



Video Education America
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Program Support Notes

Grades 9 - College

26mins

Making Photographs

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Making Photographs

Brief Summary of Program

Making Photographs explores all aspects of photography – its beginnings, its purposes and uses, its rules and its role in the media industry. This program is an excellent resource for students who are beginning to study the medium or who wish to develop greater depth in their understanding and practice.

Introduction

Despite being a medium discovered many years ago, photography is still highly popular today. Virtually every person in the world will make use of photography at some point in their lives to capture ‘that’ special moment. Developments in technology, such as the availability and affordability of digital cameras, allow people nowadays to do this in quicker, easier and more professional ways.

The camera, however, is not only used to create memories to share with family and friends; it is also a powerful means of expression. Students of photography and artists who work in this medium carefully plan out their photo shoots and explore the creative potential of the camera and their subjects. They strive to produce images that have greater meaning, depth and aesthetic awareness than your everyday snapshot. Taking a photo is easy, but making a great photo is much harder.

DVD Timeline

00:00:00	Introduction
00:01:51	Brief History of Photography
00:06:27	Summary
00:07:13	Different Types of Photography
00:10:10	Summary
00:10:46	Composing Photographs
00:15:21	Summary
00:15:57	Lighting Photographs
00:20:38	Summary
00:21:09	A Word with Photographers
00:24:58	End credits
00:25:24	End program

Making Photographs

Before Viewing the Program

- Students bring in their own favorite photographs. These may be ones that they have taken or have cut out of magazines. As a class, students discuss why these photos are their ‘favorites’ – is it because of who is in them, where/ when they were taken, or is it because they look a particular way? After the discussion, ask students to note down some of the factors that make a photograph effective/ successful.
- Students each bring a magazine (having a greater variety of magazines works best e.g. fashion, home, craft, sport, geographical etc.) to class that can be cut up. Students each cut out eight to ten images from these magazines. Have students then work in groups to prepare collages (using poster paper), in which similar types of photographs (those with a particular purpose) are grouped together.
- Ask students to find five great photos and five not-so-great photos (either their own or from magazines). Students should paste these into their books and annotate what makes these images effective/ not effective. This could include: shot size, framing, camera angle, use of equipment, subject etc. Ask students to consider these points in their annotations.
- Prepare a PowerPoint display that showcases the work of some great photographers. Show this to students and encourage feedback on the images and what is liked/ disliked about them. Encourage discussion about the various purposes or styles that the images may use.
- Take students into a particularly picturesque area of the school yard. Have each student sketch out three photos that they would take to showcase or represent this area of the school. Compare the ways in which different people in the class ‘see’ the area via their sketched images.

Making Photographs

While Viewing the Program

- **History of Photography**

1. What piece of equipment was considered the pre-cursor of the modern camera and when did it appear?

2. Who was able to produce a 'permanent photographic image' in 1837 (later patented in 1839)?

3. How much exposure to light did it take to produce this 'permanent photographic image'?

4. What was the name of the first mass-marketed camera?

5. When was the modern flash bulb first invented and by who?

6. What did the flash bulb mean?

7. In what year did Pixar introduce the first digital imaging processor?

8. Which company announced the use of CDs as a means of storing digital images in 1990?

- **Different Types of Photography**

9. Name two purposes photography is used for.

10. What does 'portrait' photography show?

Making Photographs

11. What is the aim of a photojournalist?

12. What does Les Walkling's photographic work explore?

13. What, in Les Walkling's opinion, is it important for beginning photographers to do?

- **Composing Photographs**

14. What is 'composing a photograph' all about?

15. What is an important consideration of a news photographer?

16. What are some important factors in composing photographs?

- **Lighting Photographs**

17. Why is lighting so important to photography?

Making Photographs

After Viewing the Program

- Students work in small groups to research the beginnings of photography *or* a particular era in the development of photography. Students document their information, either via a visual display, timeline, PowerPoint or oral presentation. Each group should then present to the class.
- Assign each student a piece of equipment that would be used in making photographs. This could be an SLR or digital camera, a tripod, a set of lights etc. Students create a 'how to' instruction sheet, informing others how to use this equipment effectively.
- Discuss the 'rules' relating to the composition of a photo. Students write each of these rules in their workbook, then plan out photos that take them into account.
- Working with a camera, students explore the many different ways that an everyday object (such as a bin, doorway, feet, leaves etc.) could be interestingly captured in a photograph by using a variety of shot sizes, angles etc.
- Take students on an excursion to a nearby suburb, a local park or shopping strip. Allow students to complete a photo shoot, exploring a specific aspect of the area (e.g. cars, flora and fauna, people etc.). Students should aim to produce a photographic series of 8 to 10 images each.
- Students research the work of a well-known photographic artist and then present this to the class / submit it as an essay. Students should discuss background information on the person, as well as providing an analysis of 2 or 3 of their works.

Making Photographs

Suggested Student Responses

- History of Photography

1. What piece of equipment was considered the pre-cursor of the modern camera and when did it appear?

The camera obscura 1814

2. Who was able to produce a 'permanent photographic image' in 1837 (later patented in 1839)?

Daguerre

3. How much exposure to light did it take to produce this 'permanent photographic image'?

Less than 30 minutes

4. What was the name of the first mass-marketed camera?

The Browning

5. When was the modern flash bulb first invented and by who?

1927 by General Electric

6. What did the flash bulb mean?

That low light was no longer an issue in taking effective photos.

7. In what year did Pixar introduce the first digital imaging processor?

1985

8. Which company announced the use of CDs as a means of storing digital images in 1990?

Eastman Kodak

- Different Types of Photography

9. Name two purposes photography is used for.

Medical diagnosis, aerial images from space, documentation of certain subjects – sports, people, landscapes etc.

10. What does 'portrait' photography show?

It focuses on images of people – usually their faces.

11. What is the aim of a photojournalist?

To record situations and time – to create a living history.

12. What does Les Walkling's photographic work explore?

Feelings, emotions and interactions between the artist, camera and the world.

Making Photographs

13. What, in Les Walkling's opinion, is it important for beginning photographers to do?

Explore photography, both past and present.

- **Composing Photographs**

14. What is 'composing a photograph' all about?

Filling the available space with something interesting.

15. What is an important consideration of a news photographer?

Reproducing in the photograph what the eye sees in real life.

16. What are some important factors in composing photographs?

Amount of foreground and background needed, angles, proximity to the subject, symmetry (or lack of it), placing the horizon line off centre, balance of objects, not having too much headroom, general framing etc.

- **Lighting Photographs**

17. Why is lighting so important to photography?

Because photos are all about the capturing of reflected light and light plays differently on different subjects. Poor judgments about light cause less effective photos.

18. What are some inexpensive types of lighting that you can make use of in your own photos?

Natural light, sunlight, moonlight, shadows, contrast, lamps, down lights, car headlights, reflections/ glow from TV or computers, lamps etc.

19. What do the professionals use when lighting photos?

Flashlight on top of camera, available light, reflector boards, sunlight, studio lights.