

Illinois State Museum – MuseumLink Art
Double Exposure Lesson: Discussions and experiments about Photography

Topics of Discussion and Related Activities

1. Compare how the work of the two photographers in this unit reflects their times and places. How does each feel about his environment and his subjects? What can we learn from their personal view of the world? What details of life did the photographers focus on that surprised you?
2. Make a viewfinder from a 3 by 5 inch index card. The rectangular opening should be 1 1/2 by 1 inch. Look through the viewfinder in various directions at near and far objects, parts of the room, outside. How does the viewfinder help you to focus on interestingly shaped objects, details, or scenes with contrasting values, textures, or lines? Experiment with views that include parts of objects, objects to one side, partly out of view, etc. Make a line drawing or a shaded drawing showing the values of one of these views to analyze the composition.
3. If disposable or instant cameras are available, take snapshots of your favorite view. Remember to limit the width of the scene or subject you shoot. See the information in resources on buying toy cameras. Students will look at photographs by others to get ideas for subject matter and approach. Demonstrate some aiming techniques, such as horizontal versus vertical holding of the camera, use of gauze or plastic wrap as a filter over the lens, adding light sources for drama, focusing on details.
4. Have the class decide upon a list of activities, places, people, or objects that could reflect the culture of their school. Take an instant or disposable camera to the agreed-upon sites and take the photographs. This exercise could be split up by group assignments. Remember to practice with the viewfinder before snapping the shutter to get an interesting viewpoint. Develop the photographs and display them as an essay on your school. Have each student write an essay about what a particular photograph means to him/her.

Assessment: Students will critique their own photos as to ones they think are the most and least successful and why they think that. Criteria are that the photograph tells the story they wanted to tell, that the composition is interesting (drawing). they should be able to tell what they would do better next time for the least successful ones, and what they learned from the experience about photography and its possibilities for personal expression (as an art form).

Illinois State Board of Education Goals and Standards addressed:

Visual Arts: 27.B.5: Analyze how the arts shape and reflect ideas, issues, or themes in a particular culture or historical period. (1, 4)

25.B.2: Understand how elements and principles combine within an art form to express ideas. (2, 3)