing and use of different types of colours, for association and interpretation of images by common visual signs, for demonstration of their emotional attitude to the various types of colours. They help the pupil to discover and describe the characteristics of different works of art and to express their personal impressions in their contact with the various works of art, as well as to know and use the diversity of existing drawing materials and tools.

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