AP ART HISTORY

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING AND ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE STATEMENTS

Each of the 10 content areas is accompanied by enduring understanding and essential knowledge statements that provide contextual information about the regions and time periods contained within the content area. Information from enduring understanding and essential knowledge statements is combined with course learning objectives and works of art in the image set to form targets of assessment for the AP Art History Exam. The enduring understanding and essential knowledge statements are found within the image set section, directly under the name of the content area. Enduring understanding and essential knowledge statements provide required contextual information that serves as a starting point for student learning in the course. Teachers and students are expected to expand upon this foundational information in their studies of each work of art, referring to scholarly resources such as textbooks, primary source documentation, and museum websites.

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CONTENT AREA 1
GLOBAL PREHISTORY
30,000–500 B.C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 1-1.
Human expression existed across the globe before the written record. While prehistoric art of Europe has been the focus of many introductions to the history of art, very early art is found worldwide and shares certain features, particularly concern with the natural world and humans’ place within it.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-1A.
Periods of time before the written record are often defined in terms of geological eras or major shifts in climate and environment. The periods of global prehistory, known as lithic or stone ages, are Paleolithic (“old stone age”), Mesolithic (“middle stone age”), and Neolithic (“new stone age”). A glacial period produced European ice ages; Saharan agricultural grassland became desert; and tectonic shifts in southeast Asia created land bridges between the continent and the now-islands of the Pacific south of the equator. Human behavior and expression was influenced by the changing environments in which they lived.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-1B.
Globally, the earliest peoples were small groups of hunter-gatherers, whose paramount concern was sheer survival, resulting in the creation of practical objects. From earliest times, these practical tools were accompanied by objects of unknown purpose: ritual and symbolic works perhaps intended to encourage the availability of flora and fauna food sources. People established many artistic media, from the first fired ceramics, to painting and incised graphic designs (primarily on rock surfaces), sculpture (notably female and animal figurines), and architecture (stone megalithic installations).

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 1-2.
First instances of important artistic media, approaches, and values occurred on different continents, with Africa and Asia preceding and influencing other areas as the human population spread.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-2A.
In many world regions — including those not in direct contact with one another — art shows humans’ awareness of fundamental, stable phenomena, from the macrocosmic (e.g., astronomical cycles, such as equinoxes and solstices) to the microcosmic (e.g., exploitation of permanent materials available in local environments, such as stone, hardened clay, and jade).
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-2B.
Humanity is understood to have begun in Africa and radiated outward. Beginning around 77,000 years ago, the first “art” was created in the form of rock paintings and carved natural materials, such as ocher. Geometric patterns and representations of life forms, usually human and animal, were typical two-dimensional creations. Three-dimensional forms were sculpted, and monuments, large-scale objects, and environments were assembled and/or constructed. Art making was associated with activities such as food production (hunting, gathering, agriculture, animal husbandry) and patterns of behavior, such as settlement, demonstration of status, and burial. For example, places of gathering or settlement and/or objects found in such places may be painted and/or incised with imagery related to their use.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-2C.
Humans established Paleolithic communities in West, Central, South, Southeast, and East Asia between 70,000 and 40,000 B.C.E. Paleolithic and Neolithic cave paintings featuring animal imagery are found across Asia, including in the mountains of Central Asia and Iran and in rock shelters throughout central India. In prehistoric China, ritual objects were created in jade, beginning a 5,000-year tradition of working with the precious medium. Ritual, tomb, and memorializing arts are found across Neolithic Asia, including impressive funerary steles from Saudi Arabia and Yemen. Asia’s greatest contribution to early world art is in ceramic technology, with some of the earliest pieces (dating to 10,500 B.C.E) produced by the Jomon culture in Japan. Even earlier pottery continues to be found, particularly in China. Ceramics were also produced in Iran beginning in the eighth millennium B.C.E., and refined vessel forms arose from the adoption of the potter’s wheel in the fourth millennium B.C.E.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-2D.
In the Pacific region, migrations from Asia approximately 45,000 years ago were possible because of lowered sea levels and the existence of land bridges. The earliest created objects have been dated to about 8,000 years ago. The Lapita peoples, who moved eastward from Melanesia to Polynesia beginning about 4,000 years ago, created pottery with incised geometric designs that appear across the region in multiple media today.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-2E.
Paleolithic and Neolithic Europe’s artistic statements were made in small human figural sculptures (central Europe), cave paintings (France and Spain), and outdoor, monumental stone assemblages (British Isles). These provide glimpses into the beginnings of ritual life (15,000 B.C.E.) as people tried to influence and integrate with the natural cycles of the cosmos and promote both human and animal fertility. These works establish the dynamic interplay of naturalism and abstraction found throughout art’s history.
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-2F.
On the American continent, from the Arctic to Tierra del Fuego, indigenous peoples who had recently migrated from Asia (before 10,000 B.C.E.) first made sculptures from animal bone and later from clay, with animals and sacred humans as dominant subject matter. Similar to European expressions, ancient American art adapts animal images to the natural contours of the chosen materials and features fecund females. The fact that female figurines may also display unusual or supernatural characteristics suggests the importance of shamanic religion brought from Asia very early in human history.
ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 1-3.

Over time, art historians’ knowledge of global prehistoric art has developed through interdisciplinary collaboration with social and physical scientists.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-3A.**

Ongoing archaeological excavations and use of carbon-14 dating has illuminated interconnections of art across the world. Due to the understandably small number of surviving and located monuments, however, reasons for similarity or difference in form remain largely conjectural. Nonetheless, comparisons of groups of objects and the application of ethnographic analogy (considering modern traditional cultural practices as models for ancient ones) and reconstruction of religious history (noting shamanism as the earliest, most persistent worldwide spiritual approach) can be applied to help establish general theories of the function and meaning of prehistoric art.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-3B.**

Since it was first practiced circa 1900, modern stratigraphic archaeology (recording precisely each level and location of all objects) has served as a basis for art historical studies. Archaeology supports understandings of how people, culture, and therefore art travelled across the globe well before highly organized societies were formed. Important monuments, such as the caves at Lascaux, and media, particularly ceramics, were first discovered and described by archaeologists and then became available for interpretation by art historians — the two disciplines are highly complementary.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 1-3C.**

The function of artistic expression prior to written records is inferred from evidence of technology and survival strategies and based on the relation of tools and their function (whether task related or expressive), available food sources, the rise of sophisticated culture, and humans’ capacity to shape and manage the environment. Basic art historical methods can be applied to prehistoric art by comparing works of art, imagery, materials, and techniques to identify patterns (such as a prevalence of transformational animal–human iconography), then ethnographic approaches can be used to propose hypotheses (e.g., that certain iconography is shamanic in nature). Cross-cultural comparison can help establish wider generalizations (e.g., that South African, Asian, and indigenous American peoples all participated in rock/cave expressions of a visionary aesthetic). In this way, the apparent paucity of evidence can be mitigated and theories proposed, tested, refined, and potentially rejected by conflicting evidence or new information, as in other periods of art history and in other disciplines.
CONTENT AREA 2
ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN
3500 B.C.E.–300 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-1.
Artistic traditions of the ancient Near East and dynastic Egypt focused on representing royal figures and divinities and on the function of funerary and palatial complexes within their cultural contexts. Works of art illustrate the active exchange of ideas and reception of artistic styles among the Mediterranean cultures and the subsequent influence on the classical world.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-1A.
The art of the ancient Near East (present-day Iraq, Syria, Iran, Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Cyprus, from 3500 to 330 B.C.E.) is associated with successive city-states and cultural powers: Sumerian, Akkadian, Neo-Sumerian and Babylonian, Assyrian, Neo-Babylonian, and Persian. The art of dynastic Egypt (present-day Egypt and Sudan, from 3000 to 30 B.C.E.) generally includes coverage of predynastic Egypt and Old, Middle, and New Kingdoms. The Amarna period (New Kingdom) was also important because of its cultural reform and stylistic revolution.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-1B.
The study of artistic innovations and conventions developed in the ancient Near East and dynastic Egypt (facilitated by recorded information from the time) provides a foundation for comparative understanding of subsequent artistic traditions within the region and beyond.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-2.
Religion plays a significant role in the art and architecture of the ancient Near East, with cosmology guiding representation of deities and kings who themselves assume divine attributes.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-2A.
Artists created fully developed, formal types, including sculptures of human figures interacting with gods and stylistic conventions representing the human form with a combined profile and three-quarter view. In these combinations, important figures are set apart using a hierarchical scale or by dividing the compositions into horizontal sections or registers, which provide significant early examples of historical narratives.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-2B.
Architectural representations include towering ziggurats that provide monumental settings for the worship of many deities, as well as heavily fortified palaces that increased in opulence over the centuries, proclaiming the power and authority of rulers.
**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-3.**
The art of dynastic Egypt embodies a sense of permanence. It was created for eternity in the service of a culture that focused on preserving a cycle of rebirth.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-3A.**
The culture of dynastic Egypt represents an elaborate funerary sect whose devotees created numerous ka statues (to house the ka, or spirit, after death), artifacts, decorations, and furnishings for tombs. Egyptian art incorporates mythological and religious symbolism, often centered on the cult of the sun. Development of monumental stone architecture culminated with the pyramids and with innovative designs for rock-cut tombs and pylon (massive sloped gateway) temples, each demonstrating the importance of the pharaoh — a god-king with absolute power, descended directly from the sun god. The Egyptian architectural construction of the clerestory is particularly important for the history of architecture.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-3B.**
Representations of humans make clear distinctions between the deified pharaoh and people in lower classes, using representational and stylistic cues such as hierarchical proportion and idealization versus naturalism. Approaches to portraiture depend on a figure’s rank in society. The artistic canon of dynastic Egypt, with strict conventions of representation, use of materials, and treatment of forms, was followed for many centuries with only short-lived periods of experimentation and deviation. Innovations in art and architecture tended to occur within the basic and established scheme.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-4.**
The art of Ancient Greece and Rome is grounded in civic ideals and polytheism. Etruscan and Roman artists and architects accumulated and creatively adapted Greek objects and forms to create buildings and artworks that appealed to their tastes for eclecticism and historicism.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-4A.**
Ancient Greek art was produced in Europe and western Asia, primarily in the region of present-day Greece, Turkey, and southern Italy, from 600 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. Etruscan art (c. 700–100 B.C.E., from the region of Etruria in central Italy) and ancient Roman art was produced in Europe and western Asia from c. 753 B.C.E. to 337 C.E. The arts of these early western artistic cultures are generally studied chronologically. Additionally, archaeological models and stylistic analysis have identified periods based on stylistic changes. Artworks are assigned to periods according to styles (e.g., archaic Greek), governments, or dynasties (e.g., the Roman Republic).

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-4B.**
Art considered Ancient Greek includes works from the archaic, classical, and Hellenistic periods, as defined according to artistic style, not by political units such as governments or dynasties. Etruscan art is typically considered as a single cultural unit even though Etruria was comprised of separate city-states. Roman art includes works from the republican, early imperial, late imperial, and late antique periods, as defined using governmental structures and dynasties rather than stylistic characteristics. Many Hellenistic works are in fact Roman in origin, which favors presenting these traditions at the same time.
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-4C
Ancient Greek, Etruscan, and Roman artists and architects were influenced by earlier Mediterranean cultures. Ancient Greek religious and civic architecture and figural representation are characterized by idealized proportions and spatial relationships, expressing societal values of harmony and order. Art from the Etruscan and Roman periods is typified by stylistic and iconographical eclecticism and portraiture. Etruscan and ancient Roman art express republican and imperial values, power, and preference for conspicuous display. Etruscan and Roman architecture are characterized by investment in public structures. Roman architecture is also characterized by borrowing from its immediate predecessors (Greek and Etruscan) and by technical innovation.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-4D.
Ancient Greek and Roman art provides the foundation for the later development of European and Mediterranean artistic traditions. From the 18th century onward, European and American observers admired ancient Greek and Roman ethical and governmental systems, which contributed to prioritizing art and architecture that could be associated with political elites and cultural capitals (e.g., Rome). More recently, art historians have examined art produced by contemporary subjects or “provincial” populations.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 2-5.
Contextual information for ancient Greek and Roman art can be derived from contemporary literary, political, legal, and economic records as well as from archaeological excavations conducted from the mid-18th century onward. Etruscan art, by contrast, is illuminated primarily by modern archaeological record and by descriptions of contemporary external observers.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-5A.
Some of the earliest written statements about artists and art making survive from the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. Little survives of the rich Etruscan literary tradition that is documented in Roman sources.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 2-5B.
The Greek, Etruscan, and Roman cultures shared a rich tradition of epic storytelling (first orally transmitted, later written) that glorified the exploits of gods, goddesses, and heroes. The texts recorded a highly developed rhetorical tradition that prized public oratory and poetry. Religious rituals and prognostications were guided by oral tradition, not texts.
CONTENT AREA 3
EARLY EUROPE AND COLONIAL AMERICAS
200–1750 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 3-1.
European medieval art is generally studied in chronological order and divided into geographical regions, governing cultures, and identifiable styles, with associated but distinctive artistic traditions. There is significant overlap in time, geography, practice, and heritage of art created within this time frame and region. Nationalist agendas and disciplinary divisions based on the predominant language (Greek, Latin, or Arabic) and religion (Judaism, Western or Eastern Orthodox Christianity, or Islam) have caused considerable fragmentation in the study of medieval art.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-1A.
Medieval artistic traditions include late antique, early Christian, Byzantine, Islamic, migratory, Carolingian*, Romanesque, and Gothic, named for their principal culture, religion, government, and/or artistic style. Continuities and exchanges between coexisting traditions in medieval Europe are evident in shared artistic forms, functions, and techniques. Contextual information comes primarily from literary, theological, and governmental (both secular and religious) records, which vary in quantity according to period and geographical region, and to a lesser extent from archaeological excavations.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-1B.
Before the late Middle Ages, the coexistence of many regional styles makes period-wide generalizations impossible. Isolated regional revivals of naturalism and classicism occurred, sometimes motivated by the association of classicism with the Roman Christian emperors and church. Other traditions, such as those of European Islamic art and early medieval migratory art, embraced calligraphic line and script, as well as dense geometrical and organic ornament.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-1C.
Medieval artists and architects were heavily influenced by earlier and contemporary cultures, including coexisting European cultures. Thus early medieval and Byzantine art was influenced by Roman art and by motifs and techniques brought by migratory tribes from eastern Europe, West Asia, and Scandinavia. High medieval art was influenced by Roman, Islamic, and migratory art, and European Islamic art was influenced by Roman, migratory, Byzantine, and West Asian art.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 3-2.
Medieval art (European, c. 300–1400 C.E.; Islamic, c. 300–1600 C.E.) derived from the requirements of worship (Jewish, Christian, or Islamic), elite or court culture, and learning.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-2A.
Elite religious and court cultures throughout the Middle Ages prioritized the study of theology, music, literary and poetic invention, and in the Islamic world, scientific and mathematical theory. Cultural and artistic exchanges were facilitated through trade and conquest.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-2B.**
Surviving architecture is primarily religious in function (though domestic architecture survives from the late Middle Ages); ground plans and elevations both accommodated worship and incorporated symbolic numbers, shapes, and ornament.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-2C.**
Medieval figurative and aniconic two- and three-dimensional works of art are characterized by stylistic variety, avoidance of naturalism, primarily religious or courtly subject matter, and the incorporation of text.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-2D.**
Periodic rejections of figural imagery on religious structures or objects on theological grounds were common to all three major medieval religions. These artworks could facilitate a connection with the divine through their iconography (icons) or contents (reliquaries).

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 3-3.**
Art from the early modern Atlantic World is typically studied in chronological order, by geographical region, according to style, and by medium. Thus, early modernity and the Atlantic arena are highlighted, framing the initiation of globalization and emergence of modern Europe, and recognizing the role of the Americas in these developments. More attention has been given in recent years to larger cultural interactions, exchanges, and appropriations.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-3A.**
The early modern Atlantic World encompasses what today is known as Western Europe — specifically Italy, Spain, France, Germany, England, Belgium, and the Netherlands — and those territories in the Americas that were part of the Spanish empire, including the Caribbean, the Western and Southwestern regions of the United States, Mexico, Central America, and South America, from approximately 1400 to 1850 C.E. Study of this art historical period, and specifically of the European material traditionally identified by the more familiar labels of Renaissance and Baroque, is canonical in the discipline and is thus extremely well documented. Most primary source material is housed in archives and libraries worldwide and includes works of art both in situ and in private and public collections. An immense body of secondary scholarly literature also exists.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-3B.**
The traditional art history survey presents a historical narrative that, by selectively mapping development of the so-called Old World, constructs the idea of the West. One problem with this model is that in privileging Europe, the Old World is placed in an oppositional relationship to the rest of the world, which tends to be marginalized, if not neglected. A focus upon early modernity and interconnectedness of the Atlantic regions presents a more comprehensive approach to the study of art.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-3C.**
The advent of the Age of Exploration in the late 15th century resulted in the emergence of global commercial and cultural networks via transoceanic trade and colonization. European ideas, forms, and practices began to be disseminated worldwide as a result of exploration, trade, conquest, and colonization.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-3D.**
Information and objects from different parts of the world were gathered in European cultural centers, where their influence is evident in the contents of curiosity cabinets, advances in science and technology, consolidation of European political and economic power, and the development of modern conceptions of difference such as race and nationalism.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 3-4.**
The arts of 15th century Europe reflected an interest in classical models, enhanced naturalism, Christianity, pageantry, and increasingly formalized artistic training. In the 17th century, architectural design and figuration in painting and sculpture continued to be based on classical principles and formulas but with a pronounced interest in compositional complexity, dynamic movement, and theatricality. There was an increasing emphasis on time, narrative, heightened naturalism, and psychological or emotional impact.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-4A.**
Developments in the form and use of visual elements, such as linear and atmospheric perspective, composition, color, figuration, and narrative, enhanced the illusion of naturalism.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-4B.**
The emergence of academies redefined art training and the production and identity of the artist by introducing more structured, theoretical curricula in centralized educational institutions.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-4C.**
Corporate and individual patronage informed the production, content, form, and display of art — from panel painting, altarpieces, sculpture, and print to myriad decorative arts, such as metalwork and textiles. Displayed in churches, chapels, convents, palaces, and civic buildings, the arts performed various functions (e.g., propagandistic, commemorative, didactic, devotional, ritual, recreational, and decorative).

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-4D.**
Art production in the Spanish viceroyalties in the Americas exhibited a hybridization of European and indigenous ideas, forms, and materials, with some African and Asian influences. Although much colonial art is religious, nonreligious subjects such as portraiture, allegory, genre, history, and decorative arts were central to Spanish viceregal societies.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 3-5.**
The 16th-century Protestant Reformation and subsequent Catholic Counter-Reformation compelled a divergence between northern and southern western European art with respect to form, function, and content.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-5A.**
Production of religious imagery declined in northern Europe, and nonreligious genres, such as landscape, still life, genre, history, mythology, and portraiture, developed and flourished. In the south, there was an increase in the production of political propaganda, religious imagery, and pageantry, with the elaboration of naturalism, dynamic compositions, bold color schemes, and the affective power of images and constructed spaces.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 3-5B.**
Art production in the Spanish viceroyalties paralleled European art practices in terms of themes, materials, formal vocabulary, display, and reception. However, given the Spanish Catholic context in which this art production developed, Spanish colonial art of the early modern period corresponded more closely to that of southern Europe.
CONTENT AREA 4
LATER EUROPE AND AMERICAS
1750–1980 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 4-1.
From the mid-1700s to 1980 C.E., Europe and the Americas experienced rapid change and innovation. Art existed in the context of dramatic events such as industrialization, urbanization, economic upheaval, migrations, and wars. Countries and governments were re-formed; women’s and civil rights’ movements catalyzed social change.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 4-1A.
The Enlightenment set the stage for this era. Scientific inquiry and empirical evidence were promoted in order to reveal and understand the physical world. Belief in knowledge and progress led to revolutions and a new emphasis on human rights. Subsequently, Romanticism offered a critique of Enlightenment principles and industrialization.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 4-1B.
Philosophies of Marx and Darwin impacted worldviews, followed by the work of Freud and Einstein. Later, postmodern theory influenced art making and the study of art. In addition, artists were affected by exposure to diverse cultures, largely as a result of colonialism. The advent of mass production supplied artists with ready images, which they were quick to appropriate.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 4-2.
Artists assumed new roles in society. Styles of art proliferated and often gave rise to artistic movements. Art and architecture exhibited a diversity of styles, forming an array of “isms.”

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 4-2A.
Diverse artists with a common dedication to innovation came to be discussed as the avant-garde. Subdivisions include Neoclassicism, Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Symbolism, Expressionism, Cubism, Constructivism, Abstraction, Surrealism, Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, performance art, and earth and environmental art. Many of these categories fall under the general heading of modernism.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 4-2B.
Artists were initially bonded by sanctioned academies and pursued inclusion in juried salons for their work to be displayed. Later, when this system broke down, they joined together in self-defined groups, often on the margins of the mainstream art world, and they often published manifestos of their beliefs. Change and innovation dominated this era and became goals in their own right. Women artists slowly gained recognition as many artists competed for admiration of their individuality and genius.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 4-2C.**
Artists employed new media, including lithography, photography, film, and serigraphy. They used industrial technology and prefabrication, as well as many new materials, to create innovative and monumental works, culminating with massive earthworks. Performance was enacted in novel ways and recorded on film and video.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 4-2D.**
Architecture witnessed a series of revival styles, including classical, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque. In the mid-19th century, advances in technology, such as the steel frame, ferroconcrete construction, and cantilevering, hastened the development of building construction. Skyscrapers proliferated and led to an international style of architecture that was later challenged by postmodernism.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 4-3.**
Works of art took on new roles and functions in society and were experienced by audiences in new ways. Art of this era often proved challenging for audiences and patrons to immediately understand.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 4-3A.**
Art was displayed at public exhibitions such as the Salon in Paris and later at commercial art galleries. The museum became an important institution of civic and national status and pride. The sale of art to the public became the leading driver of art production. The collection of art increased, driving up prices, as art became a commodity that appreciated in value. After the devastation of Europe in World War II, artists in the United States dominated the art market.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 4-3B.**
Church patronage declined and corporate patronage emerged. The influence of the academies receded in favor of radical individualism; some artists worked without patronage. Audiences ranged from private patrons to the public, which was sometimes hostile toward art that broke with tradition.
CONTENT AREA 5
INDIGENOUS AMERICAS
1000 B.C.E.–1980 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 5-1.
Art of the Indigenous Americas is among the world’s oldest artistic traditions. While its roots lie in northern Asia, it developed independently between c. 10,000 B.C.E. and 1492 C.E., which marked the beginning of the European invasions. Regions and cultures are referred to as the Indigenous Americas to signal the priority of First Nations cultural traditions over those of the colonizing and migrant peoples that have progressively taken over the American continents for the last 500 years.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-1A.
Art of the Indigenous Americas is categorized by geography and chronology into the designations of Ancient America and Native North America. “Ancient America” is the category used for art created before 1550 C.E., south of the current U.S.–Mexico border. This region is traditionally divided into three main areas of culture: Mesoamerica, Central America*, and Andean South America. “Native North America” denotes traditionally oriented cultures north of the U.S.–Mexico border from ancient times to the present, with an emphasis on 1492 C.E. to today. Native North America has many regional subunits, such as the Northwest Coast, Southwest, Plains, and Eastern Woodlands.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-1B.
Artistic traditions of the indigenous Americas exhibit overarching traits: content that emphasizes unity with the natural world and a five-direction (North, South, East, West, Center) cosmic geometry; spirituality based in visionary shamanism; high value placed on animal-based media, such as featherwork, bone carving, and hide painting; incorporation of trade materials (e.g., greenstones such as turquoise and jadeite, shells such as the spiny oyster, and in the case of Native North America, imported beads, machine-made cloth, and glazes); stylistic focus on the essence rather than the appearance of subjects; and creation of aesthetic objects that have a strong functional aspect, reference, or utility (e.g., vessels, grinding platforms, and pipes). What is called “art” is considered to have, contain, and/or transfer life force rather than simply represent an image. Likewise, art is considered participatory and active, rather than simply made for passive viewing.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 5-2.
Ancient Mesoamerica encompassed what is now Mexico (from Mexico City southward), Guatemala, Belize, and western Honduras, from 15,000 B.C.E. to 1521 C.E., which was the time of the Mexica (Aztec) downfall. General cultural similarities of ancient Mesoamerica include similar calendars, pyramidal stepped structures, sites and buildings oriented in relation to sacred mountains and celestial phenomena, and highly valued green materials, such as jadeite and quetzal feathers.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-2A.**

Three major distinct cultures and styles of Ancient Mesoamerica (Middle America) were the Olmec, Maya, and Mexica (aka Aztec — the empire was dominated by the Mexica ethnic group). The Olmec existed during the first millennium B.C.E., primarily in the Gulf Coast; the Mayan culture peaked during the first millennium C.E. in eastern Mesoamerica (the Yucatan Peninsula, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras); and the Mexica existed from 1428 to 1521 C.E. in the region of central Mexico, though subordinating most of Mesoamerica. (Other important cultures include Teotihuacan, Toltec, West Mexican, Mixtec, and Zapotec.)* Styles from the various Mesoamerican cultures differed markedly. Mesoamerican pyramids began as early earthworks, changed to nine-level structures with single temples, and then later became structures with twin temples. Sacred sites were renovated and enlarged repeatedly over the centuries, resulting in acropoli and massive temples. Architecture was mainly stone post-and-lintel, often faced with relief sculpture and painted bright colors, emphasizing large masses that sculpt outdoor space. Plazas were typical for large ritual gatherings. Elaborate burials and other underground installations to honor the role of the Underworld were also found.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-2B.**

Mesoamerican sculptural and two-dimensional art tended toward the figural, particularly in glorification of specific rulers. Mythical events were also depicted in a realistic, figural mode. Despite the naturalistic styles and anthropomorphic interpretations of subject matter, shamanic transformation, visions, and depiction of other cosmic realms figure prominently in Mesoamerican art. Art was produced primarily in workshops, but certain individual artists’ styles have been identified (particularly in Maya), and some works of art were signed. Artists were typically elite specialists and, among the Maya, the second sons of royalty. Rulers were the major, but not the only, patrons. Audiences were both large, for calendrical rituals in plazas, and small, for gatherings of priests and nobles inside small temples atop pyramids. Some audiences were supernatural, as for the elaborate graves considered to be located in the Underworld.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-2C.**

Mesoamerica has had an influence on its invaders and the world at large since the 16th century. Mesoamerica is the origin of many of the world’s staple foods: chocolate, vanilla, tomatoes, avocados, and maize (corn). Mesoamericans discovered rubber, invented the first ballgame, and included a number of matrilinear and matriarchal cultures (promoting women’s power). Recognition of the importance of this area in world history and art has lagged, but it increases as inclusiveness and multiculturalism grow in scholarship and popular consciousness. Indigenous culture continues: over seven million people speak Mayan languages today, and over one million speak Nahuatl, the Aztec language.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-2D.**
When Mexico was first discovered by Europe, gifts of Mexica art sent to Charles V alerted such artists as Albrecht Dürer to the unfamiliar but impressive media and images from the New World. Colonial artists preserved certain pre-Hispanic traditions both overtly and covertly in their art. After independence from Spain (in the early 19th century), the Aztec were claimed in nationalistic causes and national museums were created to promote ancient art. Twentieth-century muralists, such as Diego Rivera, overtly incorporated themes from the Mexica past. Twentieth-century European and American artists, such as Henry Moore* and Frank Lloyd Wright, were strongly influenced by the sculpture and architecture of ancient Mesoamerica as well.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 5-3.**
The ancient Central Andes comprised present-day southern Ecuador, Peru, western Bolivia, and northern Chile. General cultural similarities across the Andes include an emphasis on surviving and interacting with the challenging environments, reciprocity and cyclicality (rather than individualism), and reverence for the animal and plant worlds as part of the practice of shamanistic religion.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-3A.**
As with ancient Mesoamerica, the Central Andes was a seat of culture and art parallel to the “Old” World in antiquity, diversity, and sophistication. Baskets from this region have been found dating to as early as 8800 B.C.E., proving early peopling from Asia through the rest of the Americas was accomplished by Neolithic times. Chavín and Inka were representative and distinct early and late cultures/styles respectively (Chavin: c. 1200–500 B.C.E. in the northern highlands with reach to the southern coast; Inka: 1438–1534 C.E. covering the entire Central Andes), although many other important, art-producing cultures existed between them. Similarities within Central Andean cultures can be traced to the influence of three significantly distinct ecosystems in close proximity: the dominant Andes mountains, a narrow desert coast, and the planet’s largest rain forest, the Amazon. These environments necessarily play a central role in art, influencing the materials (especially the prominence of camelid fiber and cotton textiles), political systems (coastal diversity, highland impulses toward unification), and overall values such as reciprocity, asymmetrical dualism, and travel across long distances.
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-3B.
The necessity to interact with three disparate environments (mountains, desert coast, and rainforest) in order to survive instilled in Andean culture and art an underlying emphasis on trade in exotic materials. Complex ties linked coast with highlands; these connections brought forth themes of reciprocity, interdependence, contrast, asymmetry, and dualism. Accordingly, most Andean art seems to have been made by collaborative groups — the best known being the Inka high-status aclla weavers (the empire’s most talented women weavers, kept cloistered). A hierarchy of materials was based on availability and/or requirement for collaboration to manipulate the materials. Featherwork, textiles, and greenstone were at the top of the materials hierarchy; metalwork, bone, obsidian, and stone toward the middle; and ceramics and wood at the lower end of the hierarchy. Textiles were a primary medium and were extraordinarily well preserved on the desert coast, fulfilling key practical and artistic functions in the various environmental zones.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-3C.
Andean art tends to explore the terrestrial (e.g., animal and plant imagery, mountain veneration, sculpting of nature itself, and organic integration of architecture with the environment). It also concerns the nonterrestrial via abstraction and orientation toward the afterlife and the other realms of the cosmos. Peoples of the Andes practiced the world’s earliest and most persistent artificial mummification (in many forms, from 5500 B.C.E. onward), and almost all art became grave goods for use in the afterlife. Shamanic visionary experience was a strong theme, especially featuring humans transforming into animal selves.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-3D.
The European invasions prevailed beginning in 1534 C.E.; however, indigenous descendants of ancient peoples remain: 8 to 10 million people still speak Quechua, the Inka language. Being more distant geographically and aesthetically, Andean art was less well known to early modern Europe and current society than Mesoamerican art. However, some key modern Euro–American artists, such as Paul Gauguin, Josef and Anni Albers*, and Paul Klee*, found inspiration in ancient Peruvian textiles and ceramics. Modern Latin American artists, such as Joaquín Torres García of Uruguay*, blended Inka art and architecture with modernist theory and style, exploring a common abstract vocabulary.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 5-4.
Despite underlying similarities, there are key differences between the art of Ancient America and Native North America with respect to its dating, environment, cultural continuity from antiquity to the present, and sources of information. Colonization by different European groups (Catholic and Protestant) undergirds distinct modern political situations for Amerindian survivors. Persecution, genocide, and marginalization have shaped current identity and artistic expression.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-4A.**
Archaeological excavation of works of art, monuments, and cities/sites predating European invasion serves as the mainstay for reconstructing the art and culture of ancient America, although the majority of surviving artworks were not scientifically extracted. Spanish chronicles by invaders, friars, and colonists provide some information about monuments and artistic practices of the last independent indigenous peoples, such as the Inka, Mexica (known as Aztecs), and Puebloans; these sources can be cautiously applied to earlier cultures’ basic values and approaches. Hieroglyphs of the Mayas and Mexica illuminate text and image, historical, and artistic elements for those cultures. Ethnographic analogy highlights basic cultural continuities so that present traditional practices, myths, and religious beliefs may illuminate past artistic materials, creative processes, and iconography. Other disciplines, such as astronomy, botany, and zoology, help identify siting of cities and monuments, as well as native flora and fauna subject matter. Like all art historical research, work in these areas uses iconographic and formal analyses of large numbers of artworks and increasingly employs multidisciplinary collaboration.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-4B.**
Sources of information for Native North American art include archaeological excavations for precontact and colonial cultures, written ethnohistoric documents, tribal history (oral and written), modern artists’ accounts and interviews, and museum records. Colonial and modern mistreatment of American Indians means that historical information sources may be highly contested by American Indians. Divergent stories depend on whether native or white sources are used. Sometimes the stories converge in a positive way, as in Maria and Julian Martínez’ revival of ancient black-in-black ceramic techniques, which was encouraged by anthropologists.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 5-5.**
Although disease and genocide practiced by the European invaders and colonists reduced their population by as much as 90 percent, Native Americans today maintain their cultural identity and uphold modern versions of ancient traditions in addition to creating new art forms as part of the globalized contemporary art world.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-5A.**
Indians, Native Americans, North American Indians (in the United States), and First Nations (in Canada) are nonindigenous terms for the indigenous peoples inhabiting areas north of what is now the U.S.–Mexico border, from ancient times to the present. They did not have a collective name for themselves, being many different tribes and nations.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-5B.**

Native American art media include earthworks, stone and adobe architecture, wood and bone carving, weaving and basketry, hide painting, ceramics, quillwork and beadwork, and, recently, painting on canvas and other European-style media. Many Native American artworks are ritual objects to wear, carry, or use during special ceremonies in front of large audiences. Functionality of the object is preferred; the more active a work of art, the more it is believed to contain and transfer life force and power. Centuries of interaction with colonial and migrant peoples means that some imported materials (e.g., glass beads, machine-made cloth, and ribbon) are now considered traditional. Likewise, in subject matter, the Spanish-introduced horse has become a cultural and artistic staple, alongside the indigenous buffalo, raven, and bear. European influence is inevitable but may be subtle. What is considered traditional is constantly changing; there is no singular, timeless, authentic Native American art or practice.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-5C.**

Different regions of Native America have broadly similar styles of art, allowing grouping into Arctic*, Northwest Coast, Southwest, Plains, and Eastern Woodlands, among others. Geometric patterning, figures (often mythic or shamanic), and animals (e.g., snakes, birds, bison, and horses) are often seen. The various Native American groups may be seen to share larger ideas of harmony with nature, oneness with animals, respect for elders, community cohesion, dream guidance, shamanic leadership, and participation in large rituals (such as potlatches and sun dances). Postcontact art not only reflects these long-standing values, but it is also concerned with the history of conflict within tribes and between indigenous people and the U.S. and Canadian governments.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-5D.**

Intellectual pursuits apparent in artistic expressions include astronomical observation; poetry, song, and dance; and medicine (curing and divining). Artistic practices included workshops, apprentice–master relationships, and, less often, solitary art making. Some specialization by gender (e.g., women weaving, men carving) can be seen. Patrons might be the tribal leaders, an elder, or a family member. Audiences mostly were the entire group, though some objects and performances were restricted by their sacred or political nature.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 5-5E.**

Due to the history of suppression and forced assimilation into white culture, influence of Native North American art on modern U.S. and European art styles has been minimized. However, recent cultural revitalization of traditions and active contemporary artistic production by self-taught and academically trained artists keep Native American participation in global artistry alive. Strains range from self-conscious revival of ancient arts, such as in Puebloan pottery, to cutting political commentary on racism and injustice.
CONTENT AREA 6
AFRICA
1100–1980 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 6-1.
Human life, which is understood to have begun in Africa, developed over millions of years and radiated beyond the continent of Africa. The earliest African art dates to 77,000 years ago. While interpretation of this art is conjectural at best, the clarity and strength of design and expression in the work is obvious.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-1A.
Early artistic expression on the African continent is found in the rock art of the Sahara and in southern Africa. Those works depict the animals that lived in each region, human pursuits (e.g., herding, combat, and perhaps dance or some sort of regularized behavior), contact among different groups of people, and the use of technologies (e.g., horses and chariots).

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-1B.
The now-deserts of the Sahara were once grasslands and an original source of agriculture and animal husbandry. As the desert grew, it stretched toward the still well-watered valley of the Nile and the culture of Pharaonic Egypt. Resulting human migrations carried populations southward into central Africa and eventually across the Congo River Basin. The arts, major world religions, and international trade routes followed those paths and flourished in patterns of distribution seen in Africa today.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 6-2.
Human beliefs and interactions in Africa are instigated by the arts. African arts are active; they motivate behavior, contain and express belief, and validate social organization and human relations.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-2A.
Art in Africa is a combination of objects, acts, and events, created in a wide variety of media (vocal, aural, and visual) and materials (wood, ivory, metals, ceramic, fiber, and elements of nature) that are carved, cast, forged, modeled, woven, and combined by recognized specialists for knowledgeable patrons.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-2B.
Art reveals belief systems; it presents a world that is known but not necessarily seen, predictable, or even available to everyone. These arts are expressive rather than representational and often require specialized or supernaturally ordained capabilities for their creation, use, and interpretation. African art is concerned with ideas (beliefs and relationships that exist in the social and intellectual world) rather than the with objects of the natural or physical world. Art is created for both daily use and ritual purposes (such as leadership, religious beliefs, diagnosis and divination, education, and personal adornment).
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-2C.**
Art forms may be prescribed by a diviner, commissioned by a supplicant, and produced by a specific artist. The art object comes under the custodianship of the person who commissioned it or a member of his or her family. Performances of objects are accompanied by costumes and music. None of these practices is simple or random. Cultural protocols acknowledge and ensure the efficacy and appropriateness of artistic experience in Africa. African art is sung, danced, and presented in holistic experiences for designated audiences; it is created for specific reasons and to produce expected results.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 6-3.**
Use and efficacy are central to the art of Africa. African arts, though often characterized, collected, and exhibited as figural sculptures and masks, are by nature meant to be performed rather than simply viewed. African arts are often described in terms of the contexts and functions with which they appear to be associated.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-3A.**
As in all arts, aspects of human experience (such as origins, destinies, beliefs, physicality, power, and gender) are expressed through objects and performances. Artistic expression in Africa is an integral part of social life, connecting daily practices to beliefs, systems of power and authority, and social networks that link people to their families, communities, and shared ancestors. African arts mark status, identity, and cycles of human experience (e.g., maturational, seasonal, astronomical, and liturgical).

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-3B.**
Education, incorporation into adulthood, and civic responsibility are processes marked by the creation, manipulation, and interpretation of art objects. The arts of authority (both achieved and inherited status and roles) legitimate traditional leadership. Leaders’ histories and accomplishments are often entrusted to and lauded by historians, bards, and elders. Personal identity, social status, and relationships are delineated by aesthetic choices and artistic expression. Common ancestors link leaders, sanction social behavior and choices, and define the order of social life.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-3C.**
Urbanization and its monumental trappings (both bureaucratic and architectural) often associated with “civilization” take many forms in Africa. Administrative and liturgical centers exist apart from settlement that is often determined by the spaces required for agriculture or herding. Seasonal climatic shifts and demands of political relations affect the scale and distribution of built environments and arts that mark them. The sites of Meroë, Timbuktu, Zimbabwe, Igbo Ukwu, and Kilwa Kisiwani demonstrate that range of monumentalities.
ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 6-4.
Outsiders have often characterized, collected, and exhibited African arts as primitive, ethnographic, anonymous, and static, when in reality Africa’s interaction with the rest of the world led to dynamic intellectual and artistic traditions that sustain hundreds of cultures and almost as many languages, contributing dramatically to the corpus of human expression. African life and arts have been deeply affected by ongoing, cosmopolitan patterns of interaction with populations around the world and through time.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-4A.
African histories, often sung or recited, are traditionally the responsibility of specialists. Outsiders often see those histories as timeless and unchanging. The Africa we know often comes from ideas promulgated by foreigners since the ninth century — as though history were brought to, rather than originating from, Africa.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-4B.
As they have been traditionally collected by outsiders, African art objects that are similar in form are often grouped with works that come from the same place and are produced by a designated ethnic group. The name of the artist and the date of creation are rarely acknowledged by the outsiders who collected them. These gaps in the record do not reflect a lack of interest on the part of those who commission, use, and protect art objects; rather they are the result of ignorance and predisposition by those collecting, describing, and explaining African art.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 6-4C.
Creative contributions of African life and arts are found in populations around the world. Artistic practices were conveyed by and continue to be serviced by African people and beliefs, from Macao to Manaus to Mauritania. These creative contributions are reflected in diverse art forms, from the practices of Santeria to Japanese screens and the paintings of Renaissance Venice. The literatures of Negritude and the Harlem Renaissance expanded the notions of place and race to new levels that are again changing in the contemporary diaspora. Although traditional African art forms are usually described and exhibited, contemporary African arts have increased awareness and understanding of the arts of the continent across the globe.
CONTENT AREA 7
WEST AND CENTRAL ASIA
500 B.C.E.–1980 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 7-1.
The arts of West and Central Asia play a key role in the history of world art, giving form to the vast cultural interchanges that have occurred in these lands that link the European and Asian peoples.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-1A.
Historical cultures of West and Central Asia reside in a vast area that includes the Arabian Peninsula and the Levant, Anatolia, Greater Iran, Central Asia, Inner Asia, and Himalayan Asia. These regions have had shifting political boundaries throughout their histories and include lands associated with the former Soviet Union and modern China. They form the heart of the ancient Silk Route that connected the Greco–Roman world with China and India.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-1B.
Arts attest to the transmission and influence of cultural ideas, such as Islam and Buddhism, and cultural art forms, such as Hellenistic architecture, Buddhist sculpture, chinoiserie (in Persian art), and ceramic-tile decoration. Cross-cultural comparisons with the arts of these regions may be made most readily to the arts of the ancient Mediterranean, medieval Europe, and South, East, and Southeast Asia.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-1C.
West Asia is the cradle of arts produced in regions with a dominant Islamic culture. These arts may be religious or secular in nature, and may or may not have been made by or for Muslims. The term “Islamic Art” may be applied to these diverse art forms. Many examples of Islamic art from across the traditional Islamic lands share similarities in terms of their content and visual characteristics.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-1D.
The arts of West and Central Asia were created for and acquired by various kinds of local and global patrons. Audiences for these works included royal and wealthy patrons, lay and monastic religious practitioners, and foreign collectors who acquired works through gift or trade.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-1E.
The arts of West and Central Asia had great international impact through trade. Textiles were perhaps the most important art form in these regions and dominated much of the international trade between Europe and Asia. Islamic metalworks, including examples with Christian subject matter, were created for trade in the regions bordering the Mediterranean. Ceramics were another important trade item, particularly the iznik wares created in Turkey.
ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 7-2.
The religious arts of West and Central Asia are united by the traditions of the region: Buddhism and Islam.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-2A.
Cultures of these regions are diverse, but they were united through their shared beliefs and practices, particularly the world religions of Buddhism, which originated in the sixth century B.C.E. in South Asia, and Islam, which originated in the seventh century C.E. in West Asia.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-2B.
Architecture in West and Central Asia is frequently religious in function. West and Central Asia is home to many important Islamic mosques, which are decorated with nonfigural imagery, including calligraphy and vegetal forms. All mosques have a Qibla wall, which faces the direction of Mecca, home of the Kaaba. This wall is ornamented with an empty Mihrab niche, serving as a focus for prayer. A large congregational mosque may also include a Minbar (pulpit for the imam), as well as a Minaret and a central courtyard to call and accommodate practitioners for prayer. Other important forms of Islamic religious architecture include commemorative monuments, such as the Kaaba and the Dome of the Rock, and tomb architecture. Central Asia is further recognized for its outstanding Buddhist cave architecture, which incorporates relief carving, constructive sculpture, and wall painting. In the Tibetan lands, Buddhist architecture flourishes in the form of stupas and monastic architecture.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-2C.
Pilgrimage is an important religious practice in Islam and Buddhism and is a key focus of several monuments and artworks in West and Central Asia including the following: the Kaaba, the most sacred site in Islam; the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem; and the Buddha sculpture Jowo Rinpoche, considered the most sacred image in Tibet.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 7-3.
Use of figural art in religious contexts varies among traditions, whereas figural art is common in secular art forms across West and Central Asia.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-3A.
Figural art is a primary form of visual communication in Buddhist communities in Central Asia, as it is across Asia. Figural imagery is used to depict Buddhas and various attendants, teachers, practitioners, and deities. This is an iconic culture, and the presence of invoked figural imagery is important to Buddhist practices. These figures may be venerated in shrine settings, may inhabit conceptual landscapes and palaces of ideal Buddhist worlds, may be found in mandalas, or may be depicted in paintings.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-3B.
Islamic art that is created for religious purposes does not contain figural imagery. Mosque architecture is decorated with nonfigural imagery, including calligraphy, geometric, and vegetal forms. Manuscripts or objects containing sacred texts may contain calligraphy, illumination, or geometric and vegetal decoration, but should not contain figural imagery.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-3C.**
Figural art is an important subject of Islamic art in West and Central Asia. Islamic cultures draw a clear distinction between sacred and secular contexts, and figural imagery abounds in secular works, such as decorative arts and manuscript painting, which often depict sociological types, such as hunters or courtiers, or narrative subjects, such as the ancient kings and heroes of the Persian Shahnama. Religious ideas or content are sometimes carried over into secular art forms and may be illustrated when they become the subject of courtly or popular literature and poetry. For example, the prophet Moses might be illustrated in a manuscript of the Khamsa of Nizami. He would not be illustrated, however, in a manuscript of the holy Qur’an.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 7-4.**
Artists of West and Central Asia excelled in the creation of particular art forms exhibiting key characteristics unique to their regions and cultures. Important forms include ceramics, metalwork, textiles, painting, and calligraphy.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-4A.**
Styles of art from West Asia tend to favor two-dimensional design. These works are often highly decorative, employing geometric and organic forms and vegetal designs, qualities that carry over into figural works, where figures inhabit flat or shallow spaces with tipped perspectives and patterned landscapes. West Asian art finds its greatest source of refinement and international influence in the Persianate arts from the Timurid and Safavid Dynasties of Iran, which influenced the Ottoman arts of Turkey and the Mughal arts of India. Styles of art in Central Asia can be divided into Persianate Islamic styles, which maintain developments made in West Asian art, and Indian-inspired styles, which are characterized by the idealized figural art traditions of South Asia.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-4B.**
Ceramic arts have flourished in West Asia since the prehistoric era, and many technical advancements in this media, such as the development of lusterware and cobalt-on-white slip painting, developed here. Ceramic arts were used to create utilitarian vessels and elaborate painted and mosaic-tile architectural decoration, carrying forward artistic practices explored in ancient West Asia (the Near East). Highpoints in West and Central Asian ceramics include Persian mosaic-tile architecture from the Seljuk through the Safavid Dynasties, as seen in the Great Mosque of Isfahan, and Iznik tile work and export ceramics created during the Ottoman Dynasty.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-4C.**
Metalwork and metallurgy flourished in West and Central Asia in the creation of metal plaques, vessels, arms, armor and tack, sculpture, and decorative objects of all kinds. Islamic metalwork is widely regarded as one of the finest decorative art forms of the medieval world. Metal sculpture was an important art form in Central Asian and Himalayan Buddhist art, which created Buddhist figures in bronze, copper, brass and silver, and often ornamented them with gilding, metal inlay, and paint. Metal artworks were created through various processes including casting, beating, chasing, inlaying, and embossing.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-4D.**
Textile forms from this region include silk-tapestry weaving, silk velvets, and wool and silk carpets.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 7-4E.**
Painting in West and Central Asia usually took three forms: wall painting, manuscript painting, and in the Himalayan regions, the painting of thangkas (large paintings on cloth) of Buddhist deities and mandalas. Calligraphy was a prominent art form, particularly in Islamic art in West Asia where beautiful forms were created to transmit sacred texts. Calligraphy is found on architecture, decorative arts objects, and ceramic tiles, as well as in manuscripts written on paper, cloth, or vellum.
CONTENT AREA 8
SOUTH, EAST, AND SOUTHEAST ASIA
300 B.C.E.–1980 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 8-1.
The arts of South, East, and Southeast Asia represent some of the world’s oldest, most diverse, and most sophisticated visual traditions.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-1A.
South, East, and Southeast Asia have long traditions of art making, reaching back into prehistoric times. The earliest known ceramic vessels were found in Asia: fired shards from Yuchanyan Cave in China have been dated to 18,300 and 17,500 B.C.E., followed by Jomon vessels from Japan with shards dating back to 10,500 B.C.E. Sophisticated Neolithic and Bronze Age civilizations thrived across Asia, including the Indus Valley civilization in Pakistan and India, the Yangshao* and Longshan* cultures and Shang Dynasty* in China, the Dongson* culture in Southeast Asia, and the Yayoi* and Kofun* cultures in Japan.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-1B.
The people and cultures of these regions were diverse, but prehistoric and ancient societies based in key regions (e.g., the Indus River Valley, Gangetic Plain, and Yellow River) developed core social and religious beliefs that were embraced across larger cultural spheres, helping to shape the regional identities of people within Asia.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-1C.
The core cultural centers in Asia became home to many of the world’s great civilizations and ruling dynasties, including the following: Gupta India, Han China, Khmer Cambodia, and Heian Japan. The shared cultural ideas in each region and civilization gave birth to visual traditions that employed related subjects, functions, materials, and artistic styles.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 8-2.
Many of the world’s great religious and philosophic traditions developed in South and East Asia. Extensive traditions of distinctive religious art forms developed in this region to support the beliefs and practices of these religions.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-2A.
The ancient Indic worldview that dominated South Asia differentiated earthly and cosmic realms of existence, while recognizing certain sites or beings as sacred, and understood time and life as cyclic. The religions that developed in this region — Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and numerous folk religions — all worked within this worldview and sought spiritual development, spiritual release, or divine union through various religious methodologies and social practices. The Indic worldview was also grafted onto the preexisting animistic and popular beliefs in Southeast Asia during several waves of importation and Indian attempts at colonization.
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-2B.
East Asian religions emphasize the interconnectedness of humans with both the natural world and the spirit world. Chinese societies also developed a hierarchical and differentiated society that encouraged appropriate social behaviors. Daoism, with its almost antisocial focus on living in harmony with nature and the Dao, and Confucianism, more of an ethical system of behaviors rather than a religion, both developed in China in the fifth century B.C.E. from these foundations. Buddhism, which arrived in China in the early centuries of the Common Era, shared clear affinities with the indigenous Chinese religions through its focus on nature, interconnectedness, and appropriate behavior. Korean traditions were heavily influenced by China and incorporate Confucian, Buddhist, and local shamanistic beliefs and practices. The ancient Japanese landscape was alive and inhabited by animistic nature spirits, whose veneration forms the basis of the Shinto religion. Buddhism was actively imported to Japan from Korea and China in the seventh and eighth centuries, and as in China, it succeeded because of courtly patronage and similarities with local traditions.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-2C.
Religious practices associated with Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism are iconic, therefore figural imagery of divinities and revered teachers plays a prominent role in religious practice. The wealth of Buddhist imagery in Asia alone would rival, if not surpass, the wealth of Christian imagery in medieval Europe. Figural imagery associated with Asian religious art may be venerated in temple or shrine settings; may inhabit conceptual landscapes and palaces of ideal Buddhist worlds, or mandalas; and are depicted in paintings. Figural subjects are common in Indian and East Asian painting.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-2D.
South, East, and Southeast Asia were also home to foreign cultures and religions, including Greco–Roman cultures, Christianity, and most notably Islamic cultures from West and Central Asia. Islamic influence is particularly strong in India, Malaysia, and Indonesia, which were under at least partial control of Islamic sultanates during the second millennia C.E. These regions have also been influenced by cultures and beliefs from West Asia and Europe. Today South and Southeast Asia are home to the world’s largest Muslim populations.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-2E.
Architecture from these regions is frequently religious in function. Temples intended to house deities or shrines were constructed or rock cut. Rock-cut caves containing Buddhist imagery, shrines, stupas, and monastic spaces span across Asia from India through Central Asia to China. Japanese architecture often uses natural materials such as wood or follows Chinese architectural models with wood structures and tile roofs. Islamic architecture in South and Southeast Asia takes two major forms: secular (forts and palaces) and religious (mosques and tombs). Islamic mosques are decorated with nonfigural imagery, including calligraphy and vegetal forms. All mosques have a Qibla wall, which faces in the direction of Mecca, home of the Kaaba. This wall is ornamented with an empty Mihrab niche, which serves as a focus for prayer.
ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 8-3.
South, East, and Southeast Asia developed many artistic and architectural traditions that are deeply rooted in Asian aesthetics and cultural practices.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-3A.
Distinctive art forms from South, East, and Southeast Asia include the following: the construction of Buddhist reliquary stupas; the practice of monochromatic ink painting on silk and paper, which developed in China; the development of the Pagoda, an architectural form based upon a Chinese watchtower; the use of rock gardens, tea houses, and related ceremonies; and Japanese woodblock printing.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-3B.
The arts of South, East, and Southeast Asia include important forms developed in a wide range of media. Stone and wood carving was a prominent art form used in architectural construction, decoration, and sculpture. Ceramic arts have flourished in Asia since the prehistoric era, and many technical and stylistic advancements in this media, such as the use of high-fire porcelain, developed here. Metal was used to create sculpture, arms and armor, ritual vessels, and decorative objects of all kinds. Shang Dynasty bronze vessels* from China employed a unique piece-molding technique that has never been successfully replicated. Important textile forms from this region include silk and wool tapestry weaving, cotton weaving, printing, painting, and carpet weaving. Painting in Asia usually took two forms: wall painting and manuscript or album painting. The painting styles that developed in India and East Asia favor contour drawing of forms over modeling. Calligraphy was an important art form in these regions. In China, calligraphy was considered the highest art form, even above painting. Calligraphy was also prominent in Islamic art in Asia, and is found on architecture, decorative arts objects, and ceramic tiles, and in manuscripts written on paper, cloth, or vellum.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-3C.
The practice of the indigenous Asian religions necessitated the development of novel art and architectural forms to support them. Uniquely Asian art forms include the following: iconic images used in Buddhist and Hindu traditions; elaborate narrative and iconographic compositions created in sculptures, textiles, and wall paintings used to ornament shrines, temples, and caves; the Buddhist stupa and monastic complex; the Hindu temple; Raigo scenes* associated with Pure Land Buddhism; the Zen rock garden; and Zen ink painting.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-3D.**

South, East, and Southeast Asia have rich traditions of courtly and secular art forms that employ local subjects and styles. In India, regional painting styles developed to illustrate mythical and historical subjects, and poetic texts documented court life. In China and Japan, a new genre of literati painting developed among the educated elite. Literati paintings often reveal the nonprofessional artist’s exploration of landscape subjects, which are frequently juxtaposed with poetry. The term secular is a bit misleading when describing Asian art, as religious ideas or content frequently is carried over into secular art forms (e.g., Hindu deities depicted in Ragamala painting* in India, or Zen Buddhist sensibilities applied to ceramic production and flower arranging in Japan). Elegant and elaborate decorative programs featuring floral and animal designs are commonly found on decorative arts from East Asia.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 8-4.**

Asian art was and is global. The cultures of South, East, and Southeast Asia were interconnected through trade and politics and were also in contact with West Asia and Europe throughout history.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-4A.**

Trade greatly affected the development of Asian cultures and Asian art. Two major methods for international trade connected Asia: the Silk Route that linked Europe and Asia, connecting the Indian subcontinent to overland trade routes through Central Asia, terminating in X’ian, China, and the vast maritime networks that utilized seasonal monsoon winds to move trade between North Africa, West Asia, South and Southeast Asia, and south China. These routes were the vital mechanism for the transmission of cultural ideas and practices, such as Buddhism, and of artistic forms, media, and styles across mainland and maritime Asia.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-4B.**

Asian arts and architecture reveal exchanges of knowledge in visual style, form, and technology with traditions farther west. Early connections with the Greco–Roman world are evident in the Hellenistic-influenced artistic style and subjects found in artwork associated with ancient Gandharan culture in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Gandhara bridges what is categorized as West and East Asian content in AP Art History; influence of Gandharan art is observed in the Buddha of Bamiyan). Early Buddha sculptures in north India, China, and Japan wear a two-shouldered robe based upon the Roman toga. South and Southeast Asia had early contact with Islam through trade and in western India, through military campaigns. In the 12th and 13th centuries, Islamic sultanates arose in these lands, creating another layer of cultural practices and interactions and impacting Asian visual culture through the importation and creation of new art forms and styles. Innovations based upon Islamic influence in these areas include the use of paper for manuscripts and paintings, as well as the adoption of Mughal styles in Hindu court architecture, painting, and fashion. European influence is evident in the evolution of architectural styles, and in the adoption of naturalism and perspective in Asian painting traditions during the colonial era.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 8-4C.**
Asian Art forms had great influence upon the arts of West Asia and Europe. Art and ideas were exchanged through trade routes. The impact of Asian art is especially evident during times of free exchange, such as the Silk Route during the Han and Tang Dynasties and Mongol Empire, the colonial era, and the opening of Japan for trade in the 19th century. In West Asia and Europe, collectors acquired Asian art works through gift or trade. Ceramics created in China, from Tang slipwares to high-fire porcelains, have been coveted internationally for over one thousand years. The popularity of Chinese blue-and-white porcelain was so high that ceramic centers in Iran, Turkey, and across Europe developed local versions of blue-and-white ceramics to meet market demand. Textiles are also a very important Asian art form and dominated much of the international trade between Europe and Asia. Silk and silk weaving originated in China, where it flourished for thousands of years. Cotton was first spun and woven in the Indus Valley region of Pakistan and was, like silk, important for international trade. Cross-cultural comparisons may be made most readily between the arts of South, East, and Southeast Asia and arts of the ancient Mediterranean, medieval Europe, and West Asia.
CONTENT AREA 9
THE PACIFIC
700–1980 C.E.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 9-1.
The arts of the Pacific vary by virtue of ecological situations, social structure, and impact of external influences, such as commerce, colonialism, and missionary activity. Created in a variety of media, Pacific arts are distinguished by the virtuosity with which materials are used and presented.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-1A.
The Pacific region — including over 25,000 islands, about 1,500 of which are inhabited — is defined by its location within the Pacific Ocean, which comprises one third of the Earth’s surface. Pacific arts are objects and events created from fibers, pigments, bone, sea ivory and shell, tortoise shell, as well as wood, coral, and stone, which are carried, exchanged, and used by peoples of the region.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-1B.
Geological and archaeological evidence indicates that Papuan-speaking peoples traveled across a land bridge that connected Asia and present-day Australia about 30,000 years ago. Lapita people migrated eastward across the region beginning 4,000 years ago. The region was explored by Europeans as early as the 16th century and most extensively from the second half of the 18th century. By the beginning of the 19th century, Dumont d’Urville had divided the region into three units: micro- (small), poly- (many), and mela- (black) nesia (island). The lands are continental, volcanic, and atollian. Each supports distinct ecologies that exist in relation to the migrations and sociocultural systems that were transported across the region.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-1C.
Objects such as shields, ancestral representations, and family treasures were and continue to be constructed to give form to and preserve human history and social continuity. Other art forms are constructed to be displayed and performed to remind people of their heritage and shared bonds (such as the significance of an ancestor or leader) and are intended to be destroyed once the memory is created.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 9-2.
The sea is ubiquitous as a theme of Pacific art and as a presence in the daily lives of a large portion of Oceania, as the sea both connects and separates the lands and peoples of the Pacific.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-2A.
In the last 4,000 years, populations sailed from Vanuatu eastward, and carried plants, animals, and pottery that now demonstrate a pattern of migration and connection from what was the Lapita culture. By 800 C.E. the distribution that has come to be described as Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia was established.
**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-2B.**
Ships and devices of navigation and sailing expertise were built and used to promote exploration, migration, and the exchange of objects and cultural patterns across the Pacific. Navigators created personal charts or expressions of the truths of their experience of the sea and other objects intended to protect and ensure the success of sailing. Ocean-going vessels carried families, and often communities, across vast distances; passengers could also return to their place of departure.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 9-3.**
The arts of the Pacific are expressions of beliefs, social relations, essential truths, and compendia of information held by designated members of society. Pacific arts are objects, acts, and events that are forces in social life.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-3A.**
Arts of the Pacific involve the power and forces of deities, ancestors, founders, and hereditary leaders, as well as symbols of primal principles, which are protected by wrapping, sheathing, and other forms of covering to prevent human access. Ritual dress, forms of armor, and tattoos encase and shield the focus of power from human interaction. One’s vital force, identity, or strength (mana) is expressed and protected by rules and prohibitions, as well as by wrapping or shielding practices, or tapu. Mana is also associated with communities and leaders who represent their peoples. Objects that project status and sustain structure hold and become mana. These objects are made secure through tapu or behaviors that limit access to and protect the objects.

**ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-3B.**
Rulers of the Sayudeleur Dynasty commanded construction of Nan Madol in Micronesia, a residential and ceremonial complex of numerous human-made islets. Rulers of Hawaii were clothed in feather capes that announce their status and shield them from contact. Societies of Polynesia in New Zealand, Rapa Nui, and Samoa create sacred ceremonial spaces that both announce and contain their legitimacy, power, and life force. In Melanesia, individuals and clans earn status and power and sustain social balance in a set of relationships marked by the exchange of objects. Masks, and the performance of masks, are a recital and commemoration of ancestors’ histories and wisdom.

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 9-4.**
Pacific arts are performed (danced, sung, recited, displayed) in an array of colors, scents, textures, and movements that enact narratives and proclaim primordial truths. Belief in the use of costumes, cosmetics, and constructions assembled to enact epics of human history and experience is central to the creation of and participation in Pacific arts.
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-4A.
Objects and behaviors in the cultures of the Pacific are often designed and presented to stimulate a particular response. Rare and precious materials are used to demonstrate wealth, status, and particular circumstance. Ritual settings are structured with elements that address all of the senses. Physical combat and warfare are announced and preceded by displays of ferocity in dress, dance, verbal aggression, and gestural threats.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-4B.
The acts of creation, performance, and even destruction of a mask, costume, or installation often carry the meaning of the work of art (instead of the object itself carrying the meaning). Meaning is communicated at the time of the work’s appearance, as well as in the future when the work, or the context of its appearance, is recalled. This sort of memory is evoked through the presentation of primordial forms such as cultural heroes, founding ancestors, or totemic animals in order to reaffirm shared values and important truths. In some instances the memory is created and performed, and then the objects that appeared in those processes are destroyed, leaving a new iteration of the memory.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-4C.
Reciprocity is demonstrated by cycles of exchange in which designated people and communities provide specific items and in exchange receive equally predictable items. The process of exchange is complex and prescribed. Chants, dances, scents, costumes, and people of particular lineage and social position are called into play to create a performance that engages all of the senses and expands the form and significance of the exchange.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 9-4D.
Duality and complementarity are aspects of social relations that are often characterized by opposing forces or circumstances and express the balance of relations necessary between those seemingly divergent forces. Gender, for example, is the basis for inclusion in some societies but is understood in the context of complement rather than opposition. Spatial organization, shared spaces, and exclusive or rarified spaces are created and used to reinforce social order.
CONTENT AREA 10
GLOBAL CONTEMPORARY
1980 C.E. TO PRESENT

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 10-1.
Global contemporary art is characterized by a transcendence of traditional conceptions of art and is supported by technological developments and global awareness. Digital technology in particular provides increased access to imagery and contextual information about diverse artists and artworks throughout history and across the globe.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 10-1A.
Hierarchies of materials, tools, function, artistic training, style, and presentation are challenged. Questions about how art is defined, valued, and presented are provoked by ephemeral digital works, video-captured performances, graffiti artists, online museums and galleries, declines in (but preservation of) natural materials and traditional skills, predominance of disposable material cultures, and the digital divide — access or lack of access to digital technology.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 10-1B.
Diverse art forms are considered according to perceived similarities in form, content, and artistic intent over broad themes, which include existential investigations, sociopolitical critiques, as well as reflections on the natural world, art’s history, popular and traditional cultures, and technological innovation.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 10-1C.
Artists frequently use appropriation and “mashups” to devalue or revalue culturally sacred objects, and to negate or support expectations of artworks based on regional, cultural, and chronological associations. Intended meanings are often open-ended and subject to multiple interpretations.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 10-1D.
The iconic building becomes a sought-after trademark for cities. Computer-aided design impacts the diversity of innovative architectural forms, which tend toward the aspirational and the visionary.

ENDURING UNDERSTANDING 10-2.
In the scholarly realm as well as mainstream media, contemporary art is now a major phenomenon experienced and understood in a global context.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 10-2A.
Art history surveys have traditionally offered less attention to art made from 1980 to the present. While such surveys often presented contemporary art as largely a European and American phenomenon, today, contemporary art produced by artists of Africa, Asia, Oceania, and the First Nations is receiving the same, if not more, attention than work produced in Europe and the Americas.
ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 10-2B.
The waning of colonialism, inaugurated by independence movements, shifts in the balance of power with the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the rise of China, and the development of widespread communication networks such as the Internet have all contributed to representations of the world that are global and interconnected rather than Eurocentric.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 10-2C.
The art world has expanded and become more inclusive since the 1960s, as artists of all nationalities, ethnicities, and sexual preferences, as well as female artists, have challenged the traditional privileged place of white, heterosexual men in art history. This activism has been supported by theories (e.g., deconstructionist, feminist, poststructuralist, and queer) that critique perspectives on history and culture that claim universality but are in fact exclusionary.

ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE 10-2D.
The worldwide proliferation of contemporary art museums, galleries, biennials and triennials, exhibitions, and print and digital publications has created numerous, diverse venues for the presentation and evaluation of art in today’s world.