

Photo Composition Techniques

WebQuest Description: Students will learn about 10 techniques to take better photographs and post their final work on a wiki.

Grade Level: 9-12

Curriculum: Art / Music

Keywords: photography composition wiki group roles

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Introduction

Everyone can take a picture, but what differentiates a great photograph from a snap shot? Why are some photographs better than others? What techniques do professional photographers and artists use to improve the story they are telling with their shot? Can you identify these techniques within a photo? Can you translate your knowledge into some great photographs? Ultimately, do you know how to critique photographs to develop a high quality photography museum?

You have been asked to serve as the curator of photography for new online photography "museum". Your boss wants you to select quality images by up and coming new photographers to display at the opening exhibit. The problem is this really isn't your field, but it is a great opportunity, so you set off on a journey to learn what makes a good photograph and realize it starts with photo composition.

Page Images gathered from: amazon.com, shutterskills.com, trybpo.com, reasontostand.org, learningandteaching.dab.ca, ted.coe.waye.edu All documents written by Karin Knapik

Tasks

Students will work in groups to investigate, define and find samples online of ten photographic composition techniques, and then organize their findings on a wiki page. Using what they have learned, each student will take two photographs utilizing each technique (20 shots total). These images will be posted, labeled and described on another wiki page, under the individual's name creating a Photo Composition Online Journal. Each student will then select their favorite shots from their personal page, to be critiqued by the class. The best images will be selected for display in the Online Photography Exhibit and the high school's website.

ROLES: Each student must contribute to all aspects of the group project components, but ultimate responsibility will be broken into the following areas:

Wiki Manager: This person is responsible for how the content is displayed on the group wiki. Is there a consistent look throughout the page? Are they neat and easy to read?

Copy (Writing) Manager: This person is responsible for ensuring all writing components are of high quality with proper grammar and spelling on the group wiki.

Photography Manager: This person will ensure that there are two photographs for each technique on the group wiki and that they meet the requirements.

Citation Manager: You need to cite your sources! This person will be responsible for ensuring all your resources are gathered throughout the project and cited on your wiki.

Process

STEP #1 In groups, students will define the following ten photographic composition techniques: 1) Rule of Thirds 2) Lines 3) Angle/Viewpoint/Vantage Point 4) Framing 5) Texture 6) Balance/Symmetry 7) Patterns 8) Depth of Field 9) Fill the Frame 10) Shapes
The composition technique and definition will be included on a webpage at Weebly.com. Website resources for investigating about photo composition definitions: Rules of Photography Composition; Digital Photography Composition; Top 10 Photo Composition Rules; 5 Elements of Composition in Photography
Your websites will be created at www.weebly.com
& Create an account using your school email. & Write down your password!
STEP #2 Using the resources listed below, each group will find one excellent example of each technique on the Internet and describe why each photo demonstrates that approach, adding both the images and the description to the webpage started in step #1. Make sure you include a works cited section to your website, listing the websites that you used to find your images. Websites Resources; Flickr - Its the Composition; Flickr - Composition First Wikipage; http://photocompwebquest.wikispaces.com/STEP_#3
STEP #3 Using what you have learned about photo composition techniques, each student will take one photographs demonstrating each technique (10 photographs total) and post those images to an individual (student) wiki page, creating a Photography Composition Online Journal. Provide one photograph that demonstrate each technique along with a sentence or two explaining how the technique is represented in the image. You may organize your webpage in any manner you like, but make sure it look neat and is easy to tell which photograph is connected to which technique.
STEP #4 As a class we will critique each other's photographs. The best work will be displayed on the high school website's Online Photography Exhibit.

