

# Highlights

**ies** NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
EDUCATION STATISTICS  
Institute of Education Sciences

U.S. Department of Education  
NCES 2009-494

The   
Nation's  
Report Card

# Arts 2008

Music & Visual Arts

NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS AT GRADE 8



# Highlights

**The 2008 NAEP Arts Assessment** measured students' knowledge and skills in the arts by asking them to observe, describe, analyze, and evaluate existing works of music and visual art and to create original works of visual art.

A nationally representative sample of 7,900 eighth-grade students from 260 public and private schools participated in the 2008 arts assessment. Approximately one-half of these students were assessed in music, and the other half were assessed in visual arts.



## The Arts Framework

The NAEP arts framework serves as the blueprint for the assessment, describing the specific knowledge and skills that should be assessed in the arts disciplines. Developed under the guidance of the National Assessment Governing Board, the framework reflects the input of arts educators, artists, assessment specialists, policymakers, representatives from the business community, and members of the public. The *National Standards for Arts Education*<sup>1</sup> also served as an important reference in the development of the NAEP arts framework.

## Scoring Students' Work in the Arts

Specific scoring guides were developed for scorers to use when evaluating students' responses that demonstrated a wide range of skill levels in music and visual arts.

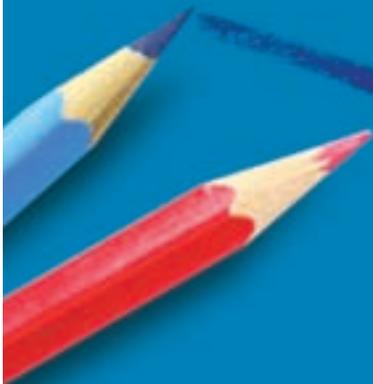
## Reporting Arts Results

- The average responding scores for music and visual arts are reported on separate 0–300 scales and cannot be compared.
- The average creating task score for visual arts is reported as the average percentage of the maximum possible score ranging from 0 to 100.

## Comparisons Between 1997 and 2008

Although the questions in the 2008 assessment were taken from those administered in the 1997 arts assessment, some of the scoring procedures could not be replicated in 2008. Comparisons cannot be made between students' scores in those two years. However, comparisons can be made for the percentages of students who responded correctly to the multiple-choice questions in the assessment, and the percentages of students based on responses to background questions that were asked in both years.

<sup>1</sup> *National Standards for Arts Education* (1994). Reston, Virginia: Music Educators National Conference.

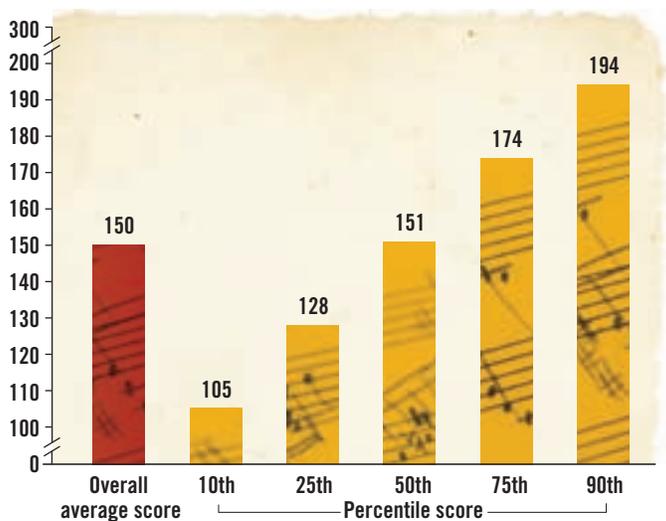


The **MUSIC** portion of the assessment measured students' ability to respond to music. Students were asked to analyze and describe aspects of music they heard, critique instrumental and vocal performances, and demonstrate their knowledge of standard musical notation and music's role in society.

# Music

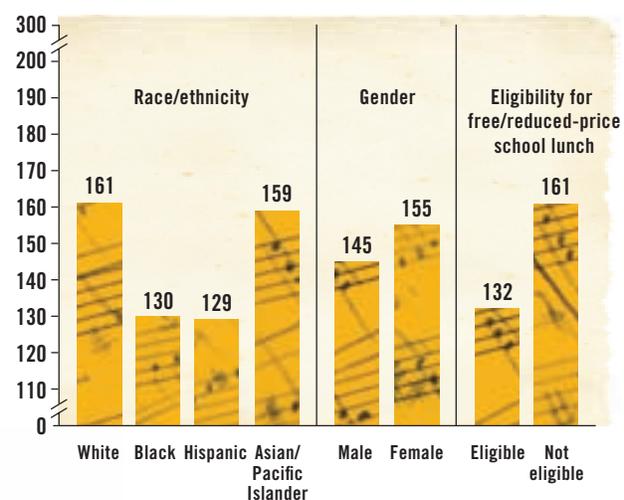
**89-point** score gap between the lowest- and highest-performing students

Music responding scale score



- White and Asian/Pacific Islander students scored higher than Black and Hispanic students
- Female students scored higher than male students
- Students from lower-income families scored lower than those from higher-income families

Music responding scale score



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.



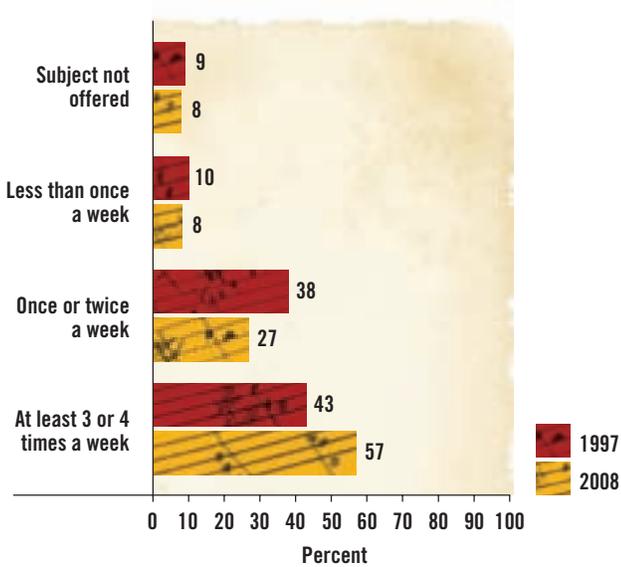


## Context for Arts Education in Music

**57%** attended schools where music instruction was offered at least 3 or 4 times a week in 2008

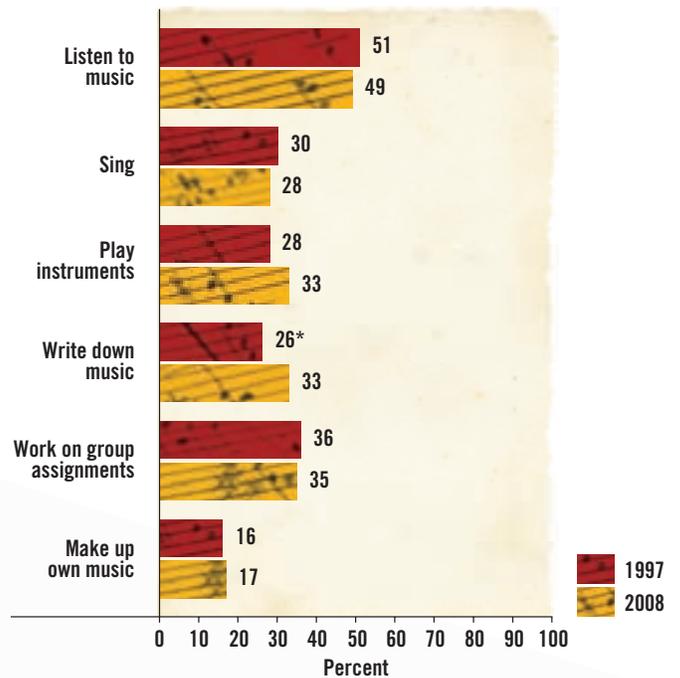
- More students were asked to write down music since 1997

Percentage of students by school-reported frequency with which instruction in music is available



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 and 2008 Arts Assessments.

Percentage of students who participate in music activities in school at least once a month



\* Significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) from 2008.

## What Students Know and Can Do in Music

### Students listened to “Rhapsody in Blue”

At the beginning of the piece, a solo is played on

- (A) a flute
- (B) an oboe
- (C) a saxophone
- (D) a clarinet

**50%** correct



What does the symbol in circle 1 tell the performer to do?  
Play or sing the music softly.

What is the musical (Italian) name for the symbol in circle 1?  
Piano

**20%** correct

The **Visual Arts** portion of the assessment measured students' ability to respond to and create visual art.

# Visual Arts

**RESPONDING** questions asked students to analyze and describe works of art and design.

**89-point** score gap between the lowest- and highest-performing students

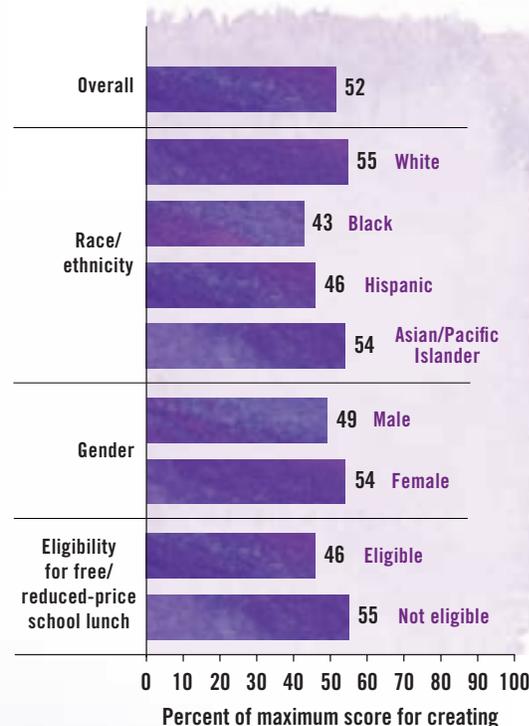
Visual arts responding scale score



**CREATING** questions assessed students' ability to communicate in works of art, think of different solutions to visual problems, and generate ideas for and then create works of art and design.

- White and Asian/Pacific Islander students scored higher than Black and Hispanic students
- Female students scored higher on creating tasks than male students
- Students from lower-income families scored lower than those from higher-income families

Visual arts creating task score



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2008 Arts Assessment.

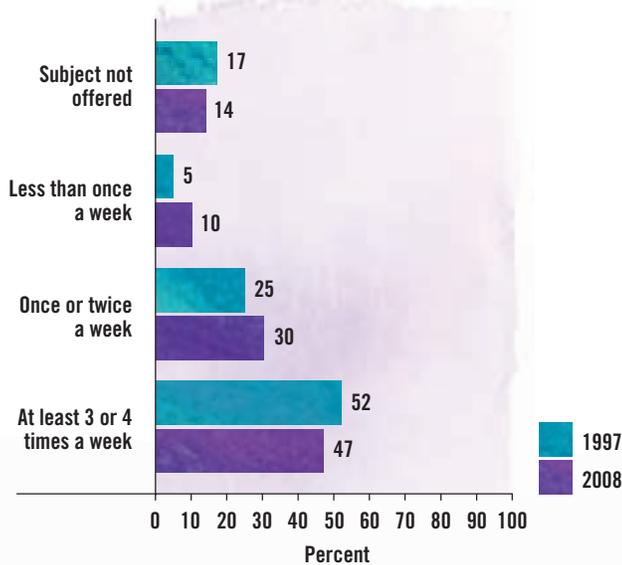


# Context for Arts Education in Visual Arts

**47%** attended schools where visual arts instruction was offered at least 3 or 4 times a week in 2008

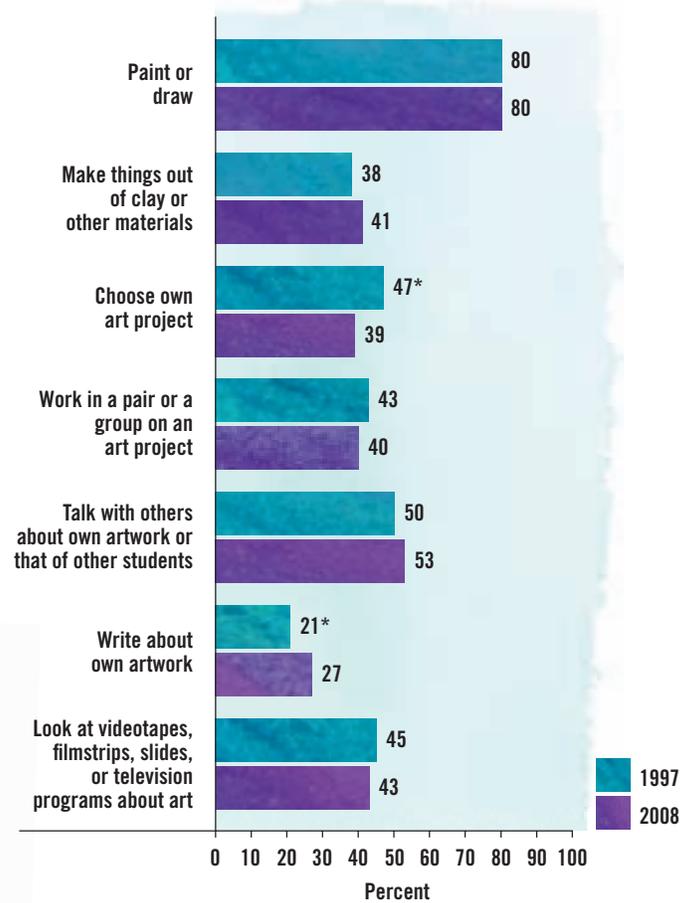
- No significant changes in the frequency of visual arts instruction from 1997 to 2008

Percentage of students by school-reported frequency with which instruction in visual arts is available



- More students asked to write about their artwork, and fewer students asked to choose their own art project since 1997

Percentage of students who participate in arts activities in school at least once a month



\* Significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) from 2008.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1997 and 2008 Arts Assessments.



# What Students Know and Can Do in Visual Arts

Students were given a set of colored oil pastels, a charcoal pencil, a mirror, and a sheet of 12-inch by 18-inch white drawing paper to use to create a self-portrait that

expressed something important about their personalities. Students' self-portraits were rated using four scoring levels: Sufficient, Uneven, Minimal, and Insufficient.



4% rated "Sufficient"



25% rated "Uneven"



57% rated "Minimal"



14% rated "Insufficient"



# What is The Nation's Report Card™?

The Nation's Report Card™ informs the public about the academic achievement of elementary and secondary students in the United States. Report cards communicate the findings of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a continuing and nationally representative measure of achievement in various subjects over time.

Since 1969, NAEP assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, the arts, and other subjects. NAEP collects and reports information on student performance at the national, state, and local levels, making the assessment an integral part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education. Only academic achievement data and related background information are collected. The privacy of individual students and their families is protected.

NAEP is a congressionally authorized project of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education Statistics is responsible for carrying out the NAEP project. The National Assessment Governing Board oversees and sets policy for NAEP.

To learn more about the arts framework, visit <http://www.nagb.org/publications/frameworks/arts-framework08.pdf>.

## THE NATION'S REPORT CARD

### *Arts 2008*

### *Music & Visual Arts HIGHLIGHTS*

June 2009

## MORE INFORMATION

The report release site is <http://nationsreportcard.gov>.

The NCES web electronic catalog is <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch>.

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