

Leckie Middle School, 2018  
Photography Workshop:  
Photographic Arts as a tool for Self Discovery

The ability to create and dissect their own content can empower students to develop critical thinking abilities/habits.

Objective:

Develop basic skills to capture, manipulate and publish photographic content with the understanding of the power and control images have within our society and how that affects us all the time. It is through this study of environments that one can begin the understanding of self.

Week 1. What is Photography?

Photography has been used as a snapshot of one's identity. It peaks into the culture of a community and can reveal new understandings without even saying a word.

Objective:

- Open dialogue with the students about their relationship with photography, revealing how images are a key component of their interaction with the outside world

- Making the comparisons between when cameras were first introduced and how prevalent they are today and how images are everywhere

A. History of Photography and its role in self discovery within society.

B. Different genres of Photography(as related to self discovery)

(5 examples of each)

- Portrait

- Abstract

- Advertisements

Week 2. Photographic Content and how it can be used to tell and manipulate a story

Objective:

Develop basic skills to evaluate messages within photographic content.

A. Ways to deconstruct an image

When deconstructing an image there are a series of questions one should ask:

- Who created this image?

- What has been done to get my attention?

(The tone and color of the objects or clothing/lighting/special effects)

-Who is the intended audience? (Parents? Video gamers? Dog lovers? Cat lovers?)

-Why was this image created? (To inform? Entertain? Persuade?[twix vs twix commercial is an example of all three with the underlying intent to sell you something]...)

\*Normally if you can figure out who pays for the advertisement, you can figure out the agenda)

Class Project:

Go over the process with 3 images and then open the floor for the students to try and deconstruct the images

[ 5 advertisements (2 each) hand them out to the students and have them try it out on their own. First individually and then with the student with the matching image. Students will present to the group as a pair: Going over the similarities and differences of their findings]

## B. Composition and Lighting

### (a)COMPOSITION

Composition refers to the arrangement of elements in the picture.

Consider:

-use of blank space

-juxtaposition (putting seemingly unrelated items close together or side by side [ ]

-details in the foreground and background [ ]

-what is excluded or cropped [example: picture of friends and one friend is cropped out. What does that tell you about friendship?]

### (b) LIGHTING

Lighting may contribute to mood and atmosphere. Consider:

-brightness/darkness

-top lighting

-side lighting

-bottom lighting

-back lighting

-artificial lighting

-natural lighting

Class Project:

General photo set up in the classroom. One light. Camera. Tripod. Student volunteers as the subjects and we go through different lighting setups as a group.

Artificial vs natural/available light. Examples of available light because that's what they'll be working with mostly.

Week 3(Disposables): Collecting Photographic Data

Objective: Give the students the opportunity to get used to taking photographs with the intention of paying more attention to the things they interact with most in their lives with an emphasis on family, community and patterns.

Project: Each student will be given a disposable camera. The task is to photograph the objects/people/signs/places they see everyday like a dinner table or a bus stop or their homeroom teacher or locker. Everyday experiences that maybe aren't too exciting but are always there.

A. What are you looking at?

Provide examples of vintage photography that highlight personal experiences

- Dinner time/Thanksgiving
- Brushing teeth
- Riding the bus
- Talking with parents

This will give students the opportunity to exercise their abilities to deconstruct an image and point out ordinary objects and experiences that shed a light on the characteristics of a stranger's life.

Distribute Disposable cameras. The task at hand is for the students to capture images of their own daily lives. The disposables will be returned and collected the following session.

[The disposables will be sent in a bag with a letter to the parents, the teachers contact information and some small reference photos]

B. How does it feel being a photographer? What did you enjoy most or least about taking the photographs?

-Collect the disposables and give each student the opportunity to describe their experience whilst taking the photos and present questions. The open dialogue is intended to create the space for the students to run the conversation and bring attention to what is specific to them.

- What kinds of things do they want to see more of?
- Why, why not?

Week 4: Review of Disposables and How to critique personal work

Objective:

To improve on the students' photographic self awareness and ability to recognize visual patterns within their own work. Also to get in the practice of critiquing their own work.

#### A. Review and Compare

-Present each student with their photographs and at least 10 minutes to review the images alone without any feedback or open communication. It is advised to spread across the room for a moment of privacy with the work. Ask each student to submit their favorite photograph for a public viewing within the group (this gives the student a beginning experience with having to choose specific photos to tell an intended story. Forcing them to inquire on the importance/relevance/power/impact of a subject)

-Give the students an opportunity to share chosen works with the group

#### Class Project: Photography Goldfish

Circled around a table, present a random image [example: a sink] one at a time and then ask the group if they have any photos of a sink or a table or a bus stop etc.. If the student feels comfortable with showing they will present their similar photo at the center of the table.

Comparisons between the presented photographs such as time/day/location/angle/distance shall be noted and dialogue between the photographer will be encouraged.

#### B. Why did you do that

-Students will watch various videos of artists describing their work to an audience

-Emphasis to be made on the language used and how they described different aspects of the work and what the intent is

-Students get a chance to hear explanations for projects and interpretations of themes from other artists

#### Class Project: Pretend Picasso

Each student will be presented with a random photograph and will appear in front of the group as if they were the artist who created the image. The student must deconstruct the image and come up with make believe examples for the work, creating stories and intentions based off of the information within the image.

#### Week 5: How to use a camera and image capture

##### A. How it works

-Proper way to hold and handle

-Examples of abstract capturing (behind a curtain/directly in the light/very close up etc.)

\*Distribute polaroid cameras and film to take home

##### B. Collect and Review

-Students will present selected photographs and prompt group discussion for mini exhibit

Distribute second set of film to be used over the weekend and collected the following session

## Week 6: Image capturing continued

### A. Collect and Review

-Students will present selected photographs and prompt group discussion for mini exhibit

Distribute third set of film to be used over the weekend and collected the following session

### B. Collect and Review

-Students will present selected photographs and prompt group discussion

## Week 7: Preparing an exhibit

Objective: Prepare photographs for the private group exhibit

A. Present materials for hanging and pinning photographs for the exhibit. Give the students enough time and materials to experiment with presentation with an emphasis on the ideas that presentation of a story is just as important as the story.

### B. Practice speech

-Artist bio

-Project Intent

## Week 8: Photo Exhibit

Light refreshments and music will be provided.

\*Parents and teachers are encouraged to participate

Objective: To give the students an opportunity to have the professional photography and exhibit experience. They'll where name tags and introduce themselves if they so wish [ If students are reluctant to share so publicly then the exhibit will be tailored to just the group and activities and refreshments will be specific to just the students]

A. Students will present their work to peers (and parents)

B. Prepare images and exhibit materials to take home for good. Goodbyes