

Illinois State Museum – MuseumLink Art
Double Exposure Lesson Plan: Artistic Analysis of a
Photograph

Objective: After viewing the photographs on the Web module and practicing answering the questions of analysis, students will be able to identify the artistic qualities of photographs by applying the analysis of elements of art.

Grade Levels: 3-8

Time Required: one 50-minute class period

Motivation:

Photographic artists use the elements of art to express themselves. They employ a variety of techniques to communicate their ideas. By analyzing a photograph for artistic qualities, it is also possible to understand better the story the artist intended to tell. This can be done with historical photographs and portraits, as well as with contemporary photographs.



Procedure:

1. Identifying the photograph
 - a. Who took the photograph?
 - b. Is there any written information on the photograph itself (or in a caption), like a title, a dedication, or a signature?
 - c. Where did you find the photograph? Are there others similar to it?
 - d. Who or what is the subject of the photograph?
 - e. Can you identify the place and time in which the photograph was taken?
2. Expressive feeling in the photograph
 - a. What mood is expressed in the photograph?
 - b. Did the photographer use a special effect or technique? (Looking through gauze, special lights, double exposure, extreme close up, tones or colors)?
 - c. What artistic element (line, value, shape, contrast, color, texture, repetition, pattern) is used to express this mood or feeling? In what way?
 - d. How does the composition (Consider vantage point, distance from subject, use of space, and use of the picture plane.) affect the mood? (Consider vantage point, distance from subject, use of space, and use of the picture plane.)
3. Interpretation of the photograph
 - a. How is the subject of the photograph important to what the photographer wanted to say?
 - b. How is the technique important in telling you what the photographer wanted to express?
 - c. How does the composition tell you what the photographer meant?
 - d. Describe the meaning of the photograph as you interpret it. Refer to details you saw in the photograph to support your interpretation.

Assessment: Students could be given one photograph and a set of questions to answer by applying their practice in discussion.

Illinois State Board of Education Goals and Standards addressed:

Visual Arts Goal 25: Understand the language of the arts.

Early Elem., Late Elem., and Middle School:

25.A: Identify the elements and principles of art as used in various media to express the artists' intent. (see standards for specific elements)

25.B: Understand how elements and principles combine to express an idea, a theme, or a characteristic style