



See life differently.

“The true voyage of discovery exists not in seeking new landscapes
but in having new eyes.”

– Marcel Proust

v. 2.03

www.theviewfinderproject.org



Table of Contents

WELCOME	3
DESIRED OUTCOMES.....	4
HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM GUIDE.....	5
THE LAST DAY OF CLASS.....	8
SUMMARY OF LESSONS.....	9
LESSONS	
Lesson No. 1: What is Ugly?.....	10
Lesson No. 2: What is Beautiful?.....	13
Lesson No. 3: Life is Beautiful.....	14
Lesson No. 4: Scavenger Hunt.....	16
Lesson No. 5: Shapes.....	18
Lesson No. 6: Patterns.....	20
Lesson No. 7: Reflections.....	21
Lesson No. 8: Shadows.....	22
Lesson No. 9: Framing.....	24
Lesson No. 10: Lines.....	26
Lesson No. 11: Making a Building Collage.....	28
Lesson No. 12: Landscapes.....	30
Lesson No. 13: People Pictures.....	32
Lesson No. 14: Storybook.....	34
Lesson No. 15: Picture Puzzle.....	36
Lesson No. 16: Behavior.....	38
WORKSHEETS AND MORE	
Parental Consent Form	40
PARTS OF A CAMERA Worksheet.....	41
PARTS OF A CAMERA Worksheet, Teacher's Copy.....	42
CAMERA LOG Worksheet.....	43
PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG Worksheet	44
TIPS FOR BETTER PHOTOGRAPHS Worksheet.....	45
SCAVENGER HUNT Worksheet (Lesson No. 4).....	46
SHAPES Worksheet (Lesson No. 5).....	47
SHAPES Worksheet, Teacher's Copy (Lesson No. 5).....	48
FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS Worksheet.....	49
CD Insert.....	50
APPENDIX A: Alternatives to Cameras.....	51
APPENDIX B: Using SLR Cameras Instead of Point-and-Shoots.....	52
APPENDIX C: Using The Viewfinder Project as a Fundraiser.....	53
Frequently Asked Questions.....	64
Acknowledgements.....	65



Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in The Viewfinder Project! It is my hope and my belief that this project will open the eyes of your students to the world in a brand new way.

The first two lessons of this project takes students through a very particular process of identifying, through photos, what they both like and dislike about the world around them, the space where they spend their day-to-day life. Students are introduced to the idea that if we as people could change how we look at the world around us, using our minds and our eyes, then we might create for ourselves an entirely different experience and therefore a different life for ourselves in years to come. Upon completing the first lesson, students inevitably have taken something that is ugly and made it beautiful using a few composition tips. This is my favorite lesson because it teaches students that they have the power of redemption within themselves, to transform what was once ugly into something beautiful and good.

The remaining lessons are very specific in subject matter with the intent of helping to train the students' eyes to notice the details in the world around them. A trained eye can see beauty anywhere and everywhere, photos just waiting to be captured. When we train our eyes to see the photos around us, what begins to happen is that we start to see the world around us in a new way. We start to notice things we have never seen previously. And then we start looking for new ways of seeing the world around us. The ways in which we perceive the world around us changes and we begin looking for alternate choices and views.

So often we think we understand people, cultures, or situations that we need to look no further. On the contrary, most of what we encounter in life requires further thought and investigation. Living life requires great creativity and requires us to pay attention! Creativity allows us to think about what is possible in our lives. **Creativity requires the ability and desire to "see life differently."** Everyone is capable of this is they so choose.

When given his first camera for a National Geographic photo shoot, Dewitt Jones was charged to "go and find what's right with the world." This is the charge for all of us in life.

As you complete The Viewfinder Project, please let me know what you learned through the process. This curriculum is made available to you at no expense. My only request is that you keep in touch and that you send me as many original digital copies of your photos the students took as is possible along with copies of the corresponding student consent forms and completed follow-up questionnaires.

The Viewfinder Project is designed to develop relationships between caring adults and children who need more caring adults in their lives. It is my desire that The Viewfinder Project will help forge new sustaining partnerships and relationships in your community for both you and your students. And it is my hope that you are enriched alongside your students as you take this journey together.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mary Beth Jackson'.

Mary Beth Jackson

Founder, The Viewfinder Project



DESIRED OUTCOMES

Before beginning The Viewfinder Project, it is important that you understand the outcomes we hope students to have achieved upon completion of both Parts I and II of the project. It is our hope that students will have learned:

1. how to operate a camera
2. how to better compose photographs
3. following instructions is important for positive results
4. how to identify what they think is beautiful (as opposed to what others tell us is beautiful)
5. learning the fundamentals of how to do something is important and can help to understand when it is appropriate to stray from the rules
6. there are other students who share a common vision or interest in photography, in making positive changes personally and/or in the community
7. to look at people and objects in new ways understanding that this will lead to a greater understanding of people and ourselves
8. that photography allows us to embrace media in a creative, proactive way
9. we all play a role in determining our own futures by using creative thinking
10. there are adults who care about them and who are committed to helping them succeed
11. there is beauty to be found in everything and everyone

****LIFE itself is a choice. Every day we must make choices that affect us either for the good or for the bad.****




HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM GUIDE


The Viewfinder Project targets children between the ages of 8-14 years. Each lesson includes a modifications section should you need to adapt a lesson for the older or younger part of that age bracket.


We recommend that The Viewfinder Project lessons be conducted with no more than 20 students at a time. Because of the time it will take you as a facilitator to go through photos on a weekly basis, archive space, and finances, 20 students is the maximum per class.

Avoid “pack photography” by students. “Pack photography” is when students go around together in a pack taking the exact same photos as each other. This is best avoided by making sure students are paired with only one other student. Even then, make it clear they are each to look for their own photos instead of copying what they see other students photographing.

We advise that you follow the instructions below to maximize the effectiveness of this curriculum.

 Remove yourself from the students’ creative process. There is no formula; there is no right or wrong answer. These lessons should **not** be evaluated in an academic sense. So be very aware of your own responses to their ideas or photos. Try to direct them in the process of discovering for themselves what they should choose to focus on and in turn what will help them find success in life and become responsible, creative adults.

 Use this project as an opportunity to give only positive, constructive feedback to students, not criticism. There are not many times in a child’s life when they are told on a regular basis what they are doing WELL. Let The Viewfinder Project create the space to do this.

 Be sure to email, mail, or post on our website copies of the photos the students take along with the names of who took what photos! We also need you to return copies of all signed consent forms as well as copies of the follow-up questionnaire administered upon completion of The Viewfinder Project.

LESSONS NOS. 1 & 2

If you can only choose one lesson to teach:

Teach Lesson No. 1, “What is Ugly?” This one lesson contains the heart of the rest of the lessons. This lesson is the crux of The Viewfinder Project and is essential to the rest of the lessons. Upon completing this lesson, you will continue reinforcing their ability to turn the ugly into something beautiful in every subsequent lesson.

If you can only choose two lessons to teach:

Teach both Lessons No. 1 and No. 2 because they go hand in hand with one another and build the foundation of the remaining lessons.

THE REST OF THE LESSONS

These lessons are organized from least difficult to most difficult. For this reason, we recommend that you follow the lessons consecutively rather than jumping around lesson to lesson. We understand that because of limited time and resources and/or because of the age of the students you are teaching you may need to alter the order of the lessons. You need to make that decision. They are each intended to develop a particular photographic skill with the hope that by focusing an entire lesson on one small skill, students will be more likely to retain that skill and remember how it applies to their lives.

HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM GUIDE (continued)

The lessons are designed to be taught on a weekly basis, starting each new week by concluding the previous week's lesson. The lessons are designed so that students will use the cameras during class time. If it is practical for you and the cameras are covered with your insurance, feel free to allow students to take cameras home overnight.

You might allow five minutes at the end of every class for students to journal about what they photographed, using the daily challenge in each lesson as a guide.

Students do not need to take pictures every week during this part of the project if it is not cost effective for you. If you are unable to find sponsorships for this project and do not have the funds to print photos for every lesson, have students participate in the first two lessons. Then after that have them choose a lesson to shoot over a 2-3 week period. In the absence of real cameras, you might create cardboard cameras (see Appendix A) so students can practice framing and composing their photos. Students might also sketch out ideas for composing photos from the different lessons in a notebook. These exercises will help them think more about their idea of beauty and composition. You could even convert some of the lessons into creative writing exercises!

Adapt these lessons as necessary to fit into your own city's or country's situation or circumstances. But always try to keep the integrity of the lessons in tact. If you do modify the lessons, please email me what you altered so that I can keep a log of modifications for the future. Your modifications may become part of future versions of these lessons!

For all lessons, remind children to *fill the frame, don't be afraid of close-ups or abstract images.* Also, encourage them to frequently reference the "Tips for Better Photographs" worksheet.

DAILY PROGRAM FORMAT

With the exception of the first and last session, every session together should follow the same basic format. The following daily schedule provides a basic template for how each hour and a half session might look:

- (5 min) Welcome students
- (15 min) Review last week's lesson; go over Discussion Points and Life Skills for last week's lesson
- (10 min) Share your favorite photos for each student from last week's lesson; it is ideal for this discussion to become student led (what they like about each photo); remember to keep all discussion positive
- (10 min) Introduce this week's lesson
- (5 min) Distribute "Camera Log" worksheets and cameras
- (30 min) Students go out to take photos
- (5 min) Collect cameras and "Camera Log" worksheets
- (10 min) Have students journal in response to the lesson's challenge

CAMERA INFORMATION

In most places of the world, simple digital point-and-shoot cameras are easiest and most cost effective. When using digital cameras, do your best to get a very small memory card. For instance, a 16 MB memory card will allow students to take about 18 photos at 3.1 megapixels. **Our desire is that photos are taken at least at 3.1 megapixels.** Any fewer megapixels and it is difficult to enlarge photos for exhibition or to include in print materials.

HOW TO USE THIS CURRICULUM GUIDE (continued)

If you must use a larger memory card, increase the megapixels to a higher resolution. We are trying to limit the number of photos students take with the cameras. The reason for this is to encourage students to really think about what they are photographing. Additionally, as the teacher you will have to review each and every photo, which can become incredibly daunting depending on how many students participate.

If there is unlimited space on the memory card, students tend to take photos very quickly and without thought, deleting whatever photos they dislike. This is what we do not want! We want them to be thoughtful, taking the time to compose each photo! As you review the digital photos on each camera, you should be able to tell where each photo falls in the greater sequence of shooting. Ideally, the last photo on a card holding 18 photos will be numbered "18" indicating that the student only shot 18 photos; they did not shoot more then delete the photos they disliked.

If using film cameras makes most sense for you, by all means use film. The advantage of film cameras is that they tend to require students to put more thought into what they are choosing to photograph because there are a limited number of shots.

RULES FOR CAMERAS: 1) Always keep camera strap wrapped around wrist; 2) never run with the camera!

IMAGE ARCHIVING

As you lead students through lesson after lesson, you will need to create a system for archiving students' photos. We recommend the following:

- Purchase/borrow an external hard drive. Depending on how many lessons you teach, you will need a lot of computer memory.
- Create a folder for each student.
- Create subfolders for each lesson within each student's folder.
- Name each photo according to student, lesson, image number, site location, and file type (computer usually defaults to JPEG). <NAME>_<LESSON>_<IMAGE NO>_<LOCATION>.jpg

For instance, if I have a student from Helping Hands Community Center whose name is David Smith and who took 16 photos for the "Shapes" lesson, we recommend the following naming structure: David_Shapes_01_hh.jpg, David_Shapes_02_hh.jpg, David_Shapes_03_hh.jpg, and so on. If you have more than one student with the same first name, add the first letter of the surname to the NAME portion ("DavidS_Shapes_01.hh.jpg").

It is important to be able to quickly identify the student, lesson, and site location just by looking at the image name. This also allows photos from all over the world to reside in our database without confusion as to who took the photo.



THE LAST DAY OF CLASS

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To wrap up your time together. To summarize the life skills components of the lessons you completed with students.

Materials Needed

Copies of "Follow Up Questions" worksheet

Copies of "CD Insert" worksheet (prepared beforehand)

CDs for each student containing all of each student's photos (prepared beforehand)

CD envelopes

Projector

Computer containing prepared slideshow

Planning Notes

As you wrap up The Viewfinder Project, make for yourself a list of the lessons you taught and a brief summary of the life skill you want students to remember from each lesson.

You will also need to take the time to burn a CD for each student that contains copies of all of each student's photos.

If you are able, put together a basic slideshow presentation of your favorite photos taken by the students during your time together.

So you have reached the end of The Viewfinder Project. That may mean you completed one lesson or that you completed all sixteen lessons with your students. However you used this project, it is important to finish well!

On your second to last day together, per usual have students complete whatever lesson you choose. But be aware, **YOU WILL NOT USE CAMERAS ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASS.**

Your last day of class together will be devoted to:

- Going over the **life skill component** of the previous lesson
- **Summarizing the project as a whole.** Recap all you did during The Viewfinder Project. Review the life skills components you want to emphasize. Most importantly, remind students of the importance of learning how to "see life differently." Engage them in a discussion of how they have learned to do that during your time together.
- **Watch the slideshow** you have prepared of all of your favorite photos. Make sure you have included photos for **every student** who was involved!
- At the very end of your session, **distribute the CDs** you have created for each student containing their photos from the Project.

Creating the CD of each student's work should not be too difficult if you have been properly archiving their work all along the way. (Refer to the "How to Use This Curriculum" page at the beginning of this curriculum guide on how to archive.) Make sure you have inserted the CD in a CD envelope to protect it. When making copies of the "CD Insert" worksheet, keep in mind that there are two inserts printed on each page and that you will have to trim them down and fold them to fit inside the CD envelope.

You want to use this last day of class together to reinforce the major goals of The Viewfinder Project. You should refer to the Desired Outcomes page at the beginning of this guide as well as to the "CD Insert" worksheet for further talking points.

Lastly, have students complete and return the "Follow Up Questions" worksheet.

As the facilitator, we ask that when everything else is completed, you send us copies of all completed consent forms, copies of the completed "Follow Up Questions" worksheet, and (on a CD) copies of all of your favorite photos the students took. You can mail everything to:

The Viewfinder Project
ATTN: MaryBeth Jackson
6900 S. Gray Road
Indianapolis, IN 46237 USA
marybeth@theviewfinderproject.org



Summary of Lesson Plans

Lesson No. 1: What is Ugly?

Having students identify & photograph their ideas of what is ugly to them in their surroundings.

Lesson No. 2: What is Beautiful?

Having students identify & photograph their ideas of what is beautiful to them in their surroundings.

Lesson No. 3: Life is Beautiful

Having students each make a collage representing their own idea of "beauty."

Lesson No. 4: Scavenger Hunt

Giving students a list of objects they must find & photograph.

Lesson No. 5: Shapes

Helping students identify specific shapes in their surroundings.

Lesson No. 6: Patterns

Helping students identify patterns in their surroundings.

Lesson No. 7: Reflections

Helping students identify reflections in their surroundings.

Lesson No. 8: Shadows

Helping students identify shadows in their surroundings.

Lesson No. 9: Framing

Helping students define and identify examples of framing in their surroundings.

Lesson No. 10: Lines

Helping students identify lines in their surroundings.

Lesson No. 11: Make a Building Collage

Having students photograph a building from various perspectives. *This is a 1-1/2 day lesson.*

Lesson No. 12: Landscapes

Helping students understand how to better photograph landscapes or city scapes.

Lesson No. 13: People Pictures

Helping students understand how to take better candid pictures of people.

Lesson No. 14: Storybook

Helping students learn how to storyboard and take photojournalistic-type photos; teaching students about avoiding bias in photography. *This is a 2-day lesson.*

Lesson No. 15: Picture Puzzle

Having students take a series of pictures that together make one complete picture. *This is a 1-1/2 day lesson.*

Lesson No. 16: Behavior

Helping students identify and photograph the characteristics of particular behaviors.



LESSON No. 1: What is Ugly?

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To help students identify what they do not like in their immediate surroundings and ultimately in their lives; to help them understand that they have the power to transform the ugly into the beautiful.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Copies of "Consent Form" worksheet

Copies of "Camera Log" worksheet

Copies of "Parts of a Camera" worksheet (as needed)

Copies of "Tips for Better Photographs" worksheet

Copies of "Photographic Log" worksheet

Pencils or pens

Planning Notes

This lesson is the crux of The Viewfinder Project and is therefore considered the most important lesson. In this lesson, students are looking for what they consider ugly. But with a few tips on how to compose photos, students inevitably transform the ugly into art. They create something beautiful out of something ugly! This is critical to emphasize with them.

They have redeemed the ugly. It is critical that students understand that they have the power within themselves to cause transformation.

Lesson

Meet students at designated time and place. Introduce yourself and your adult volunteers as is appropriate. Ask, "Who here likes stories? What kind of stories do you like? Who here thinks you can tell a story with pictures?" You might even read a picture book without words to further show how stories can be told through pictures. Explain that over the next two sessions, they are going to try and show a part of who they are and what their lives are like using photos. Explain that through this photography project, they can also begin to explore new worlds without ever leaving the community! To do this, they simply must try to see the world differently. As part of this process, students are going to try to distinguish between what they like about where they live and what they don't like, what they think is beautiful & what they think is ugly.

Ask for a show of hands how many students have ever used a camera. Ask if anyone can show you where the viewfinder is on the camera. **[NOTE: On most cameras, it the little window you put your eye up to in order to see what you are photographing. Some newer digitals only have the LCD screen with no viewfinder window. This screen can be considered the viewfinder for our purposes.]** Have students identify the lens. Encourage students to think about what the picture will look like after they have taken a photo. What could they do to make each photo more interesting? To simply stand in front of the object they are photographing would be okay and would make for a fine picture. But what if instead they stood very close to the object? Or stood up high? Or got on their bellies? They might even turn their camera at an angle and see what that looks like. There are very simple composition tips that can transform an "okay" picture into a really great picture. We've already mentioned a few!

Have students make a viewfinder with their hands. [Reference the logo you find on this page if necessary.] Have them close one of their eyes and imagine what the world might look like through this little box, through this viewfinder. How would they choose to look at the world differently if this was their only view of it? What would they choose to focus on? What details would they pay attention to?

Encourage students to really think about what picture they want to take BEFORE taking a photo. Every picture they take should start in their heads first. It is important to see with their eyes and imagine the pictures all around them before capturing them with the camera. Being thoughtful about what they photograph will help them make better pictures.

LESSON No. 1: What is Ugly? (continued)

Conduct a brief brainstorming session on all the things they do not like about where they live or what they think is ugly. The brainstorm can include anything from objects to nature to people. (Bad things might include trash, rain clouds, dogs, disease, a torn sweatshirt, rusty cars, or a person in the child's life).

**** Be sure not to involve yourself in their creative process!** Avoid giving too many examples or your own impressions as much as possible.

Distribute the "Parts of a Camera," the "Tips for Better Photographs," and the "Photographic Log" worksheets found in the Worksheets section of this manual. Go over the worksheets with them in detail. Carefully explain that after they take a picture, they are to use the "Photographic Log" worksheet to write down what they photographed and WHY, trying to explain why they chose the subject they did. They may wait to do this until at the end of class.

NOTE: Two very important rules to obey in this lesson are: 1) students are not to photograph other people; and 2) students are not to photograph other people's belongings.

Distribute the "Camera Log" worksheet. Have students write down their name & record the number or letter that identifies the camera they are using. IMPORTANT: This is the only way you will know who took what photos so make sure you have a record of who is using what camera before they disperse!

Distribute cameras to the students, explaining that they are to take as many pictures as they can of what they do not like about where they live. They have the rest of the afternoon to do this (or as much time as you give them).

At the end of the lesson, collect the cameras as well as their completed "Photographic Log" worksheets. Distribute consent forms to the students and explain how important it is for them to return the signed forms back to you as soon as possible. Turning in a signed consent form allows The Viewfinder Project to include the students' work in exhibitions, in published pieces and on the website. We want to be able to share the students' photos with the world!

Modifications

This is an important lesson to not make modifications to. It works for people of any age and therefore no modifications are recommended.

LESSON No. 1: What is Ugly? (continued)

Discussion Points

What did you find yourself taking photos of? Was it difficult to identify what is ugly and what you do not like? What other things might be considered ugly but are difficult to photograph (i.e., ugly behaviors)? Have students identify something beautiful (i.e., composition) for the photos you have chosen to discuss. If you see lots of photos of their own stuff (such as worn-out clothing or backpacks), take the time to explain that it isn't what you wear or what you look like that defines you.

Life Skill

The ugly is all around us. It is often easiest for us to identify what is ugly because it stands out to us more than what is beautiful. As noted in the Planning Notes for this lesson, students should come away from this lesson understanding that they have the power to create change. With a little creativity and a change of perspective, every single one of us is capable to taking something ugly and transforming it into something beautiful. You may see several photos of students' own things, such as worn-out clothing or broken backpacks. Explain that neither their surroundings nor their possessions represent who they are and who they will become. Who they are on the inside is so much more important than what their outsides look like. And who they are on the inside is what determines how they look at life and ultimately who they will become in life. We each have the choice to decide how we will look at the world around us. There is both ugly and beautiful. We must **choose** to find the beauty. (See the next lesson, "What is Beautiful?" for reinforcing this.)



LESSON No. 2: What is Beautiful?

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To help students identify what they like in their immediate surroundings and ultimately in their lives. To help students understand that there is beauty in everyone and everything if we look hard enough and with new eyes. To help students understand that both the ugly and the beautiful coexist all around us and that it requires a conscience CHOICE to focus on the beauty instead of the ugly.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Copies of "Camera Log" worksheet

Copies of "Parts of a Camera" worksheet (as needed)

Copies of "Tips for Better Photographs" worksheet

Copies of "Photographic Log" worksheet

Pencils or pens

Planning Notes

As with the "What is Ugly?" lesson and every lesson that follows, it is important not to impress your own ideas of beauty on the students as they go out to take photos. We want them to really think for themselves and take the time to consider what they think is beautiful. There are no rules for this lesson! What is beautiful to some people can be ugly to others and vice versa. As you look at the photos the students take for this lesson, you may be stretched to see the beauty yourself, but allow yourself to be stretched in this way!

Lesson

Explain that in today's lesson they will photograph what they **do** like and think is beautiful! Conduct a brainstorming session on, for example, all the aspects they like about where they live.

As part of a further discussion, have students reevaluate their photos from the "What is Ugly?" lesson, this time looking for any beauty in what they photographed. For example, while the subject matter may be ugly, the composition of the photo may be very creative and beautiful! Stress again to them how they made something beautiful out of something ugly!

Distribute clean copies of the "Photographic Log" worksheet for this session explaining again that after they take a photo, they are to write down what the subject of the photo is and why they chose to photograph it. Distribute cameras to the students, explaining that this time they will take as many photographs of what they think is good and beautiful. Make sure they record the number or letter of their cameras on the "Camera Log" worksheets before they take the cameras out of the room.

Modifications

This is an important lesson to not make modifications to. It works for people of any age and therefore no modifications are recommended.

Discussion Points

What did you find yourself photographing? Was it more difficult to identify what is beautiful than what is ugly? Why or why not? What other things might be considered beautiful but are difficult to photograph (i.e., positive behaviors)? What does the phrase "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" mean to you?

Life Skill

Just as the ugly is all around us, there is beauty surrounding us as well. Often the ugly is more obvious to us, making the beautiful difficult to identify. We therefore have a conscience choice as to whether we focus on what is ugly or what is beautiful. Again, IT IS A CHOICE. Just as students sometimes had to get really low to take a picture or turn the camera at an angle or get really close or step back (refer to "Tips for Better Photographs" worksheet), sometimes in life we need to look at the situations in which we find ourselves from different angles in order to gain a fresh perspective. Choosing to focus on what is beautiful will help put us on a positive path toward changing our perspective not only on the small details of our surroundings but also on the bigger issues and questions facing us. We must all train our eyes, our minds, and our hearts to see life differently! To do this, we must have great imaginations and eyes willing to search for the beauty often where there appears to be none.



LESSON No. 3: Life is Beautiful

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To help students begin to consciously think about what they think is beautiful. Sometimes it is difficult to produce your own photos representing your own idea of beauty. Looking at other people's photos helps this process. The hope for you as the teacher is to gain a better understanding of how each student perceives the world and what his or her idea of beauty includes. And it is the hope that each student begins to consciously think about what they think is beautiful.

Materials Needed

Magazines (a variety of genres suitable for children)

Tape or glue

Scissors

Poster board (or some heavily weighted paper)

Planning Notes

In this lesson, students will go through magazines of their choice, looking for picture representations of their idea of beauty. They may choose to go through a wide variety of magazine genres (ranging anything from fashion magazines to nature to food to sports). They will then make collages of these images providing a snapshot of what beauty means to them.

You may need to go through the magazines and rip out images or content you feel is not age-appropriate for the students.

Lesson

Find a space that will allow students to work in small groups, preferably with tables of some sort. On each table, place at least one roll of tape or tube of glue, two pairs of scissors, one marker or pen and a variety of magazines.

Have students gather around tables in groups of 5 or so. Distribute pieces of poster board equivalent to an 11x14-inch piece of paper. (You don't want the poster board to be too large.)

Explain to them that we all have different ideas of what is beautiful. **What is beautiful to one person may be ugly to someone else and vice versa.** That is just fine. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Explain to students that in front of them are a variety of magazines. They will take the next 10-15 minutes going through the magazines and cutting out any images of what they think is beautiful. They may choose to use images from several different magazines or just one. Either is okay. However, they must share the magazines with each other.

When the 15 minutes is up, they will tape or glue the images they have chosen onto the poster board. (If they don't need the full amount of time, they can begin to place their images on the poster board whenever they are ready.)

HINT: If there are lots of images of objects or people (as opposed to landscapes, for instance), the collage might look more interesting if each image is cut out all by itself. For example, if a student chooses a photo with a tree in it, he or she might cut around the tree, eliminating whatever else was in the picture. This will also help them fit more images onto their poster board.

Allow another 10 minutes or so for students to paste their pictures on the poster board. They should write their names somewhere on the poster board. When everyone has finished, have them quietly share with the others at the table their collages, observing what types of images the others chose.

Discussion Points

Ask the students for feedback on the lesson. What did they notice about the others' images? What were the similarities? What were the differences? Ask for any comments about what the collages say about how they as a group perceive beauty in the world around them. This time is for reflection. Help draw out of them possible observations. For instance, are there several images of fashion models? What might this say about what young girls see as physical beauty?



LESSON No. 3: Life is Beautiful (continued)

Modifications

To make this exercise less difficult, you might pull a variety of images out of magazines ahead of time for students to peruse. Be sure to pick a variety of examples in order to not impress your own ideas of beauty on the students.

Life Skill

Seeing the photos around you takes great creativity, requiring you to use your eyes to see people and objects differently. In life, sometimes we just need to look a little differently and more creatively in order to see the beauty and potential of a person or a situation. Always remember that what you think is good and beautiful may not be so to someone else. Find out what *they* think is good and beautiful. What is beautiful may vary from person to person because everyone has their own idea of beauty.



LESSON No. 4: Scavenger Hunt

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

The goal of this lesson is to help students actively search for objects to photograph. This lesson familiarizes the students with their cameras while giving them specific objects to photograph.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Copies of "Parts of a Camera" worksheet (as needed)

Copies of "Scavenger Hunt" worksheet

Pencils or pens

A whistle or bell

Planning Notes

This lesson takes students on a scavenger hunt, but instead of actually collecting items, they will be photographing them! Be sure to review the list of scavenger hunt items prior to duplication and distribution. Most likely there will be items on the list that are unavailable to students because of where you live, the season you are in, and such. Make necessary changes before copying & distributing the worksheet.

Lesson

If you have gone through The Viewfinder Project as intended and as it is written, students are already familiar with basic camera operation. Take a few minutes to review camera operation using the "Parts of a Camera" worksheet if necessary.

Go over the "Scavenger Hunt" worksheet which contains instructions and a list of items to photograph. Clarify the list as necessary. Discuss the boundaries that students are to stay within while on the scavenger hunt. If they are on school grounds, forbid them to leave school grounds. You may decide to have them look for the items without leaving the building! **You need to decide what boundaries are best for your students.**

Explain that when the time is up, you will blow the whistle or ring the bell loudly indicating to the students they are to make their way back to the starting point immediately.

NOTE: In this lesson, the temptation for students will be for all of them to photograph the very same things. They should therefore go on the scavenger hunt in groups of two, staying as far away from the other groups as possible and not conversing with other groups. This will minimize duplication in the subject matter.

You may decide to make this a competition of sorts, awarding prizes to those students who found the most items.

Discussion Points

You may briefly discuss with the students if they found it easy or difficult to find the items on the list. Ask what was the easiest to find and what was the hardest. Were the photos they took exact representations of items on the list or did they choose to creatively interpret the list (which is fine to do)?

Modifications

Less Difficult: Edit the scavenger hunt list to include more obvious items. Allow them to go on the scavenger hunt all together instead of dividing into teams of two.

More Difficult: Make the list longer with more obscure items, keeping the amount of time the same.



LESSON No. 4: Scavenger Hunt (continued)

Life Skill

Life is a journey of looking at the details and considering how they fit into the bigger picture. We should constantly be hunting for truth and for ways to draw connections between seemingly unconnected situations. Look for the opportunity in these potential connections! Life sometimes is like a scavenger hunt as you look for the treasures around you. Allow yourself the freedom to interpret what these treasures are and the beauty found in them.



LESSON No. 5: Shapes

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To identify and photograph a variety of shapes that exist in our surroundings. To better understand what shapes us as individuals.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Copies of "Shapes" worksheet

Crayons or colored markers for each student or set of students

Planning Notes

It is helpful to bring examples of shapes as they are found in our surroundings. These may be photos you as the teacher have taken specifically for this lesson or photos found in books or magazines. Familiarize yourself with the worksheet which will help you prepare students for how to look for shapes to photograph. You might also have students identify simple shapes in your meeting room.

This lesson is one of my favorites because it tends to generate some very interesting photos. If students are having trouble, help them look for the photos. Have them talk to you about the shape of some different objects they might see everyday. This may spark creativity and vision. Be sure to stick to basic, easily identified shapes.

Lesson

Shapes surround us. We can find circles, ovals, squares, and rectangles all around us if we just look for them.

Have students look around the room and identify some of the different shapes they see. A door, for instance, is usually in the shape of a rectangle as are the spines of most books lined up on a shelf. Clocks are usually in the shape of a circle.

Have students complete the "Shapes" worksheet prior to taking photos.

In this lesson, we are looking for all sorts of different shapes around us. Encourage students to really be creative as they compose their photos. Look for the repetition of shapes. Fill the frame as much as possible.

You may decide to help students identify shapes inside the classroom before sending them off on their own.

It is okay to focus on just one part of a shape if that is what is most interesting to the student. Also, the shapes students photograph do not need to be the traditional shapes included on the worksheet. The primary criteria is that they are shapes that draw the students' eyes to the subject and that they photograph only a few shapes.

Examples of photos might be the drain in a sink or water fountain, honeycomb, a ball, grating in a sidewalk or in front of a door, shells, roofs on houses, shapes of buildings, windows, doors, street signs, or arrows.

NOTE: Make sure students aren't photographing just anything, claiming it is "chair-shaped" or "human-shaped," for instance. The goal in this lesson is to focus on 3-4 definitive shapes, shapes that anyone could look at and say, "That's a circle," or "That's a square."

Students will see shapes around them if you simply help them identify a few before giving them their cameras. (But be careful of giving them too many examples as this might limit their creativity and cause them to photograph exactly the same thing.)

Discussion Points

What shape is most beautiful to you and why? Was one shape more prominent in their photos than others? Why might that be? Are people different shapes? Is that okay, in your opinion? What shapes you? What influences who you are and how you behave? Did it become easier to find shapes the more you looked? Why might this be?

LESSON No. 5: Shapes (continued)

Modifications

Less Difficult: Choose five traditional shapes for students to photograph. Have them look for squares, rectangles, circles, ovals, and triangles. To make it even simpler, you might choose just one shape to photograph, such as circles.

More Difficult: Choose five non-traditional shapes for students to photograph. Have them look for hexagons (six sides), kite shapes, diamond shapes, 3-dimensional spheres, and 3-dimensional boxes. Or have students look for shapes within shapes.

Life Skill

Some of the most ordinary shapes can be found in extraordinary ways and places. Sometimes if we look too literally at the world around us, we miss the beauty of it. Often we need to use creativity and look for what makes the ordinary special. Doing so not only helps us see the extraordinary in the ordinary; it also helps us appreciate the beautiful simplicity of the ordinary. In our “Discussion Points,” we asked if people are different shapes. We tend to think some people have more beautiful shapes than others. Why is that? Sometimes we must work hard to appreciate the beauty of all shapes, even if they are not our favorite shapes. We also asked what shapes you. This is an important question to ask yourselves. If you are aware of what shapes and influences who you are and how you behave, you will be better equipped to decide for yourselves if you are being the person you want to be or if you are being the person other people want you to be.



LESSON No. 6: Patterns

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To find patterns in your surroundings. To train the eye to see specific aspects of the world in which we live, slowing down enough to notice these details.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Planning Notes

It would be helpful for this lesson if you came to class with some different examples of patterns in photographs. You might use some of your own photos for examples or bring in samples from magazines. Having examples will help students better identify patterns for their own photos.

Have students identify patterns in your meeting room prior to going out to take photos.

Lesson

Patterns are everywhere, just as lines and shapes are everywhere. When photographing patterns, encourage students to get up close! The more difficult it is for others to identify the pattern, the better!

Students might also look for repeating patterns (circles next to lines, for instance). Contrasting patterns can also make nice photos. Patterns might be found in food, flooring, liquid, on animals, in the sky, and in the bark and leaves of trees! You might find interesting patterns on the exterior wall of an old building or in a stack of wood, or even in a pile of trash!

Be sure students are not constructing patterns and then photographing them. The goal of this lesson is not for students to design their own patterns. The goal is to find patterns as they already exist, documenting them with a photo.

Discussion Points

Did it become easier to find patterns as they exist around you? Why or why not? What kind of patterns did you find yourself drawn to? Where did you find the most patterns? Inside the building or outside in nature? Why were you drawn to particular patterns? Can anyone think of a behavioral pattern or habit? (List a few examples such as brushing their teeth before bed, combing their hair before school, or taking their shoes off every time they come into a house.)

Modifications

Less Difficult: Make a list of specific items that have patterns for students to find and photograph, much like a scavenger hunt. Examples might include circular patterns, zig-zag patterns, checkered patterns, or striped patterns.

More Difficult: Set parameters around the types of patterns students are allowed to photograph. For instance, they may only photograph patterns found inside the building or outside in nature.

Life Skill

Patterns are not only found in objects; they can be found in people. As human beings, we have a tendency to create habits or routines, which are a kind of pattern. Think of your favorite pattern you photographed. What makes it your favorite? As we try to separate ourselves from our own lives, much like you do when you look through the viewfinder to take a picture, consider how you might choose to create patterns, habits, and behaviors that help you help others and that show kindness. Be in tune with the details and the needs of those around you!



LESSON No. 7: Reflections

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To find reflections within your environment.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Planning Notes

If you have examples of objects that create reflections, you may bring them to class to create a visual for students. Examples might include a bowl of water reflecting any object, a mirror, or a piece of glass.

Students might easily confuse a reflection with a shadow (which is why the lesson "Shadows" follows this lesson). A good rule of thumb when looking for reflections is to have students ask themselves, "Can I see myself?" If they can see a mirror image of themselves (no matter how distorted), then that is a reflection.

A shadow, on the otherhand, is a dark figure created when an object intercepts rays of light, which is why on a cloudy day we do not see shadows.

Lesson

Ask students for some examples of reflections they see around them. Examples include reflections of themselves in a mirror or objects/animals/trees reflected in a body of water. Light itself may be what is reflected on water in an interesting way. An object such as a car might be reflected in the glass of a store window. Try to talk about lots of different ideas because this lesson requires a little more ingenuity and creativity.

Thinking of things that are reflective might help them think of ideas too: mirrors, water, glass, shiny metal, a car.

Ideally, the reflections themselves are the subject of the photograph, not just a by-product of the subject. This requires a very clear reflection that makes the subject it is reflecting fairly obvious. Go over the difference between a reflection and a shadow.

Discussion Points

Have a brief discussion of the different kinds of reflections they photographed. How did the reflections represent the object itself? Did it represent the object exactly or was it more or less beautiful than the object itself?

Modifications

Less Difficult: Choose one or two spots, such as a pond or the glass front of a building, for students to photograph reflections.

More Difficult: Limit the types of reflections students may photograph. For instance, you may only allow students to photograph reflections found in the windows of buildings.

Life Skill

Sometimes when we see the reflections of objects and of people around us, we see their beauty in a new way, a way we had not previously considered. We might think the reflection of something is more beautiful than the object itself. Looking at the reflection of something or someone helps us consider that object or person in a new way. Looking at the reflection helps us see that object or person from a different perspective, perhaps causing us to change our opinion or give us new insight or sense of understanding that we had not noticed previously.



LESSON No. 8: Shadows

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To find shadows in your surroundings. To be able to distinguish between a shadow and a reflection. To understand that shadows are representations of the real.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Planning Notes

As stated in the "Reflections" lesson, a shadow is a dark figure created when an object intercepts rays of light, which is why on a cloudy day we usually do not see shadows.

You might bring a flashlight with you to help simulate how a shadow is created. (Place an object in front of the light projected from the flashlight and a shadow of that object will be created.) Show how the shadow's size and appearance depends on the angle of the source of light. (When the light source is closest to the ground, the shadows are long and big; when the light source is directly overhead, there is little to no shadow.)

Lesson

Have students describe the difference between a shadow and a reflection. A shadow might be considered a copy of a real thing, resembling the real but something entirely of its own making at the same time (like a footprint).

In his piece "Allegory of the Cave," Plato describes a scene where prisoners are chained down, their heads fixed so they can only look at the wall in front of them. Behind the prisoners is a fire. And on a raised walkway between the prisoners and the fire, puppets representing real things enact their proper roles. Because of their proximity to the fire, these puppets cast shadows on the wall in front of the prisoners. And these shadows become the reality of the objects for the prisoners such that when they encounter the real objects, they do not recognize them.

The question this lesson evokes is "what is real?" How do we know what is real? What if all we have ever known are shadows of reality? Encourage students to ponder these questions. There will be time for further discussion during your lesson recap in the next session.

"I am always humbled by the infinite ingenuity of the Lord who can make a red barn cast a blue shadow." (E.B. White) Think about this quote! The blue shadow is a completely different thing than the red barn, beautiful on its own though without the barn (and the light) it would not exist.

Ideally, you would go outside on a sunny day for this lesson. The best outdoor shadows are created mid-morning and late afternoon when the sun is either still rising or starting to set. Very few shadows exist when the sun is directly overhead.

If you must stay inside, have students look for very bright light sources in the building. They can also create their own shadows using flashlights or other sources of light that they can touch and manipulate.

Discussion Points

What if all we saw were shadows? How would we interpret the world? What would we then think when we saw the real thing? How would YOU respond? What are some of the "shadows of truth" we encounter in our lives? How do you know they are shadows and not the real thing? Everyone has a moral fabric on which we build our foundation of truth. Where does yours come from? Every object and every person has the ability to cast a shadow but can only do so when there is the presence of light. Without light, there are no shadows, no copies. (Wouldn't it be less confusing without the shadows or copies?)

LESSON No. 8: Shadows (continued)

Modifications

Less Difficult: Have students create shadows for each other to photograph. Use artificial light to do this.

More Difficult: In addition to taking photos, have students write a short essay on reality versus shadows of reality in their own lives. How would they define what is real as opposed to mere shadows of reality?

Life Skill

We do not want you to live in the shadow or in the dream of reality. We want people to know the real you, not some shadow or representation of you. Take the time to look at the people around you. Consider the source of the shadow. Live the reality you have been given to its fullest. There are no mistakes, only opportunities for growth and learning. But more importantly, explore for yourselves what is true so that when you encounter the shadows or the imposters of truth, you will recognize them and cast them aside. (For example, as C.S. Lewis explains, for Christians this world is a shadow or a copy of a more real world that will only be known upon entering heaven.)¹ You will constantly be learning this truth as you go and may come to further define this truth for yourselves as you get older and have more life experiences.

¹ Lewis, C.S. (1956) *The Last Battle*. New York: HaperCollins Publishers Children's Books.



LESSON No. 9: Framing

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To learn how to create frames around the subject of a photo, using this frame to draw the eye into the subject.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Planning Notes

As with most of these lessons, finding examples is helpful for students. Go through books and magazines to find some examples of how others have used the technique of framing.

Lesson

Framing is a composition technique used to create a defined space around the subject of a photograph. Framing has a similar effect on a photo as lines (see Lesson No. 10) in that the frame helps highlight the subject. Framing may in fact use leading lines to help create the frame. NOTE: It is completely acceptable to use more than one composition technique in one photograph. Doorways and windows are wonderful frames that can be found fairly easily but must be used selectively to make an appealing photo. An example of a natural frame might be trees or the leaves of trees. Openings in trees draw our eyes to what lies beyond the trees. The trees therefore act as a frame.

Framing is a unique technique because frames can be found almost anywhere. Whereas with patterns, shapes, and even lines you must find them as they are, framing is often simply a matter of positioning the camera in such a way that a frame is created. Have students photograph as many examples of framing as possible. Just as an opening in the branches or trunks of trees can provide a nice frame, so can an opening in a broken fence or hole in the wall or a door that is open just a crack. Whatever type of frame is chosen, be sure that the frame does not overpower the subject itself! **Remember that the purpose of the frame is to draw the eye to the subject.**

Discussion Points

Was it difficult finding frames to put around your subject? What was your favorite type of frame to use in your photos? Why? How do we sometimes put frames around people? (This can be similar to putting people in "boxes," summing up who we think they are based on appearances and assumptions.)

Modifications

Less Difficult: Require fewer photos to be taken.

More Difficult: Have students look for examples of framing primarily in nature (i.e., how a grove of trees might frame a house).



LESSON No. 9: Framing (continued)

Life Skill

Think about how a house is constructed. An important part of the construction is to build a frame for the structure. The frame is like the skeleton of the structure, the part which defines how the finished house will look and function. Like a house, we all have some sort of foundation on which our beliefs and our attitudes are based. So what frames us? Who or what helps us define ourselves? Is it the media? Advertisements? Sports celebrities? Religion? The country in which we live? What influences your idea of beauty and of what is good? The same things? We must all be aware of how our opinions and beliefs are constructed and of what we allow to frame who we are and who we become.

LESSON No. 10: Lines

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To understand the way lines impact the effect of a photo. To understand how lines can help draw the eye to the subject of a photo.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Planning Notes

It would be helpful for this lesson if you came to class with some different examples of lines in photographs. You might use some of your own photos for examples or bring in samples from magazines. Having examples will help students better identify lines for their own photos.

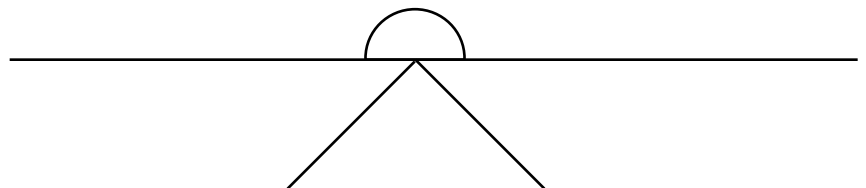
Lesson

Whether they are curved, horizontal, vertical, or diagonal, lines are an important part of composing a photo. For example, diagonal lines create the sense of movement in a photo. Lines enhance the power of the subject of the photo. Sometimes when we are led to the subject with the help of lines, we take the time to notice other aspects of the photo that may have gone unnoticed. The lines themselves might be the focus of the photo, creating an interesting pattern, or they could help lead a person's eyes to the subject of a photo (called "leading lines"). Have students look for different lines in their surroundings. They might see railway tracks, telephone poles, a fence, a curvy road, rows of corn in a field, a river, or pillars of a building, for example. Lines might even be created by the way a child is holding his or her arms in the air!

Oftentimes, the photographer is attracted to a particular linear pattern without necessarily realizing it; the lines can be a natural part of a photo's composition, yet can be so elemental.

This lesson requires students to consider the entire landscape. Lines may also be found in the small details of a pattern or an object, but we really want students to be considering the "whole picture" in this lesson, trying to see how lines help tie a landscape together.

One of the most basic examples of lines is represented in the following drawing of the horizon with a road leading into the setting sun. But challenge students to look for all sorts in lines.



Discussion Points

Was it difficult to find lines in nature? Was it more or less difficult to find lines in man-made objects?



LESSON No. 10: Lines (continued)

Modifications

Less Difficult: Give students a list of specific kinds of lines to look for, as if this were a scavenger hunt.

More Difficult: Encourage students to look for lines as they exist in nature only.

Life Skill

Lines help lead our eyes to the main object in a photo. In life, sometimes we are unable to see the lessons we are to learn from the circumstances we are experiencing. So we must train our minds and our hearts to look to the people and the events surrounding our lives that help lead us to the lessons we are to be learning. In life, we are often unable to see the whole picture of what is happening to us. That is why we need our friends, family, and other people we trust to help guide us along the way.



LESSON No. 11: Making a Building Collage

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To help students consider new perspectives of an ordinary building. To look for beauty from a variety of angles.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Poster board, one per student (bring to next meeting)

Double-sided tape or glue sticks, enough to share among students (bring to next meeting)

Planning Notes

Try to construct a sample collage prior to conducting this lesson so students have a visual of what they are trying to accomplish.

Students will make their collages at your NEXT meeting so be sure to allow time for this.

Lesson

We all have a choice as to how we look at life. Everyday, we choose to either be positive or negative. Sometimes to see the positive, we have to be creative. Sometimes we have to try to see the situation we are in from a different perspective. Taking 18-20 photos of one building can stretch one's creativity. This lesson will help students look at a building from several different vantage points. The end result should be a variety of pictures communicating the different ways in which we might consider the building: distant and far away or up close and personal.

Explain to the students that they are going to only photograph ONE building of their choice. If there is only one building on school grounds, then all the students will shoot the same building.

At the end of the lesson, collect cameras per usual. But keep in mind that during your review of this lesson at your next meeting, you will be taking an additional 10-15 minutes for students to construct their collages.

Rules:

They are to shoot just **one building**.

They may go inside to shoot but most shots should be outside.

There may not be one duplicate shot; **every shot must look different from the others**.

BE CAREFUL to avoid including unnecessary or unwanted subject matter when choosing parts of the building to photograph, such as power lines or telephone poles. Remember that any extra "junk" will distract from your subject.

If you can go offsite to photography, choose a building with lots of architectural details. (These are often older, historic buildings.) For instance, old churches sometimes have gargoyles around the top, interesting molding, wonderful front doors, high steeples, beautiful stairs, and stained glass that can look marvelous from the inside with light pouring through it.

Once they have chosen the building, they should think about what time of day they want to go and photograph the building. When is the light the most interesting on the building?

LESSON No. 11: Making a Building Collage (continued)

Discussion Points

Is there one photo you feel best “describes” or represents the building? Which one and why? How does a building tell a story? What story do you think the building you photographed tells? What parts of a person’s life helps tell their story?

The Collage

After discussion, distribute the poster board and tape to the students. Using their own photos, they will now make a collage of the building they photographed.

Instead of a collage, you may have students choose one photo to accompany a poem or song lyrics, either their own or someone else’s (making sure they give proper credit to the author, of course). You might make some other creative writing exercise for this portion of the lesson.

Modifications

Less Difficult: Require fewer photos to be taken.

More Difficult: Increase the number of photos to be taken. Limit their shots to just exterior or just interior.

Life Skills

By taking the time to look at one object or one situation from multiple angles and perspectives helps us gain a better understanding of that object or situation. If we only look at an object, a person, or a situation from one perspective, we are limiting our understanding. It is important that we take the time to consider what other perspectives will help us gain a greater understanding. Taking multiple photos from multiple perspectives increases our perspective of the whole, giving us a greater appreciation of the whole. It is often the details that tell us the real story.



LESSON No. 12: Landscapes

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To learn how to create a landscape photograph.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Planning Notes

Find a variety of examples of landscapes to show students. This will help them understand what different types of landscapes can look like. Again, look to books or magazines or your own photography for examples. The Internet is also a great resource.

Unless you live the ocean or mountains or some other picturesque setting, it may take some creativity to create landscape photos. The entire school building can create a landscape as can a football field or even a parking lot. Just remember that the photo should capture an entire scene.

Lesson

Landscape photography is one of the oldest, most traditional styles of photography. It tends to focus on an entire scene, whether it be a city skyline or a field of flowers, as opposed to one particular detail. This lesson requires students to observe and absorb an entire scene.

Avoid putting the horizon line directly in the middle of the viewfinder – this will split the image in two in a less appealing way. Instead, make sure students position the horizon line in either the lower third of the frame or in the upper third of the frame, depending on the subject of the photo. Remember to pay attention to where the horizon line is. (Refer to the Rule of Thirds on the “Tips for Better Photographs” worksheet if necessary.) For instance, if the sky (or what is looming along the skyline such as buildings or mountains) is more interesting than the land, position the horizon line in the lower third of the viewfinder. However, if the land (or sea) is of greater interest, position the horizon line in the upper third of the viewfinder.

Be conscious of what is in the foreground (the bottom part of the frame) of the photo and what is in the background (the top part of the frame) of the photo. Be sure to omit unwanted objects in the photo. If there are unwanted objects in the photo such as power lines, simply reposition your camera or yourself to exclude these objects.

While many of the photos students have taken thus far in the program may include landscapes, the purpose of this lesson is to intentionally compose landscapes. This lesson may prove to be difficult for students because capturing a beautiful landscape depends so much on factors that are difficult to control, such as time of day. Patience will be key for students as they look for the right landscapes to photograph.

Discussion Points

Was it difficult to find landscapes that you liked? What made it difficult? How did you like landscape photography as opposed to some of the other types of photography you have experienced thus far? Why do you think that is? How do you remove yourself from a situation enough to see it with a new perspective?



LESSON No. 12: Landscapes (continued)

Modifications

Less Difficult: Require fewer photos to be taken. Set the landscape up for the students by choosing what they will photograph.

More Difficult: Encourage students to experiment more with dramatic lighting, such as photographing a sunset. However, photographing landscapes is difficult enough that no modification is really necessary.

Life Skill

Photographing landscapes requires patience and the consideration of an entire scene. Life often requires both of these to make wise decisions. When we use patience and consideration, we are more likely to react to circumstances in a responsible way, painting a more beautiful picture of how to interact with the world around us.

Also, sometimes we have to remove ourselves from a situation in order to gain a better perspective of that situation. Sometimes we do not notice the decisions we are making or the changes we can make until we step back a bit and try to consider the scene at-large and what changes we might make to that scene.



LESSON No. 13: People Pictures

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To try to capture the personality of a person or group of people.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Planning Notes

The best tip I can give in taking candid pictures of people is **FILL THE FRAME** as much as you can, keeping the background as simple as possible. Natural light creates very nice photos of people. Let the light and the shadows work for you! It is also okay to ask your subject to turn a little bit to take advantage of the light.

If you are using a flash for taking people pictures, be sure to stand at least four feet away to avoid making the subject's face too bright. Or check the camera's user manual to see how far away the subject must be for flash photography. If you are too close, the subject will be "washed out" or will have an overly bright face.

Lesson

There are two primary types of pictures of people, or "people pictures" as we will refer to them. **Candid photos** are photos taken while people are doing something natural, without posing for the camera. And there are **portraits**, photos where the people being photographed are posing particularly for the photographer and are sometimes photographed in a photography studio.

For this lesson, explain to students the difference between these two primary types of people pictures. They may choose to focus on just one type of people pictures or they may use both types of people pictures for the project.

For each person(s) they have identified, have them decide where they want to take the photos. Where is the natural light the best? The "Tips for Taking Better Photographs" worksheet will be helpful for this lesson. Filling the frame, taking the photo at an angle, and using natural light are just three steps to taking nice people pictures. To best capture a person's personality, you might have them engage in an activity they enjoy. Students might also decide just to photograph the person's hands or eyes or a portion of their face. Photographing just a fragment of a person in this way can create some really interesting photographs.

If the person you want to photograph is a stranger, it is important to ask for their permission before taking their photograph. If you are taking a person's photograph for a publication or for purposes of reproduction, be sure the person gives you written permission or signs a consent form whenever possible.

You might also have students experiment with setting up a basic photography studio. To do this, they can choose what sort of a backdrop or background they want to have behind their subjects. They can position various lamps around the studio space to create the lighting they desire. And they can play with different heights of chairs if they want their subject to be sitting. Setting up a basic studio set can be a fun way to better understand portrait photography where they position their subjects the way they as the photographers think they will look best.

Discussion Points

Talk with students about the process they followed for taking people pictures. Was one type easier than the other? Why? What was most difficult about this lesson? What did they learn about the person they photographed?

LESSON No. 14: People Pictures (continued)

Modifications

Less Difficult: Identify people to photograph for the students. Help set up the photos for the students.

More Difficult: Have students follow the guidelines in Lesson 12 (Picture Puzzle) using people as their subjects.

Life Skill

Photographing people is a wonderful way to remember them. It is also a wonderful way to get to know a person. Learning how to photograph people in a way that best captures their personalities and who they are is invaluable. This sometimes requires asking questions about who they are. So many photographers will arrange a photoshoot in the home of their clients so they can better capture that person in their familiar surroundings where they are comfortable. As a photographer, seeing a person's home also gives you insight as to what is important to the person you are photographing. It also allows you to ask more specific questions about that person. Taking photos of people can also instill a greater sensitivity to the circumstances of people, a greater compassion for where and how people live.



LESSON No. 14: Storybook

Total Time

* This lesson occurs on students' own time over the course of **two sessions**. Each session should last 1-1/2 hours.

Purpose

To learn how to document different parts of a person's day with photos. To learn about avoiding bias in photography. To learn a little about photojournalism.

Materials Needed

DAY 1

Cameras, one per student
Pencils, one per student
Paper, one piece per student

*Disposable cameras might be preferable for this lesson since students will likely take the cameras home.

DAY 2

Poster board, one piece per student
Double-sided tape or glue sticks, enough to share
Pens or pencils, one per student

Planning Notes

Photojournalism, or news photography, requires photographers to very carefully choose what they will photograph to capture an entire story or event with just a few photos. Choose a few examples from your local newspaper to bring to class for students to review and discuss. Be sure to also bring the story associated with the photo to tell students what story the photo is trying to tell after students have had a chance to guess.

NOTE: You will need to make prints of ALL the photos students took prior to your next meeting.

Lesson

This lesson teaches how to create a photojournalistic account of a typical day in the life of a friend or family member. Students must tell the story with pictures that are representative of each part of the day. It is important to **remain objective** in deciding what to photograph in order to tell an accurate story.

DAY 1

Show the examples of photos from the newspaper to the students. Ask them what story they think each photo is trying to tell. (Then be sure to tell them which newspaper story is associated with each photo so they will know if their guesses were correct.) **We must all be aware that what a photographer chooses to leave out of a photo is part of the story.** Photojournalism requires a high degree of integrity; we trust that a photographer is not leaving out crucial parts of a scene when telling a story with a photo. [For instance, I may look at a photo of a birthday party that shows only children being present and I might think that no adults were present. But in reality, all the adults were only a few feet away from the children; the photographer just did not include them in the photo. This is okay if it is not important in the story to know that adults were also present.] Cropping, or omitting certain details, is unavoidable and in fact a necessary and natural part of taking a photo. **Just be sure that what you are cropping is not important to the story you are trying to tell!**

Have each student choose a person whose daily life is of interest to the student. This person may be a family member, a friend, or a teacher, for example. After a person is chosen, have each student discuss with that person what a typical day looks like. Students must arrange to spend a day with the person they have chosen; they must be prepared to spend an entire day with this person if possible, following him or her around, photographing different aspects of the day. In preparation for the day of shadowing this person, have students create a storyboard of what they might like to photograph. A **storyboard** is a tool used in creating movies and consists of a series of small drawings or sketches of what will happen in the story you are telling from beginning to end.

The tricky part of this lesson is not only the preparation required for the actual day of photography but knowing there are only 24 shots to capture the day. Students must plan and choose very carefully how to photograph the day. Storyboarding will help with this process. If after taking around 24 photos students feel they can tell an accurate story with fewer pictures, that is okay.

LESSON No. 14: Storybook (continued)

DAY 2

Bring prints of everyone's photos to this class. Have students assemble their photos sequentially on a piece of posterboard. Next, have students write one- to two-sentence captions for each photo that briefly describe what is happening. They might also title their stories something like, "A Day in the Life of My Dad."

Discussion Points

Looking back at the photos you submitted to tell the story, do you feel it was an accurate portrayal of the person's day? What could you have done differently to tell an even better story? How did you decide what was important to photograph and to include in your story? Do you feel you were objective? How might you become a more objective photographer?

Modifications

Less Difficult: Have students document only one part of the day instead of an entire day.

More Difficult: Limit the number of photos students submit to tell their story to 10 or 15 photos. It is more difficult to tell an accurate story with fewer photos.

Life Skill

A photo merely represents part of a larger whole. What we choose to photograph shows not only part of this bigger picture but also our **bias**, or what we interpret as being important. We do the same thing when we tell someone else's story, someone else's experience. We must be aware that whenever possible, we must let another person tell his or her own story. If that is not possible, we must make sure we are telling another person's story as he or she would want it to be told, omitting our own bias as much as possible. This is true both when we use words and when we use photos to tell a story.

Telling someone else's story can be a great opportunity to bring light to a dark situation; perhaps the people in some situations do not have the opportunity to tell their stories. However, we must be careful that telling someone else's story does not degenerate into gossip. We must always assess our motives for telling a story to make sure it is for good reasons.



LESSON No. 15: Picture Puzzle

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To make one complete picture using many smaller, incomplete pictures.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Poster board, one piece per student (bring to next meeting)

Double-sided tape or glue sticks, enough to share (bring to next meeting)

Planning Notes

The focus of this lesson is to make clear to students that every whole is made up of pieces. You might take the time to think of some examples of this. For instance, the human body is made up of a head, a torso, legs, and arms. Students could photograph each of these parts and assemble them together for their Picture Puzzle: a human being.

As the teacher, you may want to first do this lesson on your own prior to teaching it. You will learn how to best explain it to the students as well as learn some tricks to make it easier.

Lesson

In this lesson, students will create one large picture by assembling several other smaller pictures on poster board. For instance, students might choose to create a picture puzzle of a tree. To do this, students will start taking photos at the base of the tree trunk taking photos, continuing all the way up the trunk and into the tree limbs and leaves. They would then assemble these photos in order to eventually represent the entire tree.

Other puzzles might be of a landscape or of people. Students can choose whatever subject they like.

Essentially, students are creating a panoramic view of whatever subject they choose to photograph. They can shoot either vertically or horizontally. They might shoot in straight lines or they might choose to shoot in multiple layers or rows, creating a fuller picture of a scene or object.

Sometimes if you take a greater number of photos of the details of an object, person, or landscape, the end result provides a more complete picture of the subject than simply one or two photos. Taking multiple photos and piecing them together increases the overall perspective. It is easier to focus on the details of such a subject when taking multiple photographs, especially as you take the time to assemble the mass of photos to create one masterpiece.

The key to the success of this project: When students take each photo, they must make sure they allow for overlapping areas wherever they plan on connecting the photos to one another. It is this overlapping space that will make putting the photos together in the puzzle possible. **Without this overlapping space, students will have gaps in their end product.**

Discussion Points

Was it difficult choosing the "whole" you wanted to create? How did you decide what to photograph? What would you choose next time? Why?

Modifications

Provide a minimum and/or maximum number of photos that will compose the final picture puzzle. The more photos, the more difficult and complex the project.

Changing the camera angle will impact how easy or difficult this project is. For example, if all of the photos are taken horizontally, students will have an easier time piecing them together. However, if some photos are vertical or shot at an angle, it can be more difficult to piece them together.

LESSON No. 15: Picture Puzzle (continued)

Another way to make the project more complex is for students to include one shot of the entire subject or of other objects and/or people surrounding the subject and slip it into the other pieces of the picture puzzle. This will create an interesting effect of telling the story of what surrounds the subject; it provides both a context and a panoramic effect.

You might also have students create a 360-degree panorama. To do this, students stand in one place and slowly rotate in a full circle, taking photos as they rotate, making sure the photos connect to one another as much as possible. They can still turn their camera at an angle but it is important to keep the subject matter as linear as possible. When they get their prints back, they assemble the photos together and in order to create a 360-degree view of a scene!

Life Skill

When we meet a person or when we find ourselves in an unfamiliar situation, it can help to ask lots of questions & look at the situation from different angles so we can better understand the person or situation. Every whole is made up of lots of pieces; we are all complex beings with our thoughts, opinions, beliefs, and backgrounds. We all look different; not one of us is exactly alike. It is important to take the time to look at all the pieces of an object or a person so we can better understand the whole. If we only look at the pieces, we may be missing the beauty of the whole being.



LESSON No. 16: Behavior

Total Time

1-1/2 hours

Purpose

To learn how to recognize various behaviors based upon characteristics of these behaviors.

Materials Needed

Cameras, one per student

Planning Notes

Students are looking for representations of certain behaviors to photograph. As they make a list of behaviors to photograph, be sure there is a balance in positive and negative behaviors (ensuring that the list does not consist of primarily negative behaviors). Be sensitive as you discuss the characteristics of some behaviors as this can be assuming and loaded with your own biases. Act primarily as a facilitator for students as they come up with the characteristics for behaviors. Also, depending on what students photograph, be sensitive in the discussion part of the lesson. And of course if the photos show evidence of abuse directly to the student or in their home, be sure to alert the proper authorities.

Lesson

This lesson is particularly difficult because it challenges students to photograph human behaviors. Behaviors are what people DO, which is not as tangible as photographing a tree or a sunset or a person's face.

Have students take photos that represent different types of behavior, such as kindness or violence or addiction or generosity. To do this, have students first make a list of behaviors they are interested in photographing. Then have them list characteristics that they associate with different types of behavior. Finally, have them photograph examples of these characteristics. For instance, alcoholism might be represented by empty bottles lying around on the ground. Kindness might be represented by a person giving a gift to someone. Generosity might be represented by someone sharing their lunch with another person.

Students can set up a scene to represent a behavior. This might be necessary depending on where they are taking photos. Encourage them to think about how kindness might look then have them set up the scene.

Make sure students are not setting out to expose the secrets of their families and friends. This lesson is intended to help students better identify good and bad behaviors when they see them. It is not intended to be an exposé.

NOTE: If the photos students reveal serious abuse issues, it is important to contact the proper authorities and/or individuals who can intervene in the situation.

Discussion Points

Discussion in this lesson should be handled sensitively as some of the behaviors described and/or photographed may deeply impact the students' lives. Questions to ask might include: How did you choose which behaviors to try and capture in a photograph? Was it difficult to find representations of these behaviors? Which behaviors were easy to photograph and which were difficult? Why do you think this is?

Modifications

Less Difficult: Tell students what behaviors they are to photograph.

More Difficult: Have students group behaviors together in their photos. For example, they might photograph both love and generosity in the same photo.



LESSON No. 16: Behavior (continued)

Life Skill

Being capable of identifying the characteristics of behaviors can make it easier for us to identify abusive situations as well as situations steeped with love and kindness. Take the time to notice the representations of behavior in those around you (both good and bad). Is someone you know always happy? Why might that be? Ask them! Is someone you know always sad? Why might that be? Being aware of why people behave the way they do will help you better understand how to be their friend. You might also learn which behaviors you want to be characteristic of you!



PARENTAL CONSENT

"COPYRIGHT LICENSE AND CONSENT TO USE"

1. LICENSE GRANT. All photographs taken by the Students shall be deemed works made for hire and ownership therein shall vest The Viewfinder Project, Inc.. Student hereby assigns all right, title and interest in all photographs taken during the Viewfinder Project to The Viewfinder Project, Inc. The Student shall retain a perpetual nonexclusive, royalty-free license to publish photographs and retain any revenues which may result therefrom. The Viewfinder Project, as the owner of all copyrighted photographs shall have the all rights in the copyrighted works, subject to attribution of original authorship. Each student shall promptly disclose the photographs to The Viewfinder Project and/or its designee. The foregoing license shall be broadly construed to enable The Viewfinder Project's efforts, to preserve integrity and to prevent fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism.

2. CONSENT TO USE LIKENESS. The Viewfinder Project, Inc. may use images it has of your child on its website or in its promotional materials. The Viewfinder Project will not reference your child by name or other identifying information. The Viewfinder Project will not sell images or videos of any child. Please tell us your preferences regarding our use of photos of your child.

____ YES, I grant you permission to use photos or videos of my child(ren) on your website and/or in your promotional materials.

____ NO, please do NOT take or use and photos or videos of my child(ren).

I, _____, as the parent and/or legal guardian of the minor named below, consent to the foregoing policies of the the Viewfinder Project. I authorize the use or reproduction of the photograph(s) without being entitled to payment.

Signature: _____ Today's Date: _____

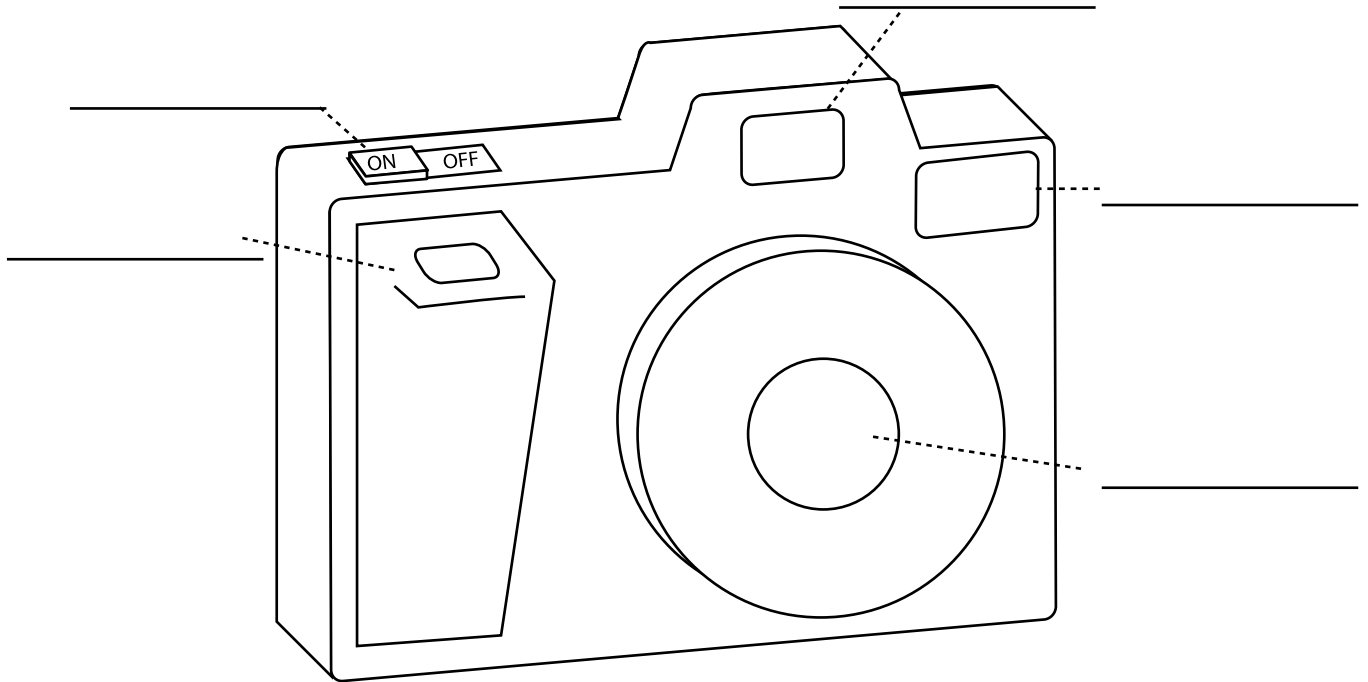
(parent/guardian)

Printed name of parent/guardian: _____

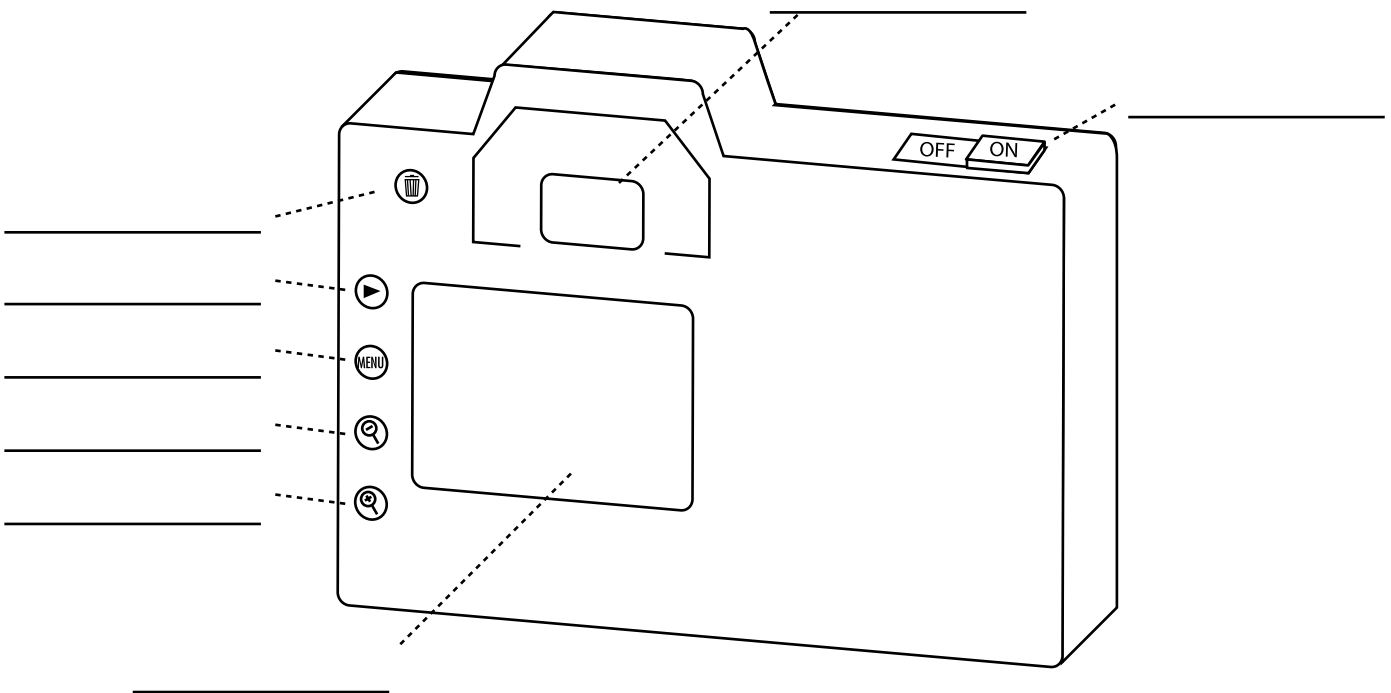
Full name of minor: _____

Contact phone number (optional): _____

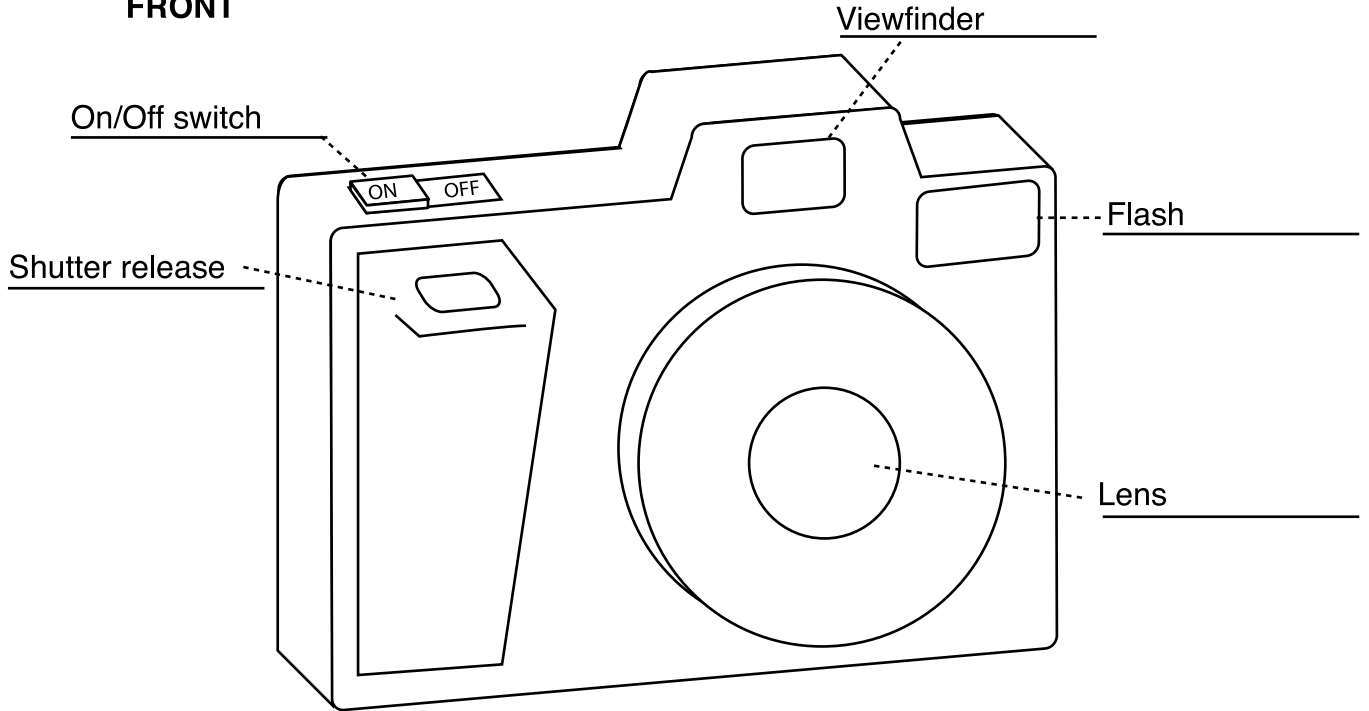
FRONT



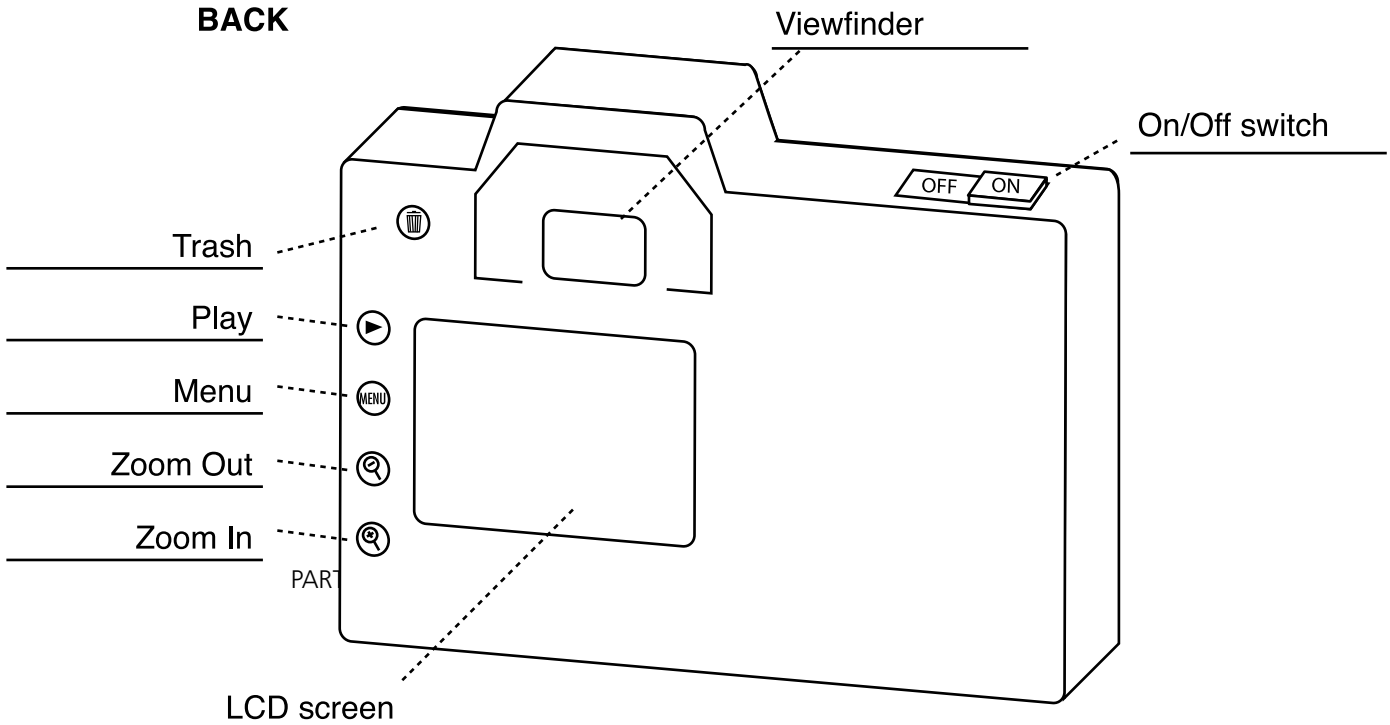
BACK



FRONT



BACK





PHOTOGRAPHIC LOG Worksheet

Name _____

Please check the appropriate lesson number:

Date _____ Age _____

Lesson No. 1: What you DO NOT like or what you think is ugly.

Camera # _____

Lesson No. 2: What you DO like or what you think is beautiful.

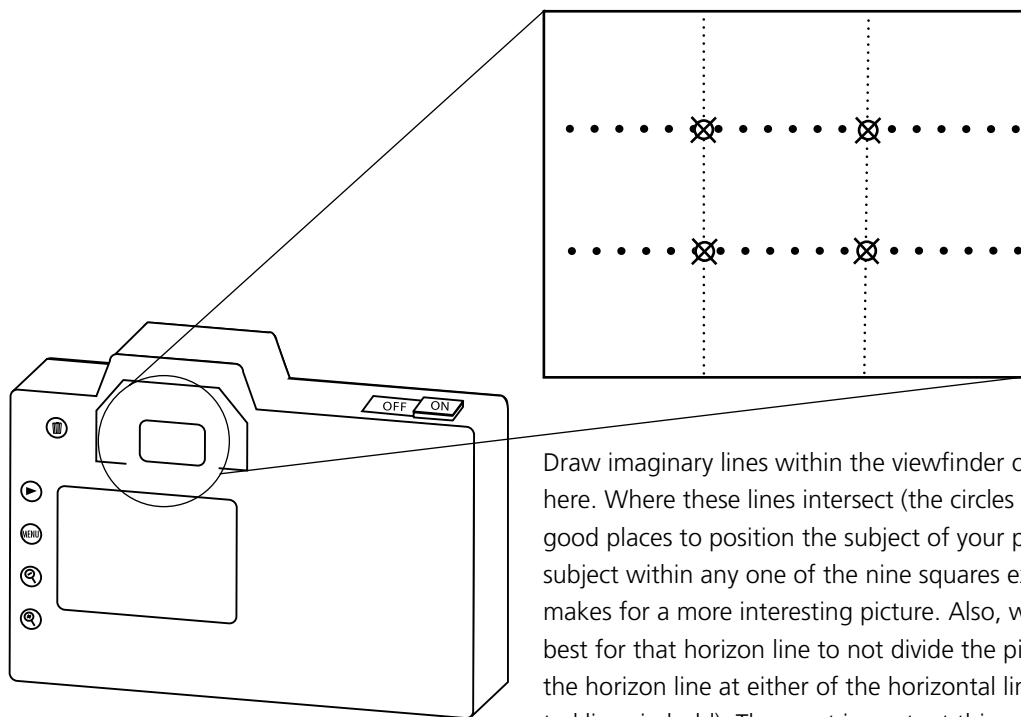
Please fill in the table below as you are taking pictures. On the "Subject" line, describe the subject of your photograph (what you are taking a picture of). On the "Explanation" line, explain why you are taking the photo. For instance, describe **specifically** what you like or what you do not like about what you are photographing.

FRAME#	SUBJECT	EXPLANATION
1	_____	_____
2	_____	_____
3	_____	_____
4	_____	_____
5	_____	_____
6	_____	_____
7	_____	_____
8	_____	_____
9	_____	_____
10	_____	_____
11	_____	_____
12	_____	_____
13	_____	_____
14	_____	_____
15	_____	_____
16	_____	_____
17	_____	_____
18	_____	_____
19	_____	_____
20	_____	_____
21	_____	_____
22	_____	_____
23	_____	_____
24	_____	_____

The following tips will help you take better pictures. These are general rules that will help you look more creatively at the world around you waiting to be captured with a photo. Take the time to follow these basic rules. Then, as you become a better photographer, you will know when to make exceptions to these rules.

When you take pictures, first start with your mind and your eyes. SEE the photo before you take the picture with a camera.

- Be careful not to put your fingers in front of the lens.
- Shoot high. (Maybe stand on something to make you taller.)
- Shoot low. (Don't be afraid to get on your belly!)
- Turn your camera at an angle to shoot.
- Shoot from behind your subject or from the side (the profile).
- Shoot close-ups. (If you are using a disposable cameras, stay at least 1 meter or 1 yard away from your subject. If you do not, the photo will likely be out of focus.)
- Fill up the frame with your subject! Try to not have objects in your picture that you do not want such as power lines. **Look around the entire frame before taking the picture.**
- Use the Rule of Thirds:



Draw imaginary lines within the viewfinder on your camera, as shown here. Where these lines intersect (the circles with X through them) are good places to position the subject of your photo. In fact, placing your subject within any one of the nine squares except the center one generally makes for a more interesting picture. Also, when the horizon is visible, it is best for that horizon line to not divide the picture directly in half; position the horizon line at either of the horizontal lines in this rectangle (the dotted lines in bold). The most important thing to remember here is to **ALTER YOUR VIEWPOINT.**

Remember to always wear your camera strap around your wrist or neck while taking photos.

Keep taking pictures, with your mind if not with a camera! Who knows, maybe you'll become a famous photographer!



SCAVENGER HUNT Worksheet

Name _____

Directions: Find as many items on this list as you can and take a photo of it within the time limit provided. You do not have to find the items in order; you may jump around the list. When you have found every item or when the time is up, return your camera to your teacher.

Remember that you can only take 24 photos or so. You must determine how you are going to plan these shots before you begin. If you want to look for the few 3-point bonus items, plan for this. But also remember that finding the items worth less might add up more quickly!

FIND AND PHOTOGRAPH THE FOLLOWING!

Each of the following is worth 1 point.

1. a red car
2. a school bus
3. a white building
4. a piece of playground equipment
5. a flower
6. your country's flag
7. a church steeple
8. a birthday cake
9. any kind of ball
10. a lamp post
11. a mail box
12. a baby
13. a married couple in the same picture
14. a jar of sweets
15. a sports field
16. a bicycle
17. a cat
18. a dog
19. a cat and dog in the same picture
20. an airplane in the sky
21. a sculpture
22. a beach umbrella
23. the moon
24. a body of water (natural or man-made)
25. a gas pump

BONUS!

Each of the following is worth 3 points.

26. a server/waitron at a restaurant
27. a police officer
28. someone in a costume
29. a video game
30. a tractor in a field

Name _____

Directions: Color the shapes using the key below!

Square = Green

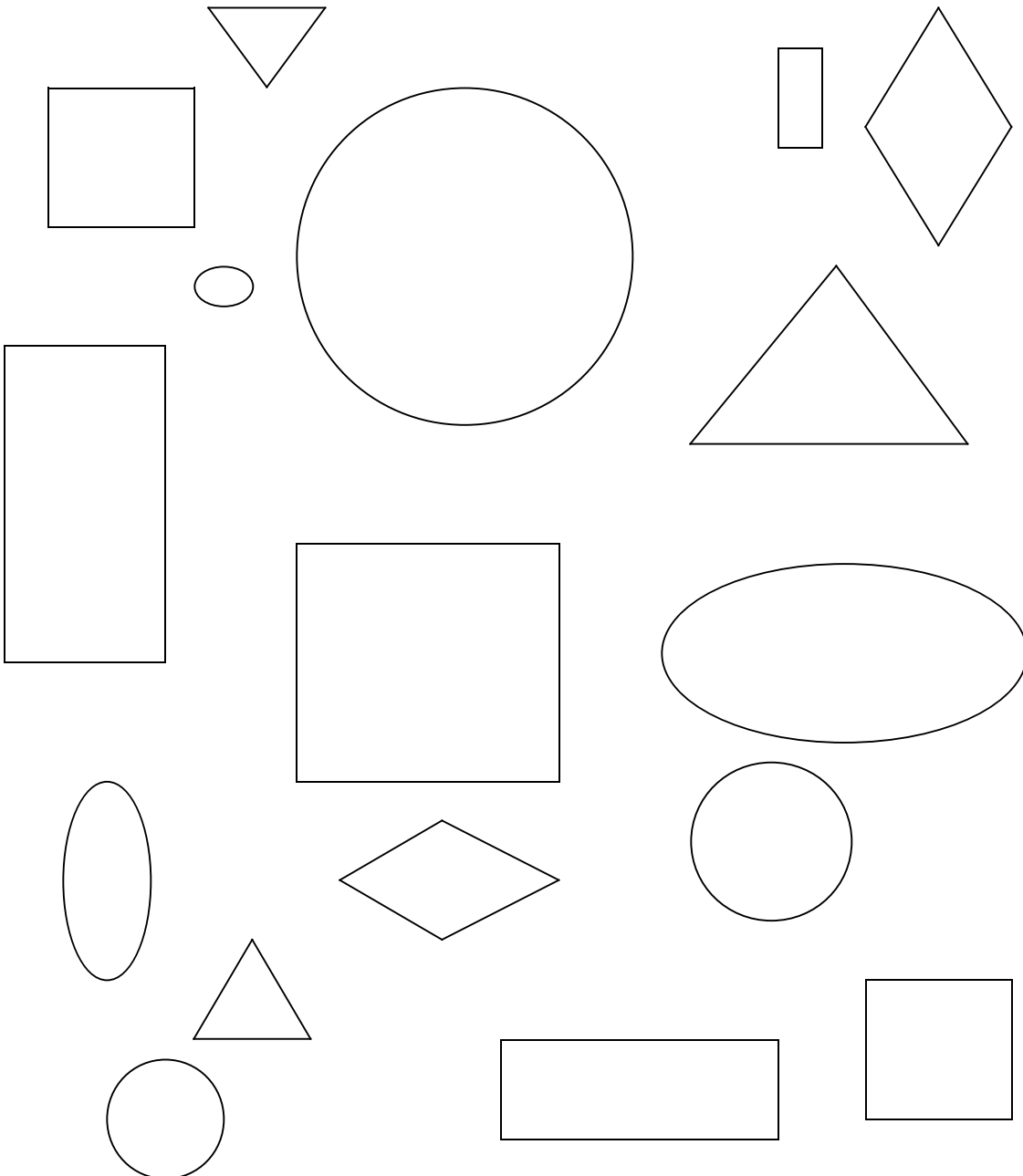
Oval = Orange

Rectangle = Red

Circle = Blue

Triangle = Yellow

Diamond = Purple



Name _____

Directions: Color the shapes using the key below!

Square = Green

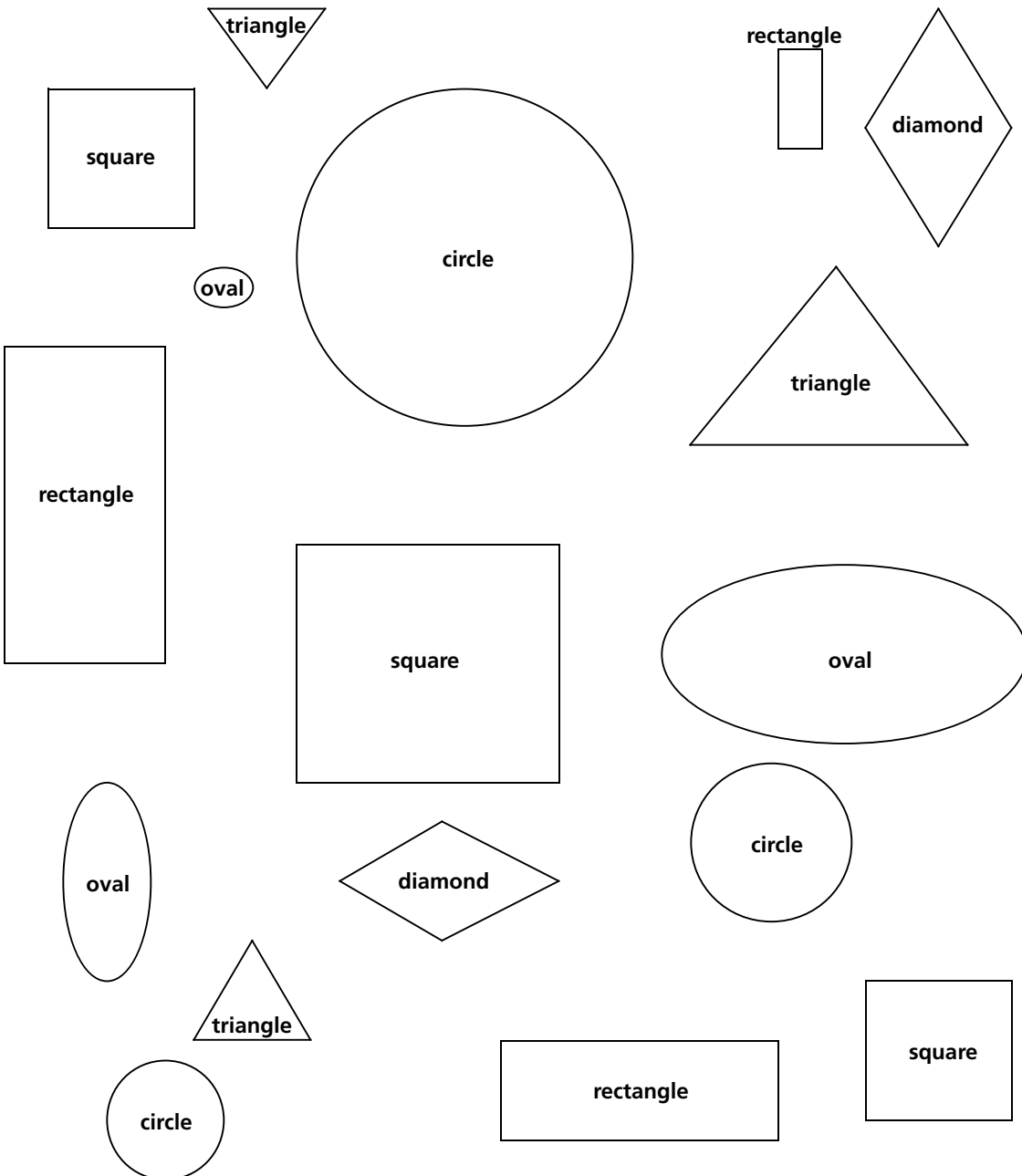
Oval = Orange

Rectangle = Red

Circle = Blue

Triangle = Yellow

Diamond = Purple





FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS Worksheet

First Name _____ Age _____

Location of The Viewfinder Project _____

1) Mark your THREE favorite lessons that you completed:

- What is Ugly?
- What is Beautiful?
- Life is Beautiful
- Scavenger Hunt
- Shapes
- Patterns
- Reflections
- Shadows
- Framing
- Lines
- Making a Building Collage
- Landscapes
- People Pictures
- Storybook
- Picture Puzzle
- Behavior

2) In your own words, name THREE "tips to photography" that you learned by participating in The Viewfinder Project:

3) What has participating in The Viewfinder Project taught you about your own life and what you can do to bring about positive change?

4) Please make any other comments or suggestions in the space below.

Thank you for participating in The Viewfinder Project!



Thank you for participating in The Viewfinder Project! As we end our time together, we want to leave you with these thoughts:

You are special & talented.
You can create change.

You have the power to change the ugly into the beautiful.
You are in charge of your own perspective.
There are adults around you who care for you. Trust them.
Creative thinking will always give you options.
Use your imagination. It will free you.

Below are some websites for you to visit to look at photos and to learn more about photography as well as show you how you can use photography and creativity to look at the world differently:

www.dewittjones.com
www.seeingbeyondsight.org
www.bluecandyphotography.com
www.gregwhitaker.com

We hope you have learned a few things about taking photographs, such as how to look at your surroundings from a different perspective AND that taking a photo begins with your own creative mind. We hope you have learned a few things about yourself and what you are capable of creating.

Now, GO AND FIND WHAT IS RIGHT WITH THE WORLD.

“See Life Differently”
www.theviewfinderproject.org



Thank you for participating in The Viewfinder Project! As we end our time together, we want to leave you with these thoughts:

You are special & talented.
You can create change.

You have the power to change the ugly into the beautiful.
You are in charge of your own perspective.
There are adults around you who care for you. Trust them.
Creative thinking will always give you options.
Use your imagination. It will free you.

Below are some websites for you to visit to look at photos and to learn more about photography as well as show you how you can use photography and creativity to look at the world differently:

www.dewittjones.com
www.seeingbeyondsight.org
www.bluecandyphotography.com
www.gregwhitaker.com

We hope you have learned a few things about taking photographs, such as how to look at your surroundings from a different perspective AND that taking a photo begins with your own creative mind. We hope you have learned a few things about yourself and what you are capable of creating.

Now, GO AND FIND WHAT IS RIGHT WITH THE WORLD.

“See Life Differently”
www.theviewfinderproject.org



APPENDIX A: Alternatives to Using Cameras

Most of the lessons are written to use with cameras. However, if resources are limited to you and using cameras for every lesson is not an option, here are some ideas on what you might do instead. You might also choose to combine any number of these activities. All of these ideas can help students engage their imaginations to “see life differently.”

Cardboard Cameras

For a model of The Viewfinder Project happening in South Africa, there were not enough cameras for everyone. So the teacher made flat cameras out of pieces of cardboard, cutting out a hole for the viewfinder for students to look through & compose their photos. Students can choose to decorate their cardboard cameras.

Creative Writing

Have students use some of their own photos or photos from magazines (that you or they choose) to use as the basis for a story. Perhaps you provide a line of intrigue to get them started then they finish the story.

Visual Diaries

Create blank diaries for students using plain paper folded & stapled down the middle. Students can decorate the covers as they wish. They then use these diaries to cut & paste pictures out of magazine that correspond to the lessons. They can also include pictures that simply inspire them or that they admire.

Illustrations

Have students illustrate a story by making a storyboard. (Reference the Lesson No. 14 “Storybook” for further information on how to do this.) You might also have students use their cardboard cameras to create the photo they like in their minds then try to illustrate that photo on paper.

Sharing Cameras

If you have some cameras but not enough for everyone, you can create a sharing system where some students go out and take photos while the others participate in one of the above activities. When those students come back, they then give the cameras to the other students while they choose an alternate activity. Be sure you are certain who took what photos! For instance, photos 1-15 belong to Student A and photos 16-25 belong to Student B. You can even do this if you only have ONE camera! Just be sure students log on a piece of paper which photos are theirs!

All of the lessons in this curriculum guide will require a bit of your own imagination and creativity as you determine how to best apply them to your specific group of students. You will be stretched to change your own perspective and enjoy the process alongside your students!



APPENDIX B: Using SLR Cameras Instead of Point-And-Shoot Cameras

Coming soon!



APPENDIX C: Fundraising Using The Viewfinder Project

Several of our models have sold the photos students have created while participating in The Viewfinder Project to help raise money for their organization. We at The Viewfinder Project want to help your organization be successful by serving as a fundraising tool. But we also ask that you help continue to spread word about The Viewfinder Project at the same time.

What constitutes a "fundraiser"?

We consider a fundraiser as anything you do that produces profits for your organization using photos produced by students while participating in The Viewfinder Project. This can mean an actual exhibition-style event or it may mean creating simple greeting cards portraying student photos that you sell. You may choose to hold a silent auction for your fundraiser. Or you may choose to create commemorative photo books to sell using online tools such as Snapfish (www.snapfish.com/snapfish/photo-books).

This appendix is organized into the following sections:

- A) Guidelines to follow when planning a fundraiser using TVP student photos (p. 53)
- B) How to organize a photo exhibition (p. 54)
- C) How to organize a silent auction (p. 58)
- D) "Silent Auction Registration Form" worksheet (p. 60)
- E) "Silent Auction Bid Sheet Form" worksheet (p. 61)
- F) "Greeting Cards Template" worksheet (p. 62)

GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW

If you choose to have a fundraiser for your organization, we ask that you do the following:

- 1) Please let us know about your fundraiser at info@theviewfinderproject.com. We would love to come see your fundraiser & learn from you & support you! We would also like to help promote your fundraiser on our website!
- 2) Please provide information about The Viewfinder Project at the fundraiser. You can download our digital promotional materials from the Member's Forum part of our website.
- 3) Please reference "The Viewfinder Project" in any interviews, press materials, printed materials (including greeting cards; see below) surrounding the fundraiser.
- 4) If you are going to produce greeting cards (including holiday cards that you may or may not sell), please use the template provided here & on our website. This will help make your project easier as well as providing some uniformity in design from model to model.
- 5) Please consider giving a percentage of the fundraiser's proceeds back to The Viewfinder Project to help us continue pursuing our mission of helping children "see life differently."



APPENDIX C: Fundraising Using The Viewfinder Project (continued)

HOW TO ORGANIZE AN EXHIBITION

Having an art exhibition to show the student work is a great way to both honor the students' efforts throughout the course of The Viewfinder Project and raise some money & awareness for your organization. Seeing their work printed out and presented nicely gives students a great feeling of pride and accomplishment. This can serve as a huge boost to their self-confidence.

Ultimately, you will have to figure out the best way to organize the exhibition based on your location & your resources. But here we offer a few simple ideas to help it run smoothly and make the event a success.

Getting the art ready to exhibit

Choosing the Photos

For the exhibition, make sure you include at least one photo for every student who participated. **But remember, you can only sell the photos of students who turned in their signed consent forms!** This is really important as you could run into some serious legal issues if you sell something made by a minor without parental consent. This can serve as a big incentive for students to make sure they turn in their signed consent forms.

Choose images by the students that represent a variety of colors and lessons completed. For example, avoid having photos exclusively from the Shapes lesson or the Patterns lesson (both of which usually produce some really wonderful photos). Vary it up as much as possible. Of course, this applies mostly to locations that have completed a variety of lessons. If you have only have taught the first two lessons, try to have an equal number from each lesson.

Avoid altering the photos on your computer. We want the work to remain the students'! If you change the photos from color to black & white or crop them or anything else, the photo then becomes more of your photo than the students'. We do not want this. It is okay to adjust the color slightly in order for the photo to "pop" more off of the wall but do not jeopardize the integrity of the photo by altering it too much. You may allow the students themselves to alter the photos any way they choose if you have access to the digital technology to do this.

What Size Do I Make the Photos?

This depends totally on you. Having photos of all the same size can create a clean, simple feeling. But having a variety of sizes can create a more whimsical, creative feeling. This decision may be dictated by your budget.

Framed Photos

The most traditional way to exhibit photos is perhaps to place them in simple frames. You can often find inexpensive, nice frames at wholesale warehouses or craft shops. Stores may also offer you a bulk discount if you purchase enough! You might also check at a you-frame-it type shop to see if they can offer you a discount if you frame enough work.

Just be sure you do not dry mount the photos prior to framing – simply place a piece of masking tape (or some other type of tape that will not damage the photo over time) on the back of the top of the photo & place matte board over it. This will allow the photo to hang flat under the glass without permanently altering the photo itself.

Our favorite frames are simple black wood frames with white mattes as these keep the focus on the art; if the frame is too fancy or elaborate, this will distract from the photography. So remember, simple is best. Be sure the frames have a hook on the back for hanging both vertically & horizontally.

Examples of framed photos (shown here alongside large dry-mounted photos):



Unframed Photos

One of our models held a wonderful display their student work by hanging just the photos themselves using clothespins to hold the photos. They attached the clothespins to the wall using a product like a press-and-stick adhesive. If you choose to do this, just make sure your photos are no bigger than 8x10-inches as they may otherwise become too heavy for the adhesive. You might also hang a type of clothesline onto which you clip the clothespins & photos.

If you choose this method for display, you might consider placing a small piece of masking tape on the back of the top of the photo with enough sticking out to allow you to clip the clothespin onto without clipping the actual photo. The clips may damage the photos if you place the clips directly onto to them.

The one danger of displaying the photos in this way is that you risk people touching the photos & possibly damaging them, making them unsellable.

Examples of unframed photos:



Dry-Mounted Photos

Another alternative is to dry mount the photos onto foam core or dry mount board for display. As we mention above, dry mounting permanently alters your photo making it impossible to ever reframe or display in other ways. This can, however, be a good, more affordable solution for exhibiting the photos. We like black foam core that is at least ¾-inch thick.

Example of dry-mounted photos:



To Sign or Not to Sign

You will have to decide if you want the students to sign their work that is exhibited. If you decide to have them sign their work, please follow these guidelines:

- For their privacy and protection, **only have them sign their first names.**
- Do not have them sign the front of the photo itself.
- If you have them sign the backs of the photos, be sure to use a fine-point marker made for writing on photos, such as a Sharpie. Otherwise over time, the ink will bleed through to the other side of the photo.
- If you matte or mount the photo, you may have them sign their first names on the mat board. No special pen is required for this type of signing.

Displaying the Art

You may choose to clump the art into groups according to each student, by lesson, or by theme. Or you may decide to intermingle all of the art together. Either way is fine.

“About the Artist”

If you choose to clump the photos according to artist, it is a nice touch to include a small paragraph about the student artist. You may have them write a small bio about themselves.

Placards

We suggest you make simple placards displaying the student’s first name, age, lesson completed, and title of the work (if you have students title their work). Do this for every photo. You may also include the medium used (see sample below). If you are selling the photos, also include the price. It’s also nice to tell visitors to the exhibition that a percentage of every sale goes back into your organization (or wherever you designate) should you decide to make such a designation.



APPENDIX C: Fundraising Using The Viewfinder Project (continued)

Print all of this information out on plain white paper. Trim down so they are all the same size. Then using simple, black poster board, glue the white paper onto the black background & trim so there is a ½-inch black border. Use double-sided tape or press-stick adhesive to affix to the wall under each photo.

Creating simple placards adds to the overall exhibition experience, making visitors feel they are at a very organized, professional exhibition.

SAMPLE PLACARD:

Nicole, Age 11 Untitled, (point-and-shoot digital camera) Lesson: WHAT IS UGLY? \$150
--

Easels vs. Wall Hanging

If you have access to either table or floor easels, you may choose to use these in addition to hanging photos on the wall or instead of using the walls. It is completely up to you.

Complements to the Exhibition

Food

It is very nice to offer food and drink to those who come to the exhibition. This can be as simple or elaborate as you choose. What you choose to do may range from making cookies and offering cool water to drink having the entire event professionally catered. It all depends on your budget.

Slide Show

If you have access to a video projector, it is a nice touch to have a slideshow running of the student work from throughout your time together. This is a great way to show visitors a large variety of images that you may not have had the resources to print and frame to hang. Some of our models have chosen to include all of the same information that is included on the placards for each slide image, and some chose to not include any information at all. Again, this is your choice.

NOTE: You may even decide to JUST have a slideshow as your event instead of hanging hard copies of students photos. In this case, make sure you include other elements, such as having students take time to talk about their work.

Music

Music can add to the overall ambiance of the event. Choose music that serves as background music and that is not overpowering and distracting in nature. Keep the volume level loud enough to hear but not so loud that it is difficult for visitors to talk.

Program

It can be helpful to provide a simple program that visitors can pick up at the door to help them better understand the scope of The Viewfinder Project and your organization. This will give them a context for the art they are viewing and perhaps provide a greater incentive for wanting to make a financial contribution to support your organization.

Programs can be simple one-sheets or even half-sheets of paper. They do not need to be fancy, color, or complicated.



APPENDIX C: Fundraising Using The Viewfinder Project (continued)

Games/Art Project

At one exhibition we held, we set up a table that had coloring pages and crayons to occupy younger visitors.

You could also set out some old magazines, glue sticks, scissors, and paper and have visitors both young and old make collages of “what is beautiful” to them. You can either hang up the finished pieces or allow visitors to take them home.

We set up another table with a variety of random objects and brought some of the cameras so visitors could practice some of the “Tips for Better Photographs.” You may even choose a lesson, such as Shapes, to use as a guide for visitors. This exercise gives visitors to your exhibition an opportunity to experience in a small way what the students experienced while participating in The Viewfinder Project.

Volunteers

We feel it is important to have some volunteers from your organization, either students who participated in The Viewfinder Project or adult volunteers, present to mingle with visitors and help answer questions. You should have volunteers wear something that distinguishes them, such as a nametag or specifically colored shirt. You can include in your program that volunteers are walking around to help answer any questions.

One of our models chose to have all of the students who participated in making the art for the exhibition present. Each student stood beside their clump of photos and could answer questions or simply talk about their own personal art.

HOW TO ORGANIZE A SILENT AUCTION

To organize a silent auction fundraiser, you will follow the basic guidelines of organizing an exhibition as are detailed earlier in this appendix. There are a few additions to the process.

Registration

It is a good idea to have those bidding in the auction to complete a simple registration form. This will allow you to follow up with them after the auction to thank them and to keep them informed of future events related to your organization. See registration template included in this appendix.

Order of the Night

Welcome your guests to the evening. Go over the simple rules for the auction:

- State the exact start time and end time for the auction.
- When the auction has ended, you will collect the bid sheets and announce the winners. It is best for winners to be present! If they are not present, the next closest bid wins. *By requiring winners to be present, you avoid having to track down everyone after the auction is over and done.*

Number Each Photo

You will need to create a simple numbering system for each photo to correspond with the bidding sheet. You might purchase plain stickers onto which you write the numbers and **place on the wall or table** next to the photo. (If you choose to use stickers, be careful not to place the sticker directly on the photo or the frame as this may ruin it when trying to remove the sticker!)



APPENDIX C: Fundraising Using The Viewfinder Project (continued)

Bidding

Tables

You will need some tables to place under the hanging art for auction sheets on which visitors will place their bids.

Bid Sheets

You will need to print out auction bid sheets for each photo you are auctioning. You may use the template included in this appendix.

Starting Bid

It is your responsibility to choose the starting bid. This is the number everyone will use to continue the bidding process. Your starting bid will depend on how you choose to sell the photos. If the photos are unframed, the starting bid will be lower than if the photos are framed. Be sure to cover your costs when deciding on the starting bid number. Be sure you do not start the bid too low! Most people are willing to pay a little more for something when they know their money is going to a good cause.

Bidding Increments

You decide what the bidding increments will be. You may require bids to go up in increments of \$5, \$10, or more! (For instance, for increments of \$10 and if the starting bid is \$50, the bids should look go up from \$50 to \$60 and on and on until the close of the auction. If you set a \$10 increment, bidders may not place bids of \$55 or \$65 and so on.)



SILENT AUCTION REGISTRATION FORM

Thank you for participating in our silent auction fundraiser event! We are honored to have you here. Please take a moment to complete this form so we can follow up with you and keep you informed of future events for our organization!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address _____

How did you hear about our organization?

Would you like to be added to our organizations mailing list?

Yes _____ No _____

Thank you!



GREETING CARD TEMPLATE

The following page contains a template for creating a greeting card.

Size flat: 7" x 10"

Size folded: 7" x 5"

6900 S. GRAY ROAD, INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46237
www.theviewfinderproject.com



.....
FOLD



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How do I start The Viewfinder Project in my city or at my school?

A: You need to make sure you have signed and returned the License Agreement before starting. If you obtained a copy of this curriculum online, then you should have signed it electronically. If you obtained this curriculum from a friend, please contact The Viewfinder Project at info@theviewfinderproject.org before beginning.

Q: Do I need to be a teacher or a photographer in order to teach The Viewfinder Project?

A: No! The only criteria you need to have is the ability to believe that there is beauty to be found in everything. If you can believe this, then you will be able to lead your students through this journey of self-discovery. The Viewfinder Project lessons are written to help easily guide you through this process.

Q: What ages does The Viewfinder Project target?

A: We target children between the ages of 8 and 14 years, though the curriculum can be adapted for both younger and older students.

Q: Can I make changes to the curriculum if I need to?

A: You may make changes to the curriculum provided these changes do not alter the lesson dramatically or go outside the vision and mission of The Viewfinder Project. We in fact encourage you to do what you need to to make these lessons more appropriate for your situation. Please contact us if you have any questions about what you are and are not allowed to change.

Q: Can students take cameras off-site in order to participate in The Viewfinder Project?

A: We do not recommend that students take cameras off-site while participating in The Viewfinder Project. If you have purchased your own cameras, then you need to make a judgment call as to whether or not your students are responsible enough to care for the cameras outside of your supervision.

Q: What if I am unable to purchase cameras or pay for film developing costs?

A: You can always start by asking your friends and family if they would be willing to donate a new or used camera to you. Or you might identify a camera you want all of your students to have and contact the manufacturer to see if they will either donate the cameras to you or offer you a bulk discount. Contact local photography supply stores to see if they are able to assist you in any way. Visit our website at www.theviewfinderproject.org to find out about sponsorship ideas and opportunities.

Q: Can The Viewfinder Project help me with costs?

A: Possibly. The Viewfinder Project is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We therefore might be able to help provide tax breaks to participants and donors in the United States. Please contact us for more details.

** Please be sure you register for The Viewfinder Project at www.theviewfinderproject.org! By registering, you will gain access to much more information regarding partnerships, idea exchanges, photo libraries, and more!



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks go to so many people who helped make The Viewfinder Project possible.

Thank you to Mr. Olivier and the 2005 sixth-grade class at Raithby Primary School in South Africa for being the first model of Lesson No. 1 and No. 2 and for inspiring the creation of the rest of the lesson plans.

Thank you to Kelly Weaver at Mindfull Design for all the design work you did for this entire project.

Thank you to: our friends, specifically Pierre Vivier, Edy Stoughton, and Jen Maher; Gene and Marylou Habecker; and most of all to Kyle. Thanks to you all for being constant champions and sources of encouragement through the development of this project.

And thank you to all of you who are bringing The Viewfinder Project into your communities and schools. May the imaginations and the lives of your students be enriched as a result of your investment in them.



Here are some questions and suggestions when considering using The Viewfinder Project (TVP) in your organization:

1. What is your objective in approaching TVP? What do you hope to accomplish?
2. Who will be your target students?
TVP is originally intended for middle school-aged students; can go older but no younger than 4th grade.
3. How many participants do you ideally want to include?
It is recommended that no more than 17-18 participants
4. How often do you hope to meet with participants? For how long?
TVP works best meeting once a week for no less than one hour.
5. Do you have access to volunteer help? TVP recommends a 5:1 adult to student ratio.
6. Who will teach the lessons? Lessons are designed for the most novice photographer to teach lessons. Do you have access to photographers who may help teach?
7. What type of cameras will you use? (film ,digital, specialized cameras? See Appendix A & B for suggestions) Do you have access to cameras? Indianapolis based programs may contact TVP about borrowing cameras.
8. How will you get enough cameras for use? (ask for donations, grants, participants bring their own, fundraisers (see fundraiser etiquette: Appendix C of curriculum)?)
9. How will you view the photos? (digital on computers, film)
10. Which lessons will you teach? Lessons 1 & 2 are the most important lessons. The lessons are organized from easiest to most difficult.
11. What additional information may you want to add to the lessons? (e.g. basic photography skills, biblical lesson or life lessons add-ons). The curriculum can be used as a skeleton and can be adjusted to meet a specific locations contest and needs. The curriculum should not be altered so much that it is no longer recognizable as TVP.
12. Write out schedule/plan of implementing TVP: (Include: objective, goals, lessons that will be taught, supplies needed) Refer to "How to Use This Curriculum included in TVP teaser document).