

The Ultimate Assignment – Annotated Photo Journal

Teachers! This information and these resources can be used in a variety of ways in any curriculum. You can use these resources in activities that support your curriculum and are meaningful to students, whether you are teaching in the classroom or virtually.

Activity Applicable to: Social Studies, Language Arts, Fine Arts, STEM, all other disciplines

Objectives:

Students will understand that photographs with annotations can send specific messages.

Students will know

- Photographs capture non-verbal representation.
- Annotations can aid in understanding a photograph.

Students will be able to

- Generate meanings from photographs.
- Use photographs and annotations to present a perspective.

Prior Knowledge: Students have seen photographs in multiple contexts. Students have the ability to distinguish photographs from other art mediums. Students have seen representations of photographs and artwork with annotations or captions.

Representative Standards: The following standards alignment is intended to demonstrate the universal applicability of this lesson and long-term skills, knowledge and understanding that students gain as a result.

College Board Standards for College Success:

Speaking -

- S2.1 Student communicates in one-to-one contexts.
- S2.2 Student plans for and participates in group discussion.

Media Literacy -

- M1.1 Student understands the nature of media communication.
- M2.1 Student understands, interprets, analyzes, and evaluates media communication.

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards:

Reading –

- TOD 701. Identify the purpose of a word, phrase, or sentence when the purpose is complex.
- TOD 703. Use a word, phrase, or sentence to accomplish a complex purpose, often in terms of the focus of the essay.

Writing –

- EXJ 601. Show advanced understanding of the persuasive purpose of the task by taking a position on the specific issue in the prompt and offering a critical context for discussion.
- EXJ 602. Generate insightful reasons for a position; show understanding of the complexity of the issue in the prompt by
 - examining different perspectives; and/or
 - evaluating implications and/or complications of the issue.



- DEV 601. Provide ample development in support of ideas; substantiate ideas with precise use of specific, logical reasons and illustrative examples.

NOTE: Other standards may apply in your state or district.

Lesson Instructions:

This lesson has been divided into three sections that are carefully designed to provide students with background knowledge and conceptual readiness before they apply their new skills. The activities in this lesson can be done in the classroom or virtually.

Part I – The Power of a Photograph: How do we know a photographer’s intended message? - Class Introduction and Discussion

Guiding Questions: Does a photograph always send a message? How do you determine that message? How do we keep ourselves safe from sending unintended messages?

Choose three photographs and hang them around the room. Ask students to move around the room to each photograph and individually record what each photograph means. In groups of three or four, have students share their ideas and generate new possible meanings. Once the small group sharing is complete, ask the full class to share some of the new ideas they developed in their groups. Ask the class a few questions about the exercise.

- When you first walked around the room, did you feel you understood the full meaning of each photograph?
- When you sat with your group, did you hear new perspectives about each photograph that you had not previously generated?
- How comfortable do you feel looking at a photograph and analyzing the full meaning behind each photograph without additional information from the photographer or context?

Note: *Teaching this lesson virtually? Share the photographs with your students via screenshare (Zoom, Teams, etc.) or include them as resources using your school’s online learning management system. You can still assign students to work in pairs or small groups, or you can prompt the entire class to share their ideas and generate new possible meanings for the photographs.*

Class Discussion: The purpose of this activity is to introduce students to the power of a photograph. Students will initially analyze powerful historical photographs and discuss possible meanings, implications and intentions of the photographer.

“With today’s media, smart phones, and technology at our fingertips, taking photographs is easier than ever. We use photographs to send updates as to what we are doing, who we are with, and what we believe. How do we know that what we are sending is being interpreted the way we intend? How do we know that what we are interpreting what we see the way the photographer intended?”



Show a series of photographs and ask your students to consider the following questions for each photograph:

Note: *Suggestions and links can be found in the resources section. Teaching this lesson virtually? Screenshare the series of photographs or include them as resources in your school's online learning management system.*

- What is the photographer's intent in capturing this image?
- What message is the photographer trying to convey?
- Could this photograph be posed or edited in any way to alter the message?
- What may be missing from this photograph? What might the photographer have left out?

Additional Activity – The Secret Message: Break into small groups and give each group an intended message that they can use photographs to depict. Some suggestions may be – sadness, happiness, poverty, entitlement, rhythm, refrain, equal, greater than/less than, etc. Have students research to find or take three to five photographs that depict the intended message. Have each group present their photographs to the class and have classmates generate hypotheses about the intended message and/or theme.

Note: *Teaching this lesson virtually? Assign students to work together in small groups to complete The Secret Message activity. Each small group can choose one presenter to share their chosen photographs with the rest of the class. Give your students control of the presenting screen!*

Discussion Prompt: How aligned was the original theme of the photographs to the guessed theme from classmates?

Instructional Option: Break into specific subject disciplines here. Science teachers may choose to have students reflect on scientific reactions, elements, or parts of nature. History teachers may choose time periods or events. Language Arts teachers may choose a theme or scene from a class reading.

Part II – The Value of Annotation: It's All About Perspective - Class Introduction and Discussion

Guiding Questions: How can you present a photograph with a notation or caption that conveys the photographer's intended message? How do notations and captions add to the understanding and the purpose of the photograph?

Class Discussion: What is the value of annotating?

First, in their groups, students choose one of the powerful photos from the previous activity and provide initial annotations and/or a caption of the photograph, telling the audience about key features of the photo.



Second, have students consider the following questions when learning how to annotate a photograph:

- Looking at the subject of the photograph:
 - What is the photograph about?
 - When and where was it taken?
 - Is this photo realistic?
 - What message does the photo communicate?
- Looking at the form, color, process and mood of the photograph:
 - What sort of shapes, lines, patterns or textures are in the photograph?
 - What time of day was the photograph taken?
 - Does the photograph seem manipulated or distorted in any way?
 - How does the photograph make you feel?

Have students revisit their initial annotations and answer the above information to add substance to their annotation or caption. Have each group prepare a second annotation with the above listed items. Compare the original annotation to the revised/expanded annotation. How do they compare? Which annotation conveys more details and provides more depth?

Note: *Teaching this lesson virtually? Students can annotate the powerful photos by working together or individually. Questions that students must address when learning how to more fully annotate their photographs can be emailed, included in assignment directions, or uploaded as resources to the learning management system used at your school. When sharing, other students can provide feedback in video conferencing chat windows!*

Additional Activity – Alternative Perspectives: Provide students with one image replicated three times. Have each student come up with three short captions or labels that present different perspectives of the image. In groups of three to four, have students share their various perspectives. Once the small group sharing is complete, ask the classroom to present varying perspectives for each photograph.

Note: *Teaching this lesson virtually? To complete the Alternate Perspectives activity, choose ~8-10 photographs to replicate three times and assign one to each student. Then, create small groups of students with the same photograph to share their short captions together. They'll be amazed at their different perspectives! Groups can choose a presenter to share his or her screen with the class so everyone can see the photograph and the differing points of view.*

Class Discussion: How does having the caption or label convey understanding of each photograph?

Part III – The Annotated Photo Journal: Student Project

Students have an understanding of the power of a photograph and how careful annotations add to a photograph's meaning. The purpose of preparing an annotated photo journal can either be to



represent a theme, share images related to one specific topic, or provide a chronological narrative of a time period.

Suggested annotated photo journals:

History – Guiding Questions: What is the power of an historical site? How can each site (monument, memorial, or museum) affect an individual personally?

Science – Guiding Question: What are the positive and negative effects of human interaction on the environment?

Language Arts – Guiding Questions: What essential events move the action of a story? What point of view does the author select?

Music/Fine Arts – Guiding Questions: How do composers create an emotional response through music? In what ways do lyrics create images in our minds? What considerations go into pairing music with scenes in films and shows?

Math – Guiding Questions: How does math make me a better shopper? How can I use numbers to win arguments? When is it in my favor to guess on a multiple choice question?

Have students prepare 12-15 photographs that represent evidence of their response to the question above. These photographs may be sourced online, with accurate citations, taken around the house, or taken while traveling. Each image should be accompanied by an annotation that provides context for the photograph, meaning behind the subject choice, and additional information related time period and style. Note: with images sourced online, extra research may be needed to provide annotation information.

In addition to the 12-15 photographs and annotations, students will also prepare a written introduction, analysis, and reflection. Introduction should include a reframing of the initial question with a strong statement as to what the photos will show. Analysis will describe how the photos depict the student's opinion. Reflection will center on the challenges each student may have experienced when using photographs to convey an opinion. Each written piece should be at least one paragraph in length.

Recommended Summative Assessment:

Does the student's photo journal provide a clear representation of an opinion and answer to the guiding question?

In evaluating your students' work, use a rubric that includes the elements of the aligned standards. Rubrics are most effective when they are given out alongside the assignment directions.



	Expected High Quality	Acceptable Evidence of Learning	Evidence of Learning Will Benefit from Revision	Evidence of Learning is Absent
Work shows clearly defined response to guiding question – Introduction. ___/10	Response to guiding question thoughtfully presented and organized logically. Up to 10.	Response to guiding question presented. Some organization is present. Up to 8.	Response to guiding question is vague. Little organization is present. Up to 6.	Response to guiding question not presented. No organization of presentation. Up to 3.
All required photographic elements are included. ___/15	12-15 photographs are included that clearly respond and relate to guiding question. Up to 15.	11-7 photographs present. Photographs present connection to guiding question. Up to 12.	Less than 6 photographs present. Photographs loosely relate to guiding question. Up to 8.	Photographs are not included or photographs do not relate to guiding question. Up to 4.
All required annotation elements are included. ___/15	Annotations for all 12-15 photographs are organized, thorough and provide additional information critical to reader understanding. Up to 15.	Annotations for photographs are organized and provide additional information that adds to reader understanding. Up to 12.	Annotations for photographs provide additional information that provides some reader understanding. Up to 8.	Annotations are not included or do not enable reader understanding. Up to 4.
Photographs and annotations support initial statement and response to guiding question. ___/20	Photographs and annotation present a unified response to guiding question and express a specific message. Up to 20.	Photographs and annotations connect to guiding question and add meaning. Up to 16.	Some photographs and annotations relate to guiding question. Up to 12.	Photographs and annotations do not relate to guiding question. Up to 5.
Analysis reflects upon student's use of photographs and annotations in response to guiding question. ___/20	Analysis clearly connects the use of photographs and annotations as a tool to present a purposeful response to a specific message. Up to 20.	Analysis connects the use of photographs and annotations to present a response to a specific message. Up to 16.	Analysis connects some use of photographs and annotations to respond to a message. Up to 12.	Analysis suggests a need for further thought and development. Up to 5.
Reflection depicts students' experiences using photographs and annotations as a narrative tool. ___/20	Reflection has been robustly developed and is supported by substantive evidence from the photo journal experience. Up to 20.	Reflection has been developed and is supported by evidence from the photo journal experience. Up to 16.	Reflection has been loosely developed and is vaguely supported by evidence from the photo journal experience. Up to 12.	Reflection suggests a need for further thought and development. Up to 5.



Differentiation Options:

Presentation options may range from paper format, videos, still photos, or musical representations.

Grouping students will offer several opportunities for differentiation. Student groups can combine learning styles, strengths and weaknesses, and topics of interest.

Technology Options:

See photo journaling app resources. These options provide popular photo journaling apps that may work for your students regardless of their devices.

Student Resources:

Photograph Reference Websites: Feel free to use these websites or your own images.

- <http://time.com/photography/life/#index/0>
- <https://www.nyip.edu/photo-articles/photo-gallery>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/gallery/2013/mar/22/ecology-in-action-photo-competition-winners-in-pictures>
- <http://www.cnn.com/2013/09/01/world/gallery/iconic-images/> *Historic images – some may be graphic in nature.
- <http://all-that-is-interesting.com/influential-photographs> *Historic images – some may be graphic in nature.
- <https://www.mic.com/articles/91925/11-powerful-images-that-prove-how-music-really-can-change-the-world>

Reference information for taking good photographs:

- <http://digital-photography-school.com/rule-of-thirds/>
- <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/photography/photo-tips/pbb-get-some-perspective/>

Annotating a photograph:

- <https://photographysubdip.wordpress.com/artist-research-list/how-to-annotate/>

Building photo-based writing skills:

- <https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/01/11/picture-this-building-photo-based-writing-skills/>

Lesson Resources:

Edutopia: Academic Scrapbooking: <https://www.edutopia.org/academic-scrapbooking-photographs-journals>

Teaching the photo essay resource: <https://www.weareteachers.com/teaching-the-photo-essay/>



Annotating a photograph - <https://photographysubdip.wordpress.com/artist-research-list/how-to-annotate/>

Building photo-based writing skills: <https://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/01/11/picture-this-building-photo-based-writing-skills/>

WorldStrides:

Contact the Curriculum and Academics Team at WorldStrides with questions:
discovery@worldstrides.com

Explore exciting travel opportunities with WorldStrides: <http://ws.educationaltravel.com/>

For additional information on professional development opportunities from WorldStrides:
professionaldevelopment@worldstrides.org



Student Handout:

Now that you have learned about the power of a photograph and how careful annotations can add understanding to the meaning of a photograph, you are ready to create your photo journal.

1. Think about your response to the guiding question. What message would you like to illustrate with your photos?
2. Select or take photographs that represent your message. Do your photos individually represent your entire message, or do they share only part of the message? How do your subjects support your message?
3. As you review your photographs, what information is missing or unclear? Brainstorm possible annotations that will add meaning to your photographs.
4. Prepare careful annotations that will provide meaning and add depth to your photographs. What will the reader need to know to fully understand your intended message?
5. What format option is best to present your photo journal? Should photos be paired, be presented individually, or some of each format? Is your message formal or fun and creative? How does the intended tone inform your creative choices? Consider various format options for your photo journal that will help your reader understand your message. Possible presentation programs may be: Prezi, Power Point, Google Docs, Microsoft Word, or iMovie.



Now that you have generated your response to the guiding question, chosen or taken 12-15 photographs, and provided careful annotations, you are ready to write your introduction, analysis, and reflection. Each piece should be at least one well-developed paragraph in length.

1. Introduction – What is your guiding question? What do your photos show?

2. Analysis – How do these photographs and annotations depict your answer to the guiding question? Do all of your photographs represent the same message, or do they present only parts? Do your photographs tell a story? How do the annotations provide additional meaning?

3. Reflection – What challenges did you experience when using photographs and annotations to convey your opinion? How did your subjects conform to your intentions? How did factors out of your control (day, time, weather, etc.) affect your photographs? How did using an annotated photo journal to respond to your question provide additional meaning above a traditional essay or written text?