



# *Photojournalism*

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Stephen Green created these lessons as a capstone project for completion of the journalism educator master's degree program at Kent State University. It may be reproduced only for individual classroom teachers in class, but not for any commercial purposes including derivative works.

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### Rationale

There are a few rules that will improve a photojournalist's work from snapshots to photography. Understanding these basic rules will produce usable, storytelling work.

**CLASS GOAL:** We will understand the basic principles of photojournalism and photo composition.

**INDIVIDUAL GOAL:** I will take photos using all of these basic principles at the same time.

### Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- The rule of thirds means to place photos on the invisible lines that divide the photo into thirds
- Headroom means to leave space above the top of the subject
- Lead room means to leave room in the direction the subject is facing and for them not to face off of the photo
- Include faces and emotion wherever possible to help readers feel a photo
- And try to get lower or up higher whenever possible to give readers a new angle on an otherwise normal view they get at eye level.

### Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in less depending on school class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

### Materials Needed

- "Basic Composition Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Basic Composition Practice Picture" printed on 8.5- by 11-inch paper for each student (can be a class set)
- "Basic Composition Practice Tools" cut out for each group
- Markers, pens, pencils or other writing utensils students may use to draw on the "Practice Picture", or have the image laminated and use dry-erase markers
- Cameras for students to practice with DSLR or mirrorless cameras; this can also be done with cellphones
- (Optional) computers to upload photos & editing software to manipulate at teacher preference

### Day 1

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

**INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:** Have each group member pull one of the four "Basic Composition Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Give each student a copy of the "Basic Composition Practice Picture" and have the set of picture frames ("Basic Composition Practice Tools") cut for the group. Each group member should take a different sized frame and move the frame around the image, attempting to get rule of thirds, headroom and lead room in one shot. They should then show their group members their shot and, in a round robin format, explain why they chose this shot and frame. If the group members see an issue, they should coach the student to correct the issue. Then, have students rotate until each group member was successful in placing all four types of frames on the image.

Then, have one member of each group move to another group. The remaining members of the group who did not move will attempt to find as many different photos as possible in 10 minutes with any number of frames. They can contain different subjects, change orientation, whatever they think works, as long as it meets the three basic composition rules. The visiting group member will be the referee, counting all the different crops the group members found and determining if they met all three rules. After 10 minutes, celebrate the group members who scored the most points.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Have students leave the room with a camera (or cellphone if the situation calls for it). They should go find a classroom, ask the teacher if it is OK to take pictures. They need three different photos of three different people that follows: rule of thirds, headroom, lead room, is medium/tight, candid (not posed) and not at eye level. They should come back and show the teacher as a formative assessment.

### Day 2

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Have students compare and critique their photos from the day before.

**PRACTICE ACTIVITY:** Either assign each student a random classroom, or a group/class that needs photos for publication purposes. They should spend the rest of class (until 5 minutes before the period ends) covering the class for the publication. This is also a great time to preview the caption lesson by telling them to get names (first & last), grades and write down what was going on that day in class. They should have a minimum of 10 different, well-composed shots usable in any publication. They can shoot more, but must turn in 10.

**NOTE:** Many students fear getting too close. Teachers should be firm in requiring them to re-shoot if they were too far away. Teachers should also be firm in holding students accountable for getting names spelled correctly and completely.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Have students, on their way out, write down the area they are having the most difficulty with in terms of composition and with what they feel most confident.

### References

- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Kobre, K. (2017). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach*. Routledge.

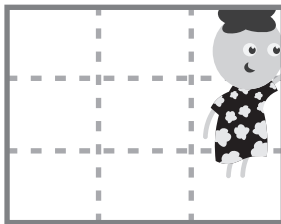
# Rule of Thirds, Headroom & Lead Room

## PHOTO COMPOSITION BASICS

### Bare Basics

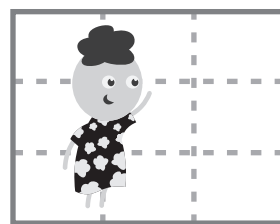
The rule of thirds means to imagine two lines that divide a photo horizontally and two vertically into thirds and place your subject on one of those lines in the opposite direction they are facing (lead room). If they face right, put them on the left line. You don't want the subject to face off the photo. Don't cut the top of their head — leave some headroom. In short, don't center your subject.

### Bad Model



Dood lé Head is facing off the frame, and will have their hair and arm cut off.

### Good Model



Dood is now on the correct dividing line, has headroom and lead room.

## Get Close, Not in the Stands

## PHOTO COMPOSITION BASICS

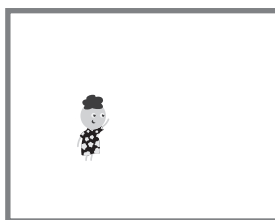
### They Don't Bite

When you are going on your first assignment, you may be scared to get close. At a sporting event, you may be tempted to hide away in the stands.

Don't!

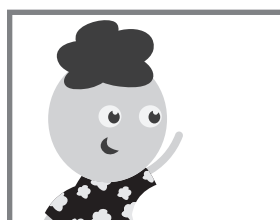
All you are doing is hurting your own photography quality by not being close. Yes, you can crop, but it will pixelate and be bad quality that way. Just get close. People will soon forget you're even there.

### Bad Model



You can barely even make out Dood lé Head. Walk closer. They don't bite.

### Good Model



We can see Dood's face well now and all the emotion and detail that people like.

## Look for Candid Faces

## PHOTO COMPOSITION BASICS

### Universal Language

English, Spanish, German, Chinese, Farsi — not everyone can speak them. Saying "I'm happy" in one language likely won't translate to a non-native speaker. Emotions do though.

Anguish, joy or thrill is obvious — on their face and in their body language. Make faces and facial expressions a priority to help the audience feel the photo without having to say, "John Smith is upset."

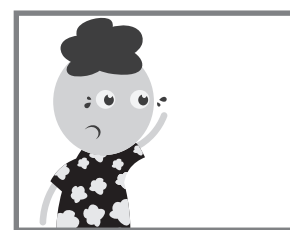
Don't get poses. Get REAL, candid action.

### Bad Model



We know Dood lé Head is waving, but what are they feeling? I can't feel their emotion in this photo.

### Good Model



Oh no! Dood is crying. You wouldn't know from the first photo. Faces = emotion.

## Don't Stand Up

## PHOTO COMPOSITION BASICS

### Go Low, Go High

People experience life at eye level. Looking at photos taken at eye level may not be bad, but it isn't exciting.

To bring your photography portfolio from OK to great, do your best to never stand up when taking a photo. Kneel down, lay down, get on a ladder, stand on a (sturdy) chair, or get on your belly.

Bird's eye view is a shot above eye level. Worm's eye view is below. Try both out!

### OK Model

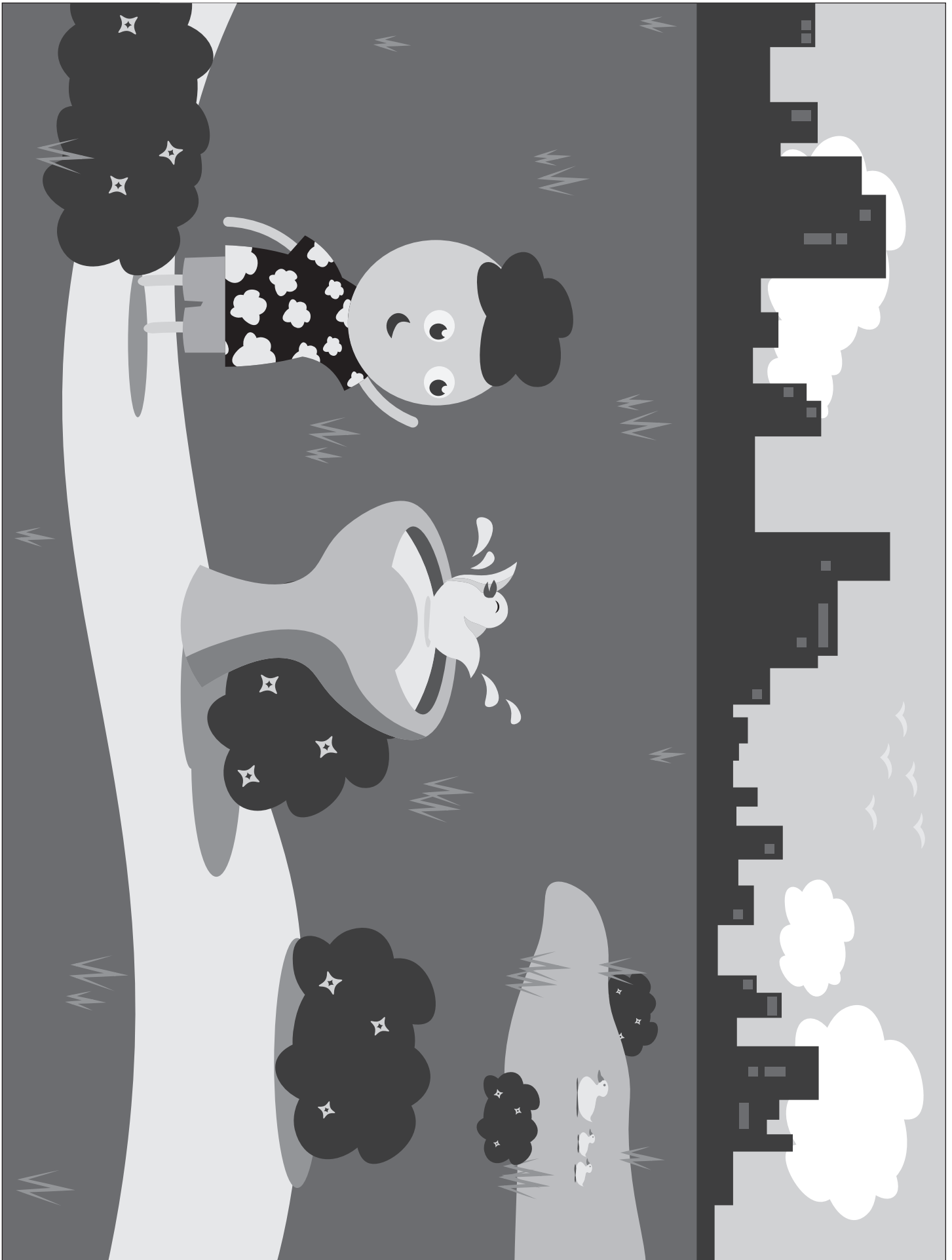


There's nothing exactly wrong with this photo, but it is boring and at eye level.

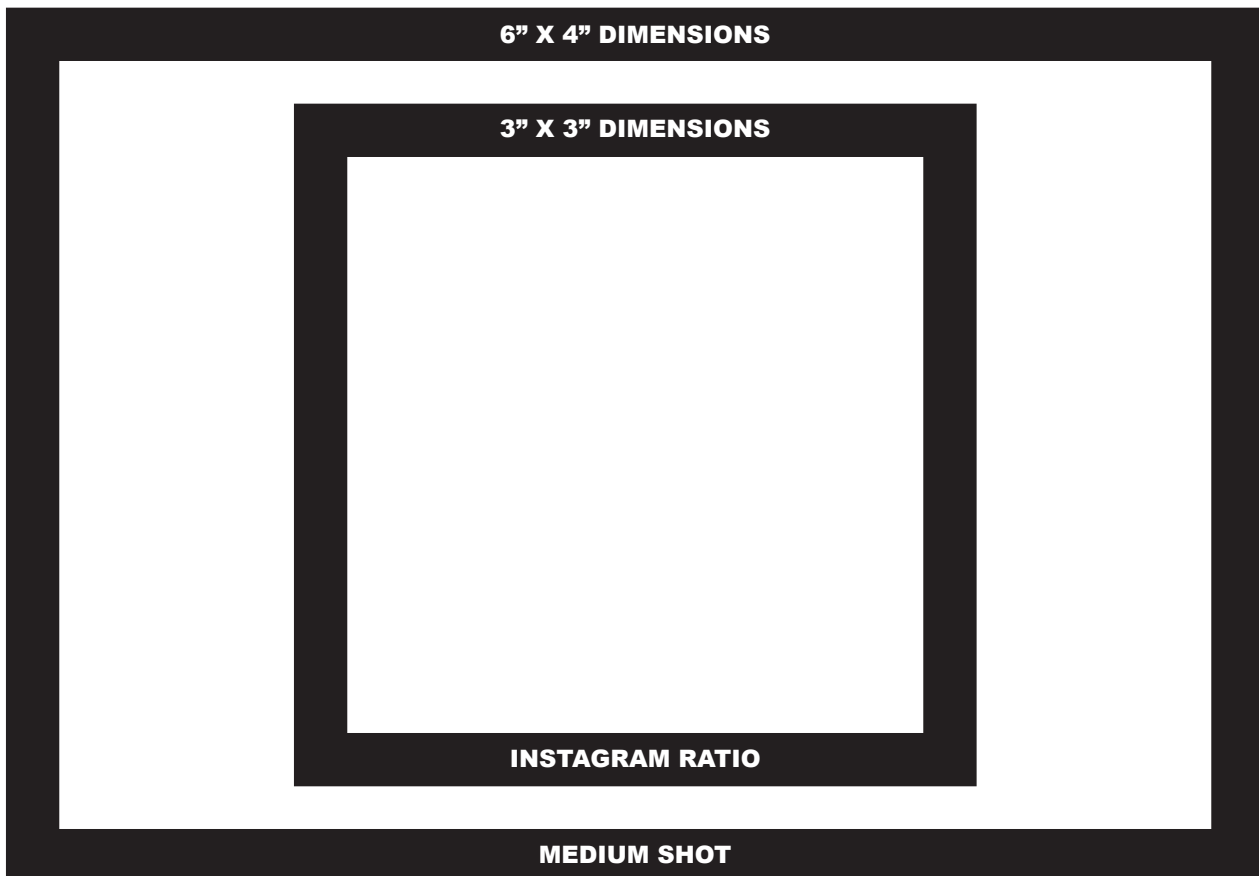
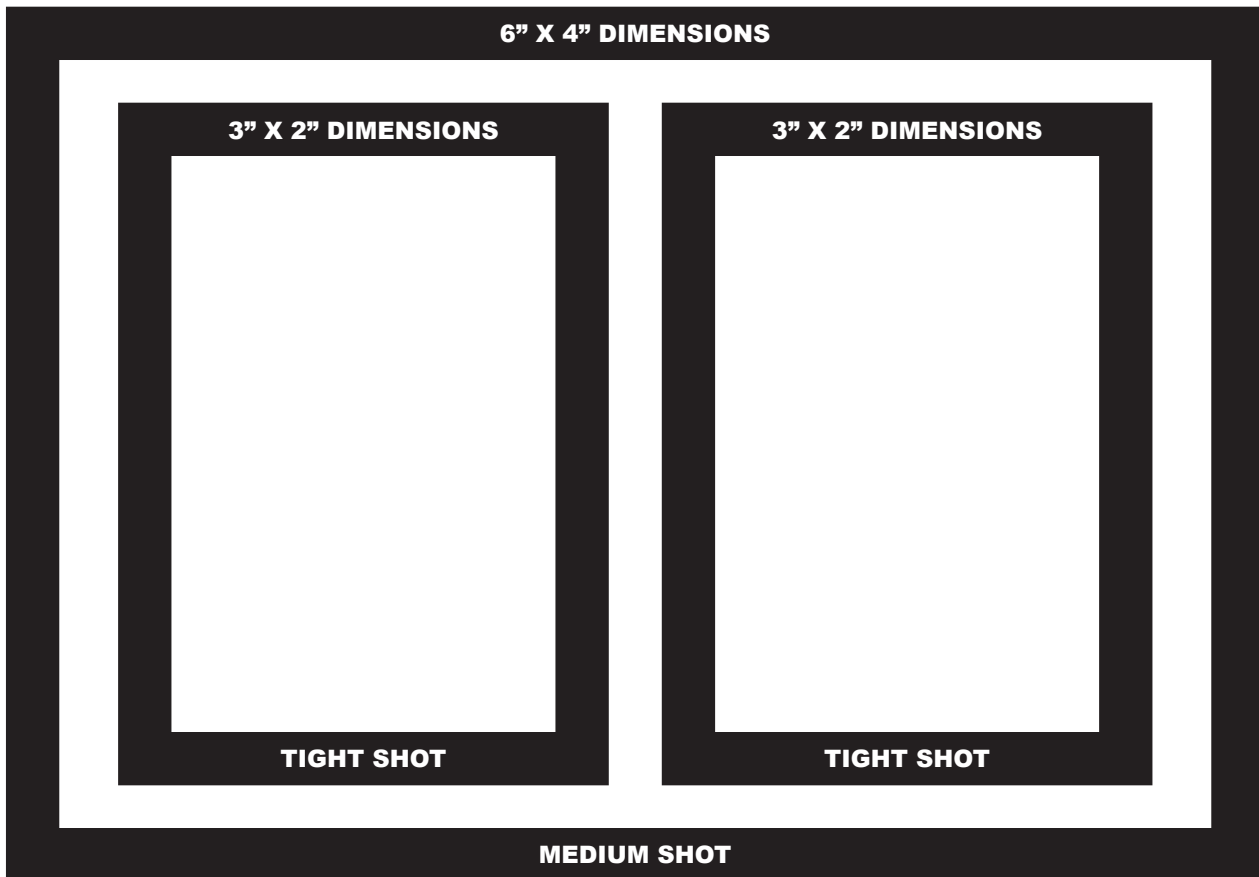
### Better Model



By getting closer to the ground, the photo develops more depth and leading lines.



*Cut out the black rectangles. Cut out white middles as well. You should have 5 black rectangles in total.*



### Rationale

The rule of thirds (and its friends) are excellent rules of thumb. However, there are ways to break the rules and still draw the reader's eye to where we want it to go.

**CLASS GOAL:** We will understand other techniques that photojournalists can use that may break the basic rules.

**INDIVIDUAL GOAL:** I will take photos using each of these techniques.

### Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Pattern and symmetry provide structure and order, which is pleasing to the eye
- Contrast directs the eye to the subject that sticks out
- Filling the frame is a tight shot of a subject that takes up the majority of the frame
- And framing surrounds the subject on three sides in the foreground or background, creating focus by making a picture within a picture.

### Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

### Materials Needed

- "More Techniques Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "More Techniques Practice Cards" cut for the class
- "More Techniques Window Drawing" for each student
- Cameras for students to practice with DSLR or mirrorless cameras; this can also be done with cellphones but is significantly harder to do so with some of the newer techniques
- (Optional) computers to upload photos & editing software to manipulate at teacher preference

### Day 1

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested answer the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

**INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:** Have each group member pull one of the four "More Composition Techniques Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Then, give each student one of the cards from the "More Techniques Practice Cards". These are examples of all photo composition techniques. Students should mix around the room while music plays until the music stops before pairing with a person near them. They will quiz and coach each other until both have it correct. They will continue to do this until all students have circulated or the teacher is satisfied with the results.

After this, give each student the "More Techniques Window Drawing". The paper has four squares where each student will draw an image representing one of their favorite memories, but drawn in the style of the photo composition technique. Give them 10-15 minutes to think about their four memories and draw them. Encourage students to help one another out when a technique is challenging for one of the group members to imagine how the drawing looks. After 15 minutes, ask students to show and check each scene to make sure every student understands the concepts of the technique. Then, have them share one of the memories with the other students in their group.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

**NOTE:** This may be difficult for some students to imagine. First, tell them to treat the black square like the frame of an image. Second, tell them to imagine the area where the memory occurred and act as if they were a photographer shooting the moment. They should draw what they can imagine that look like in the box. Also, stick figures and line art is perfectly acceptable for this.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Have all students answer the question on Slide 6 in a method preferred by the teacher.

### Day 2

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Run another round of the "More Composition Techniques Practice Cards" to refresh student memories about the techniques.

**PRACTICE ACTIVITY:** Each student should use a camera to return to the class they shot in the "Basic Composition Techniques" lesson (or another if the teacher prefers this). There, they should get another 10 photos. This time, at least one of them should be from each of the four new techniques they learned. The other six photos should also be from the four techniques, but the techniques are up to them. They should return with enough time to turn the photos in. They won't have time to edit yet, but will be learning that later on. They will edit these photos then.

**NOTE:** This seems like a quick timing for one class period. This is by design. Students need to understand the need for fast turnaround. If students have to share cameras, reduce the number of photos required for each pair/trio.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Students should turn in their photos for teacher critique.

### References

- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Kobre, K. (2017). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach*. Routledge.



## Pattern & Symmetry

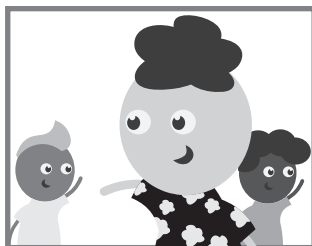
MORE COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES

### *Candy to the Eye*

Patterns are just shapes that repeat in an expected way. Symmetry is when there is perfect repetition. The human brain loves patterns because it is hardwired to spot change — thank your ancestors for looking out for danger in the wild.

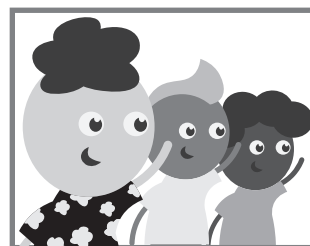
Look for opportunities to try to use pattern and symmetry in your work. Move around and attempt to find ways to get shapes to repeat, mirror, rotate (like a pinwheel) or step symmetry (like footprints in the sand).

### *Bad Model*



There is nothing resembling a pattern or symmetry in this shot.

### *Good Model*



They are repeating in a line. They are all doing the same thing. Easy pattern.

## Contrast & Odd Man Out

MORE COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES

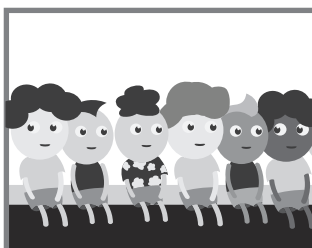
### *Just Look at Them*

Contrast is in many ways the opposite of symmetry and pattern. The goal is to have something stick out.

The reader's eye will be drawn to the subject that sticks out — which should be engaging — while also getting the visual effect from the pattern they are breaking.

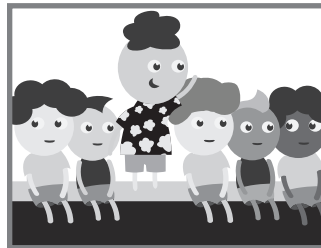
Contrast can also be placing two obviously different subjects next to each another to create a message about that difference.

### *Bad Model*



There is no main subject. My eye isn't drawn to any one place.

### *Good Model*



My eye goes straight to them standing up because they are breaking the pattern.

## Filling the Frame

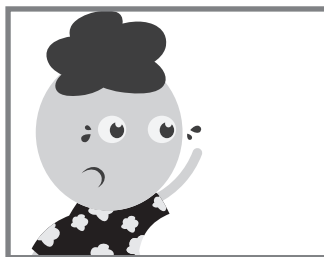
MORE COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES

### *Get REALLY Close*

There are many times where needing to include the entirety of a subject or scene is unnecessary. Filling the frame means to literally take up the majority of the frame — the edges of the picture — with the subject.

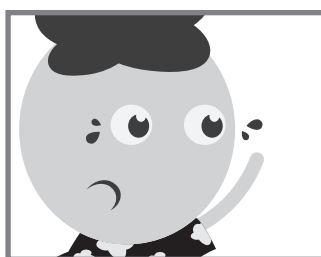
You cannot halfway do it like the example to the right where the photographer attempted. The hair is touching the frame and there is space we don't need. Instead, crop tighter or — better yet — get closer.

### *Bad Model*



The hair is touching the frame and lots of dead space I don't need.

### *Good Model*



We can see their face well now and all the emotion and detail without distractions.

## Framing

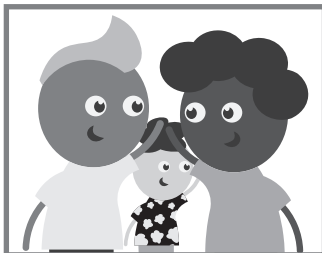
MORE COMPOSITION TECHNIQUES

### *You're Surrounded*

When a subject is framed, they are surrounded on at least three sides by something in the foreground (the area between you and the subject) or the background (the area behind the subject).

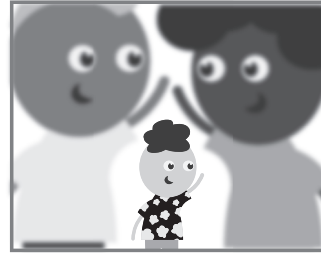
If you use foreground subjects as the framing device, make sure you crop and/or blur out enough of them to prevent the photo from becoming distracting, cluttered and confusing for the viewer.

### *Bad Model*



The foreground overlaps the subject and are distracting because they're in focus.

### *Good Model*



By cutting off parts of the foreground and using a low f-stop, we draw focus to them.

**CONTRAST/ODD MAN OUT**

**FRAMING**

**PATTERN/SYMMETRY**

**FILLING THE FRAME**



## Card 1

### Answer

Lead room

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 2

### Answer

Headroom

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 3

### Answer

Rule of thirds

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 4

### Answer

Contrast or odd man out

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 5

### Answer

Pattern, symmetry or leading lines

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 6

### Answer

Don't stand up or worm's eye view

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 7

### Answer

Framing

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 8

### Answer

Framing

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 9

### Answer

Filling the frame

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 10

### Answer

Contrast or odd man out

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 11

### Answer

Pattern, symmetry or leading lines

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 12

### Answer

Filling the frame

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 13

### Answer

Lead room

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 14

### Answer

Headroom

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 15

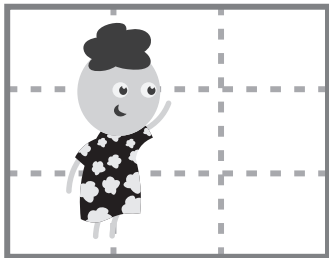
### Answer

Rule of thirds

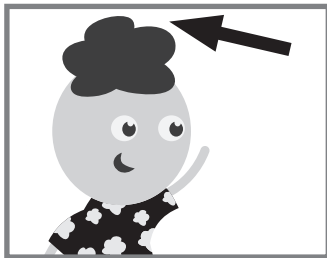
### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

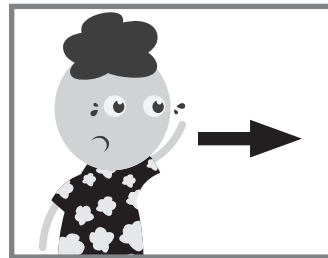
*Card 3*



*Card 2*



*Card 1*



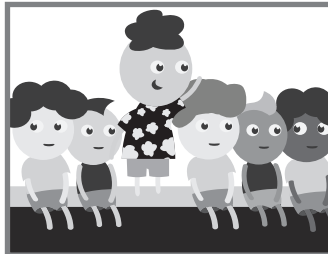
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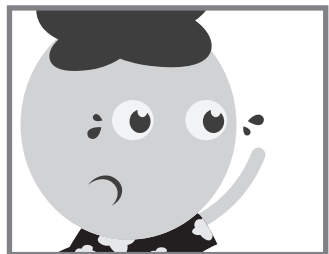
*Card 5*



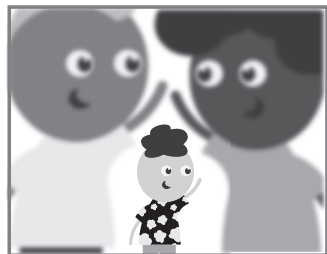
*Card 4*



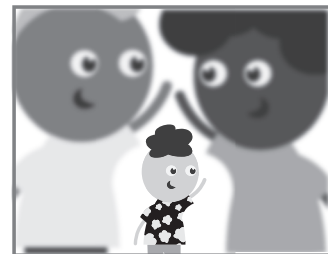
*Card 9*



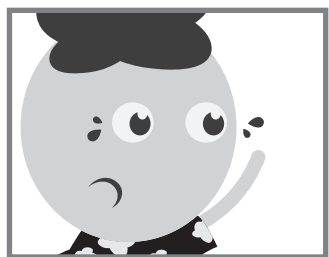
*Card 8*



*Card 7*



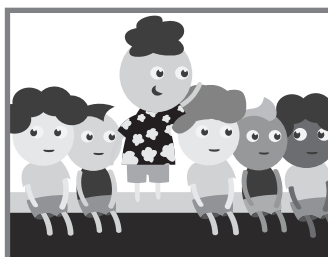
*Card 12*



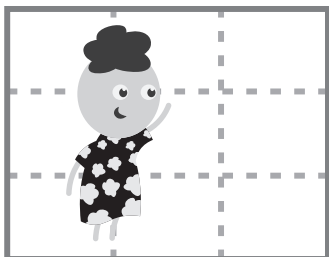
*Card 11*



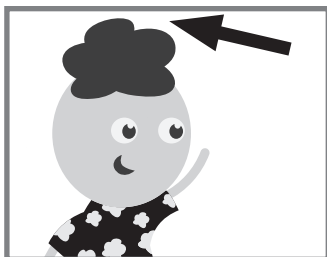
*Card 10*



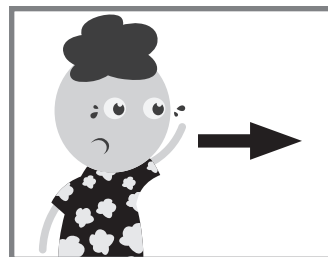
*Card 15*



*Card 14*



*Card 13*



## Rationale

Automatic on a DSLR or mirrorless camera does help super amateurs. However, photojournalists encounter challenging lighting and color situations where they need to understand how the different settings work and correct issues they have. The exposure triangle is a basic for all photojournalists to understand.

**CLASS GOAL:** We will learn the basics of the exposure triangle including the ISO, shutter speed and aperture.

**INDIVIDUAL GOAL:** I will think through scenarios and make suggestions based on the functions of each setting.

## Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- The exposure triangle is a balance of ISO, shutter speed & aperture with the goal of being well exposed
- Underexposed is too dark and overexposed is too bright
- Aperture controls how much light comes in and depth of field
- Shutter speed controls how long light is let in for and motion blur
- And ISO controls how reactive the camera is and the level of noise

## Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

## Materials Needed

- "Exposure Triangle Instructional Cards" for each group
- "Exposure Triangle Practice Cards" cut for class
- "Exposure Triangle Scenarios" for each group
- Cameras for students to practice with DSLR or mirrorless cameras; cellphones will not work with the practice assignment

## Day 1

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

**INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:** Have each group member pull one of the four "Exposure Triangle Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Then, give each student one of the cards from the "Exposure Triangle Practice Cards". Students should mix around the room while music plays until the music stops before pairing with a person near them. They will quiz and coach each other until both have it correct. They will continue to do this until all students have circulated or the teacher is satisfied with the results.

Finally, give each group the "Exposure Triangle Scenarios" to work through as a group. The first person will read the scenario. Person 2 will identify the problem setting. Person 3 will make a recommendation of what to change. Person 4 will determine if it is correct. The group should then discuss. The process repeats with all the roles shifting to the right. Person 2 reads, Person 3 identifies, etc. Do this until all groups finish all scenarios. Once finished, each group should send a representative to a nearby group who will discuss their answers before returning to their group to lead their team in any revisions needed.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Have all students complete the scenario individually on Slide 6.

**NOTE:** How long this takes depends on the group of students. Some years, the group may understand the settings much more quickly than the next.

**FAST CLASSES:** If there is extra time, have the students grab a camera and start identifying and playing with each setting using Manual mode, which will allow them to see the effects of changing just one.

## Day 2

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Have students compare answers o Slide 6.

**PRACTICE ACTIVITY:** Have students line up by youngest to oldest. Starting with the youngest, number off students into threes. Give each pair a camera and a sheet of blank/extra paper. Ask one of the members to wad up the paper into a ball. Ask the trios to find a spot with lots of room — the hallway, cafeteria, outside, etc. Teachers should be able to monitor student progress. Have two of the three in each trio play catch. The third has a goal to get a well exposed shot with no motion blur that follows basic composition rules and gets the ball in the shot. Let them struggle and ask each other first if the settings aren't working for them. After the first student successfully completes this task, they should randomize the settings and pass it to the next person, who will complete the same exercise. Continue until all three in each group achieve the goal in Manual mode.

Then, the trio will — still working in Manual — attempt to get a shallow depth of field head-and-shoulders shot of one another with the minimum amount of noise and no motion blur.

**NOTE:** They may find lighting to be an issue. If possible, allow them to go outside to get more light. They may also need to be coached into getting closer, which is required to achieve a shallow depth of field in addition to the low f-stop.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Have each group return and upload their photos as a formative assessment.

## References

- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Kobre, K. (2017). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach*. Routledge.

# Exposure Triangle: Strike a Balance

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

## Goldilocks & the Three Camera Settings

The exposure triangle refers to the balance between a camera's aperture, shutter speed and ISO. The goal would be to have good exposure (brightness). Underexposed means the photo is too dark, while overexposed is too bright. When one changes, one or both of the others should also or risk being under/over.



## Aperture: How much?

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### What is It?

Aperture is the hole in the lens that lets in light. The aperture is measured in f-stops.

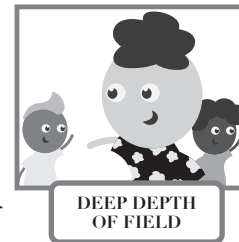
**2 2.8 4 5.6 8 11 16 22 32**

These determine how much light gets into the camera and its depth of field — how much of the image is in focus.

### Exposure & Visual Effects

As the f-stop number, the less light enters the camera because the hole got smaller. Each full stop higher (see left) is half as much light as the one before.

The aperture also controls the depth of field. As the f-stops increase, the more of the image will be in focus — called a deep depth of field. Lower f-stops are shallow — less will be focused.



## Shutter Speed: How long?

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### What is It?

Shutter speed is how fast the camera's shutter opens to let light hit the sensor and then close. It is measured in fractions of a second.

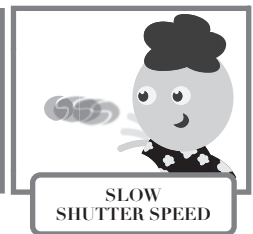
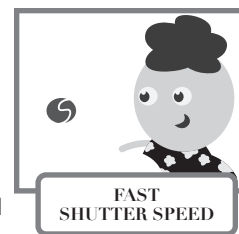
**1/60 1/125 1/250 1/500 1/1000**

These determine how long light is let in as well as how much motion blur exists in the photo.

### Exposure & Visual Effects

As the fraction gets smaller ( $1/20 \rightarrow 1/40$ ), less light enters the camera because light hits the sensor for less time. Each time the time is twice as fast, half as much light goes in.

The shutter speed also controls motion blur — streaks of light that show were something moved while the shutter was open.  $1/125$  will stop most motion. Below that, you risk motion blur.



## ISO: How reactive?

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### What is It?

ISO is the setting determining how quickly the camera's sensor reads the light coming in and converting it to a digital image. Measured using an industry-created standard.

**100 200 400 800 1600 3200**

These determine how reactive (or sensitive) the sensor is to light, as well as how much noise/grain the image will have.

### Exposure & Visual Effects

As the number doubles, the sensor becomes twice as reactive, which means the image will become brighter if you do nothing else.

The ISO also controls noise or grain — areas where the camera guessed at what should be there. The higher the number, the more the camera has to guess what should be there, making it more noisy/less detailed.



## Card 1

### Answer

Aperture: also called the f-stop

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 2

### Answer

Shutter speed: fractions of a second

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 3

### Answer

ISO: Measured in 100s

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 4

### Answer

Determines how reactive the sensor is to light.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 5

### Answer

Determines how much light enters the lens.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 6

### Answer

Determines how long light enters the camera and strikes the sensor.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 7

### Answer

Noise: Lower ISO leads to less noise.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 8

### Answer

Depth of field: Low f-stops lead to shallow depth of fields; high leads to deep.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 9

### Answer

Motion blur: The faster the shutter speed, the less motion blur you get.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 10

### Answer

ISO: Lower ISO leads to less noise.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 11

### Answer

Shutter speed: The faster the shutter speed, the less motion blur you get.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 12

### Answer

Aperture: Low f-stops lead to shallow depth of fields; high leads to deep.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 13

### Answer

The balance for an image's brightness between the shutter speed, aperture & ISO.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 14

### Answer

The photo is too dark. There are no pure white pixels in the image.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## Card 15

### Answer

The photo is too bright. There are blown highlights throughout the photo.

### Remember To Coach

If your partner is struggling, help them to find the right answer WITHOUT giving away the right answer at first. Let them struggle some.

## *Card 3*

### *Question*

400 is an example measurement of which setting?

## *Card 2*

### *Question*

1/250 is an example measurement of which setting?

## *Card 1*

### *Question*

f/2.8 is an example measurement of which setting?

## *Card 6*

### *Question*

How does the shutter speed affect exposure of an image?

## *Card 5*

### *Question*

How does the aperture affect exposure of an image?

## *Card 4*

### *Question*

How does the ISO affect exposure of an image?

## *Card 9*

### *Question*

What visual effect (not exposure) does the shutter speed control?

## *Card 8*

### *Question*

What visual effect (not exposure) does the aperture control?

## *Card 7*

### *Question*

What visual effect (not exposure) does the ISO control?

## *Card 12*

### *Question*

If you wanted to make sure you had a background out of focus, which setting would you change?

## *Card 11*

### *Question*

If you wanted to make sure you stopped all motion, which setting would you change?

## *Card 10*

### *Question*

If you wanted to make sure you had a high-detail, low-noise image, which setting would you change?

## *Card 15*

### *Question*

What does it mean if a photo is overexposed?

## *Card 14*

### *Question*

What does it mean if a photo is underexposed?

## *Card 13*

### *Question*

What is the exposure triangle?

## *Scenario — The Wrestling Match*

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### *The Situation*

While taking pictures of the wrestling district tournament, your photographer texts you their images are blurry and noisy, but in focus.

You ask for their settings and they tell you: f/32 (max on their camera), 1/30, and ISO 12800.

### *Fix It!*

What are you going to text them back?

## *Scenario — The Senior Portrait*

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### *The Situation*

A friend asks you to take their senior photos. You take them to their favorite hallway at the school because they like the mural in the background.

You shoot the picture, which is in focus, but has lots of noise. There is no motion blur.

### *Fix It!*

What are you going to change?

## *Scenario — The Group Photo*

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### *The Situation*

It is group photo day for the yearbook. The FFA shows up with 80 members and are lined up into rows in the bleachers.

You notice the first row is in focus, but the back row is not.

### *Fix It!*

What are you going to change?

## *Scenario — The Volleyball Game*

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### *The Situation*

At the volleyball playoff game, you were asked to take over for the main photographer who bailed last minute.

You are shooting the game in focus but notice lots of motion blur and the images are way too bright.

### *Fix It!*

What are you going to change?



## *KEY Scenario — The Wrestling Match*

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### *The Situation*

While taking pictures of the wrestling district tournament, your photographer texts you their images are blurry and noisy, but in focus.

You ask for their settings and they tell you: f/32 (max on their camera), 1/30, and ISO 12800.

### *Fix It!*

What are you going to text them back?

ANSWER: THE APERTURE NEEDS TO BE REDUCED BECAUSE IT IS LETTING IN VERY LITTLE LIGHT. THIS WILL ALLOW THE SHUTTER SPEED TO INCREASE AND ISO TO REDUCE.

## *KEY Scenario — The Senior Portrait*

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### *The Situation*

A friend asks you to take their senior photos. You take them to their favorite hallway at the school because they like the mural in the background.

You shoot the picture, which is in focus, but has lots of noise. There is no motion blur.

### *Fix It!*

What are you going to change?

ANSWER: THE ISO IS TOO HIGH. IT SHOULD BE REDUCED.

## *KEY Scenario — The Group Photo*

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### *The Situation*

It is group photo day for the yearbook. The FFA shows up with 80 members and are lined up into rows in the bleachers.

You notice the first row is in focus, but the back row is not.

### *Fix It!*

What are you going to change?

ANSWER: THE F-STOP (APERTURE) IS TOO LOW AND CAUSING TOO SHALLOW OF A DEPTH OF FIELD. THE F-STOP SHOULD BE INCREASED TO PROVIDE A WIDER FOCUS AREA.

## *KEY Scenario — The Volleyball Game*

EXPOSURE TRIANGLE

### *The Situation*

At the volleyball playoff game, you were asked to take over for the main photographer who bailed last minute.

You are shooting the game in focus but notice lots of motion blur and the images are way too bright.

### *Fix It!*

What are you going to change?

ANSWER: THE SHUTTER SPEED IS TOO SLOW. INCREASING THE SHUTTER SPEED WILL SOLVE BOTH THE BLUR AND EXPOSURE.

### Rationale

Even the best photographers will tell you photos need editing. Photojournalists limit their edits to exposure & color correction, and cropping. We don't edit parts of images in nor out to make it look better.

**CLASS GOAL:** We will learn the steps to edit a photo for publication.

**INDIVIDUAL GOAL:** I will edit a photo to be used for publication.

### Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Photos should be cropped starting by highlighting the face and adding in parts the photographer wants to keep rather than cropping outside to in
- Avoid distracting mergers — areas where foreground or background objects intersect with the frame or main subject, or where the subject touches the frame; especially avoid cropping at joints
- Color correct using the Color Balance function in Photoshop
- Exposure correct using the Levels function in Photoshop (Teachers can also use Curves if they prefer)
- And edit color & exposure to the main subject's skin

### Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

### Materials Needed

- "Editing Photos Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- Access to Adobe Photoshop or Photopea on computers
- "Photo Editing Learning Rubric" for each student
- "Photo Composition & Technical Critique Rubric" for each student (optional) if you want students to critique more than just the editing
- Students should have photos already taken in previous assignments.

### Day 1

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the correct version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

**INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:** Have each group member pull one of the four "Photo Editing Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Use Slides 5-14 to have students quickly discuss what is wrong with the edit on the photo using just what they can see. The teacher will pull up a Slide and all students will individually answer on white boards, paper or any other method the teacher prefers. Then, the students will select a group leader. The group leader will call out "Show Me" and everyone will reveal their answers. If there is disagreement, they will discuss the options and come to consensus. If not, they should celebrate and cheer as a group. (They are more engaged if there is a non-academic teambuilding activity that is fun preceding this.) This repeats through all images.

Now have students open Adobe Photoshop or another photo editing software with similar capabilities of Photoshop's Levels and Color Balance functions. First, they will edit one photo and get used to the process before editing many photos. Tell students to save a copy of the original so they have a compare/contrast to the final product. Have students crop (inside to outside), exposure correct (using Levels) and color correct (using Color Balance). With either preassigned or randomized pairs, have students critique the each other's work using the "Photo Editing Learning Rubric" to rate the photo. They will not be assigning a grade, but rather going through multiple parts to give students from a "Well Below Standard" to "Above Standard" in each category.

Slide 15 has a recap of concepts.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Have students turn in a completed photo and the original image for the teacher to check.

### Day 2

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Students should look at Slide 16 and discuss with their group in a round robin format all the issues in the photo using concepts used on Day 1. Then, randomly call a student in each group to see what the groups all mentioned. Continue until all errors have been spotted.

**PRACTICE ACTIVITY:** Have students crop, edit and color correct all the photos taken in the Basic Composition and Breaking the Rules (More Techniques) lessons. This should take most of class.

**NOTE:** This is the time to really squash lazy habits and force students to see the small details. If the teacher gets students to fully understand the concept this early, it will become a good habit.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Have each pair reconvene and critique another photo using the same editing checklist as Day 1. Then, have them compare to the photo they edited on Day 1.

### References

- DK. (2015). *Digital Photography: Complete Course*.
- Etwell, J., Balmeo, M., Austin, E., & Hamm R. (2021). *Journalism: Publishing Across Media*. The Goodheart-Willcox Company.
- Harrower, T. (2013). *Inside Reporting: A Practical Guide to the Craft of Journalism*. McGraw-Hill.
- Harrower, T., & Elman, J. M. (2013). *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*. McGraw-Hill.
- Kanigel, R. (2012). *The Student Newspaper Survival Guide*. Wiley-Blackwell.
- Kobre, K. (2017). *Photojournalism: The Professionals' Approach*. Routledge.

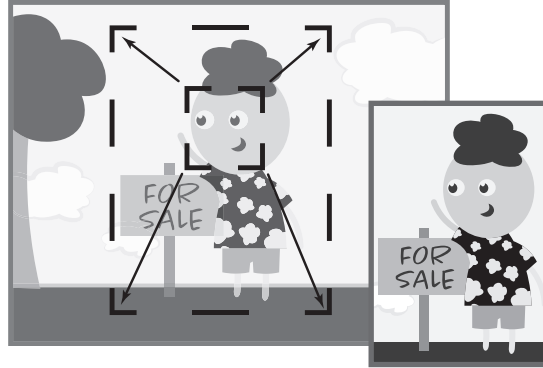
# Crop Inside to Outside

EDITING PHOTOS

## Start at the Face

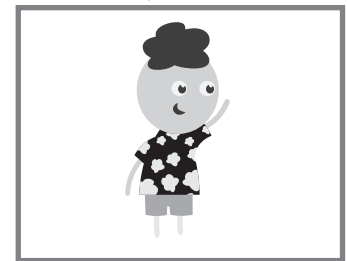
First step. When cropping, aim for a tight crop around the action. Start by drawing a crop box around the face. If the face isn't strong enough on its own (it usually isn't) start adding in more of the photo.

When you crop outside-in, you usually leave unneeded space. An inside-out method will help you be more aware of what is in your photo by adding to the photo to make it better, rather than cropping outside-in to make the photo less bad by cutting things out.



## Draw It!

Draw a box around the subject's face and another where you would finish the crop.



# Watch Out for Mergers

EDITING PHOTOS

## Overlapping Problems

Mergers are annoying issues when cropping. They are times when foreground or background objects intersect with the frame or main subject, or where the subject touches the frame.

You especially want avoid cropping at joints to avoid awkward mergers.

**NOTE:** Mergers are sometimes unavoidable. Do your best to make those situations have the least number of distracting mergers with the main subject.

## Circle It!

On the right, circle every merger you see. Start with the frame — follow the edge and circle everything that touches it.

Then look at the subject and circle objects touching them or where they touch the frame.

Which are OK to you? Which are distracting and should be cropped?



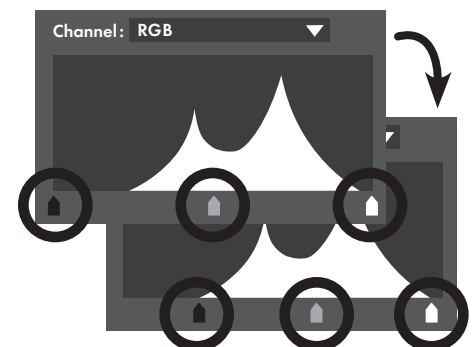
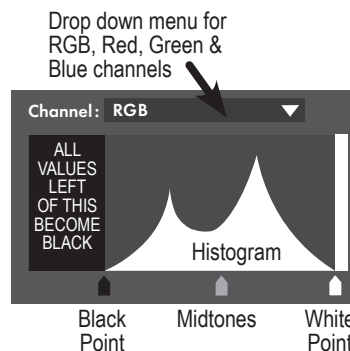
# Exposure Correction

EDITING PHOTOS

## Level Playing Field

Second step after cropping. In Photoshop or other editing software, there is a Levels function that lets the photographer edit the histogram of a photo for each of the three channels — red, green and blue — in RGB images.

AFTER cropping, start by moving the black and white end points for each channel individually to eliminate any empty space only. Then, switch to the RGB composite level, hold Alt and drag each again to correct exposure, careful not to have too much pure white, which blows the highlights. If you want it darker or brighter after this step, move the gray midtones Slider toward the middle of the histogram.



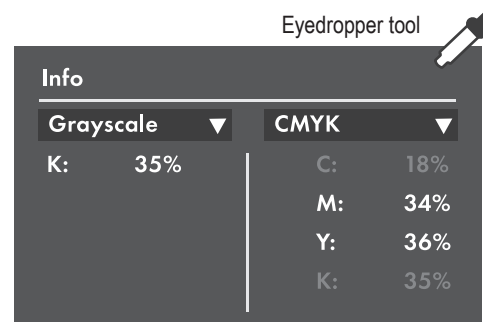
# Color Correction

EDITING PHOTOS

## Why So Blue?

Final step after cropping & exposure correction. Different lights reach different temperatures, which changes the color of the lighting. Your camera has a white balance function, but the colors almost always need some sort of correction.

Open the Info panel in Photoshop, select the Eyedropper tool and change the left to Grayscale (K) and right to CMYK. On MOST people — no matter how pale or dark their skin — the M and Y values should be about the same. Test with the Eyedropper tool (set to anything but Point Sample) on a well exposed piece of skin. Use the Color Balance adjustment to resolve that. The K value should be about 35% for most people with light skin. People with darker skin tones should NOT be edited to the same K value. However, the K value shouldn't rise above 70% or the subject may not be visible on paper like newspaper. Fix that in Levels by sliding the Midtones Slider.



# Learning Rubric — Photo Editing

## EDITING PHOTOS

	<i>Above Standard</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Nearly at Standard</i>	<i>Well Below Standard</i>
<i>Crop</i>	<p>The crop enhances composition rules like rule of thirds, headroom and lead room, and simultaneously follows other techniques like pattern or framing.</p> <p>There are no mergers touching the main subject or subjects.</p> <p>There are no mergers touching the frame's edge.</p> <p>The space remaining creates perfect internal margins of the subject, not requiring any additional space nor additional cropping.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo adheres to composition rules like rule of thirds, headroom and lead room, or clearly follows other techniques like pattern or framing.</p> <p>There may be mergers of the subject, but none distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There may be mergers of the frame, but none distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There may be a little extra space or subjects close to the frame's edge, but only a slight amount.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo violates one basic composition rule like rule of thirds, headroom and lead room, or almost follows, but not quite, other techniques like pattern, symmetry or framing.</p> <p>There are a few distracting mergers of the subject and frame.</p> <p>There is some extra space on one side of the frame with some cropping needed to cut dead space, or subjects close to or touching the frame's edge.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo violates more than one basic composition rule like rule of thirds, headroom and lead room, and does not clearly follow other techniques. This includes completely uncropped images.</p> <p>There are many distracting mergers of the subject and frame.</p> <p>There is a lot of extra space on more than one side of the frame with lots of cropping needed to cut dead space, or main subjects touching the frame.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<i>Exposure Correction</i>	<p>Photo is perfectly exposed.</p> <p>The contrast between areas of dark black and areas of bright white enhance the visual quality of the photo throughout the entire image.</p> <p>Noise from color is almost impossible to notice, absent completely, or enhances the story of the image.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo is barely underexposed or overexposed with only a few blown highlights (pockets of pure white or glowing "halos". Any blown highlights are mostly harmless and not distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There is some contrast between areas of dark black and areas of bright white, but the contrast may not be throughout the entire image.</p> <p>Exposure was not edited so heavily to cause noise or grain to be distracting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo is underexposed, or overexposed with several blown highlights (pockets of pure white) or glowing "halos" in sections of the image. Some blown highlights are harmful and distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There is some contrast between areas of dark black and areas of bright white. There is some dark black and/or bright white areas of the photo, but not many.</p> <p>Exposure was edited in a way that it made noise a distraction.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Photo is completely underexposed, or drastically overexposed with blown highlights (pockets of pure white) or glowing "halos" across the image. Almost all blown highlights are harmful and distracting to the eye.</p> <p>There is no contrast (flat) between areas of dark black and areas of bright white. There are no dark black nor bright white areas of the photo.</p> <p>Exposure was edited so heavily to enhance noise as a major distraction.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<i>Color Correction</i>	<p>Image is perfectly color corrected to the main subject's well-exposed skin. The M &amp; Y values in the Info Panel are within 3%. Attention was paid to skin that falls outside typical color ranges or in situations complicating skin tones.</p> <p>The K value in the Info Panel does not exceed 70% on people with dark skin tones or 30% on the lightest skin tones.</p> <p>Noise from color is almost impossible to notice, absent completely, or enhances the story of the image.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Image may be slightly yellow or blue, but otherwise is close to correct. The M &amp; Y values in the Info Panel are within 10% of each other on well-exposed skin except for situations and skin that fall outside of the typical color range.</p> <p>The K value in the Info Panel does not exceed 70% on people with dark skin tones or 30% on the lightest skin tones.</p> <p>Color was not edited so heavily to cause noise or grain to be distracting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Image may be slightly yellow or blue, but otherwise is close to correct. The M &amp; Y values in the Info Panel are within 10% of each other on well-exposed skin except for situations and skin that fall outside of the typical color range.</p> <p>The K value in the Info Panel does not exceed 80% on people with dark skin tones or 50% on the lightest skin tones.</p> <p>Color was edited in a way that it made noise a distraction.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Image is completely yellow or blue. The M &amp; Y values in the Info Panel are not within 25% of each other on well-exposed skin, or does not make exception for situations and skin that fall outside of the typical color range.</p> <p>The K value in the Info Panel does not exceed 90% on people with dark skin tones or 60% on the lightest skin tones.</p> <p>Color was so heavily to enhance noise or grain to be distracting.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

# Learning Rubric — Photo Composition & Technical Rubric

## EDITING PHOTOS

	<i>Above Standard</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Nearly at Standard</i>	<i>Well Below Standard</i>
<i>Focus</i>	Subject is crisp & in focus, or used in a normally improper way that enhances the storytelling in the photo.	Subject is crisp and in focus. Details in the visible parts of the subjects have well-defined lines that stand out from the background.	Subject is mostly crisp and in focus. Details in the subjects have mostly clear lines that let it stand out from the background.	Subject is fuzzy and not in focus. Details in the subjects do not have clear lines and the subject blends into the background.
<i>Depth of Field</i>	Depth of field is just deep enough for subject and action, or used to enhance a photo in a meaningful way.	Depth of field is just deep enough to include all details of the subject and action, and keep out distractions.	Depth of field is sufficient to include most details in the subjects and action with minor distractions in focus.	Depth of field is too shallow to capture details in focus, or too deep and includes distracting elements.
<i>Motion Blur</i>	Motion blur is nonexistent, or used in a way to enhance the meaning.	Motion blur is nonexistent, or present but not distracting.	Motion blur is barely present but mostly not distracting.	Motion blur is present and is distracting and even destructive.
<i>Noise</i>	Noise is nonexistent, or used in a way to enhance the meaning.	Noise is nonexistent, not distracting nor destructive.	Noise is somewhat distracting or destructive of the subject.	Noise is highly present and destroys details in the picture.
<i>Exposure &amp; Color</i>	Subject is well-exposed, or not but in a way that enhances the photo's meaning. The colors present are intentional and enhance the meaning.	Subject is well-exposed. The colors are vibrant or correct to the subject's skin tone. There are no blown highlights.	Subject is well-exposed, or slightly over/under. The colors are dim, muddy or too bright. There are only one or two, small blown highlights.	Subject is not well exposed, and possibly so bright/dark that details are difficult to determine. Colors are incorrect to the subject's main skin tone. There are many blown highlights.
<i>Composition</i>	Subject placement is unconventional to direct the eye in an intentional way. Traditional photo composition rules are tossed out, but the photo is stronger for it rather than weakened. The size of the subject enhances the meaning.	Subject placement directs the viewer's eye to the subject or action. Sports photos include the ball (if applicable). The subject's face is visible and facing into the photo. No body parts are cut off at a joint. Subjects are of good size.	Subject placement directs viewer's eye with one or more distractions. Sports photos include the ball. Subject facts are completely or partially hidden. Body parts are nearly cut off at joints. Subjects are slightly too far away or too close to the photographer.	Subject does not draw attention. Sports photos do not include the ball. No faces are visible, cut off and/or facing out of the photo. Body parts are cut off at joints. Subjects are too far away or too close to distinguish features.
<i>Creativity</i>	Photographer uses creative techniques in a way to enhance one or more elements of the photo. This includes placement, lighting, color, angle, storytelling, access to subject or location. Effort is visible and commands attention of the viewer.	Photographer may or may not have used creative composition that enhance mood, tone, emotion or storytelling aspects of the photo. If used, it is used effectively. If not, effort to create quality is visible in product.	Photographer may or may not have used creative composition that enhance mood, tone, emotion or storytelling aspects of the photo. If used, it is used to minimal effect. If not, effort to create quality hardly exists.	Photographer took no creative liberty or go out of their way to enhance mood, tone, emotion or storytelling aspects of the photo. If used, they are done poorly and is a distraction. The photographer made no attempt at quality photos.
<i>Storytelling</i>	Subjects are unique and evoke compelling emotion. Action and reaction is impactful to tell the entire story almost without needing a caption.	Subjects are vibrant and full of emotion. Photos involving movement or action show the entire action, or focuses on the reaction to an action.	Subjects have life, but are not engaging nor show any compelling emotion. Photos with action show most of the action. The basic mood, tone and emotions are boring or come across after some thought (confusing).	Subjects are dull and lifeless. There is little to no action or reaction. It does nothing to describe the mood, tone nor emotions, or does so incorrectly, inappropriately or out of context.



### Rationale

Captions are not labels nor throwaway text. They are the most-read text in a yearbook and each should function as a mini story. As such, there are five basic parts: A lead-in to set the tone and direct a reader's eye; an action sentence, a background sentence, and commentary from someone in the photo, as well as a photo credit.

**CLASS GOAL:** We will learn the parts of a caption for a publication.

**INDIVIDUAL GOAL:** I will write a mini-story caption for publication photos.

### Goals for Understanding

Students will understand & demonstrate

- Lead-ins are mini headlines that function both as previews of the caption and as visual cues to draw the reader's eye
- Action sentences are literally the 5Ws and H of the photo, written in present tense, active voice, and name the subjects of a photo up to those with six or more subjects
- Background sentences tell me something I don't know related to the action sentence, written in past tense and active voice
- Commentary is a direct quote from someone in the photo
- And photobys are the credit for the photographer; don't forget it!

### Overview & Timeline

This lesson is designed to be completed in one or two, 45-minute class periods with students split into groups of four, but may be completed in one depending on class length. This also depends if students already have caption information or have to collect it. This lesson may extend in time for students to complete all captions from the two photo-gathering assignments.

Lesson includes

- Warm up activity/preactivity assessment
- Direct instruction
- Cooperative learning activity
- Closing/post-activity assessment

### Materials Needed

- "Caption Writing Instructional Cards" cut for each group
- "Caption Writing Critique" for each student
- "Caption Writing Worksheet" for each student.

### Day 1

**WARM UP ACTIVITY:** Show Slides 2 & 3 of the slideshow and have students individually complete the activity with a 2-minute time limit. Then, direct students to go around their group explaining and justifying each of their results using the round-robin method for 20 seconds per student. Use a timer application or website to show the students how much time is left. Audibly signal when it is time to switch group members and ensure everyone is talking. Slide 4 has the suggested version the teacher can use to preview the lesson.

**INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITY:** Have each group member pull one of the four "Photo Editing Instructional Cards" and read to themselves for 1-2 minutes. Then, have each student spend 30 seconds explaining to the group members the different concepts they learned.

Give each student the "Caption Writing Critique". Each student in the group will make one note on each caption about something wrong with its structure, wording, pieces missing, or missing information. Then, pass the paper to their right. They should make one more note per caption that is different than what the previous student wrote. This should continue until all papers have been seen by every group member twice.

Slide 5 has a recap of concepts.

**EXIT TICKET/CLOSING ACTIVITY:** Have all students complete the "Caption Writing Worksheet" using photos of their choice. Teachers will need to be explicit with how to identify which photo the caption describes so the teacher can adequately assess the quality of their caption writing.

**DAY TWO:** This activity would extend into Day 2 only in the case that students need to spend the rest of Day 1 getting quotes, names, information, etc. they need to complete the "Caption Writing Worksheet."

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## Lead-Ins

### CAPTION WRITING

### Mini-Headlines

Lead-ins are first and mini headlines that function both as previews of the caption and as visual cues to draw the reader's eye. They are one word or a phrase, but rarely a full sentence. Usually they are puns, word play or references to pop culture.

### Model

**GOAL FOR IT.** Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1. "I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs."

*Photo by Phil M. Camera*

### Try It!

Write a lead in for this caption

*After drinking six glasses, senior Katherine Laddie smiles with a milk mustache at the FFA Fun for Funds carnival Tuesday. The event features silly games like milk drinking, hay bale punching and cow tipping. "Don't drink that much milk," she said. "Just don't."*

*Photo by Phil M. Camera*

## Action

### CAPTION WRITING

### What Happened?

Action sentences are second and

- literally the 5Ws and H of the photo
- written in present tense
- active voice
- name the subjects of a photo up to those with six or more subjects

Who is doing what, when, where, why and how? (How is usually also the what.)

### Model

**GOAL FOR IT.** Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1. "I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs." *Photo by Phil M. Camera*

### Try It!

What's missing from the action sentence below?

*After drinking six glasses, senior Katherine Laddie smiles with a milk mustache.*

## Background

### CAPTION WRITING

### What Else?

Background sentences are third and tell

- something I don't know just by looking that is related to the action
- written in past tense
- written in active voice

Who is doing what, when, where, why and how? (How is usually also the what.)

### Model

**GOAL FOR IT.** Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. **The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1.** "I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs." *Photo by Phil M. Camera*

### Try It!

What's wrong with the background sentence?

*After drinking six glasses, senior Katherine Laddie smiles with a milk mustache at the FFA Fun for Funds carnival Tuesday. She had a milk mustache after finishing the contest.*

## Commentary

### CAPTION WRITING

### Say What?

Commentary is last and just a direct quote from someone in the photo ABOUT that moment specifically. If it is a photo of a sport, ask about that play or that game. It shouldn't be about their love of sports.

These are formatted the exact same as quotes used in a story.

### Model

**GOAL FOR IT.** Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1. **"I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs."** *Photo by Phil M. Camera*

### Try It!

What would be the difference in the caption to the left if the quote wasn't there? What value does the quote add?

## Credit & Photobys

### CAPTION WRITING

### Who Did It?

To be absolutely clear: Student journalists own the photos they take — even if it is with school cameras. This is a lot of work, time and skill put into making one photo. Be sure to include a photoby/photo credit for every single photo.

Take the credit you earned!

### Model

**GOAL FOR IT.** Junior Jorge Jaimes makes a last-ditch attempt at goal from 50-yards back in the game against Townston on Friday. The shot fell short, causing Cityville to lose 2-1. "I knew we were running out of time, so I went for it," Jaimes said. "Honestly, I cried when it didn't go in. That was the last shot we had at playoffs."

**Photo by Phil M. Camera**

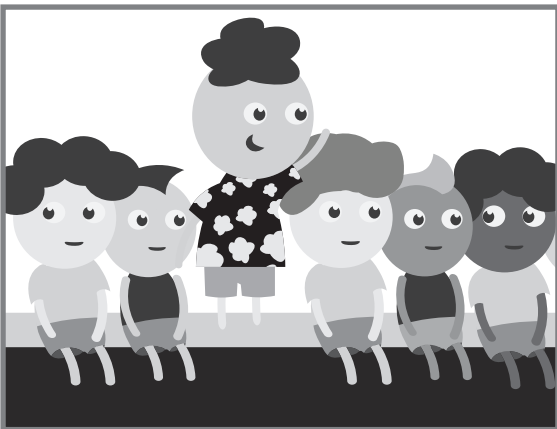
### Try It!

How would you handle a designer forgetting to include photo credits? What about a photographer giving your photos away for free? Think about how you would professionally handle that.



# Caption Critique

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_



PICK ME. Dood lé Head raises their hand. They were the only student to volunteer to play aside from those already on the field, and led the freshmen to a last-minute win. "I love this game," lé Head said.

*Notes* What's wrong with these captions?

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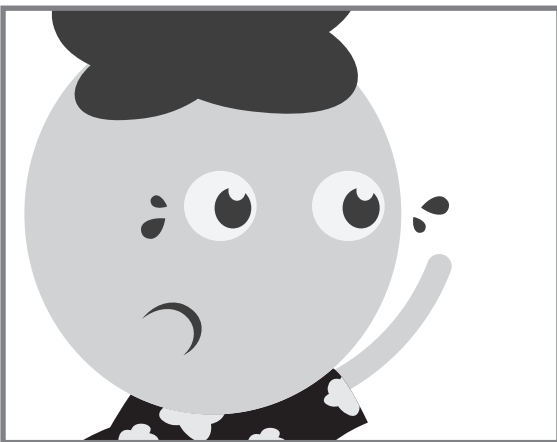
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CRYBABY. As their mother drops them off, tears stream while a freshman waives goodbye. "It was overwhelming thinking about being the new person at a school," lé Head said. "I was afraid of being the new kid and having no friends. That changed over time though."

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On Thursday, July 22, Dood lé Head tries to pet a dove enjoying the birdbath while on a morning walk in Cityville Municipal Park. They said their flower-print shirt is their favorite out of the whole closet. "The park is weird," lé Head said. "It has a strange smell — like hope or sewage."

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quiz bowl team While competing on the JV quiz bowl team, freshman Dood lé Head rushes to answer the last question Oct. 1. Quiz bowl is a team event and competed in several competitions where they competed in a quiz format and trivia knowledge against other school quiz bowl teams. They answer trivia questions to see who is smartest and stuff. "I like quiz bowl," freshman Ima Tryen said. "It's a competition."

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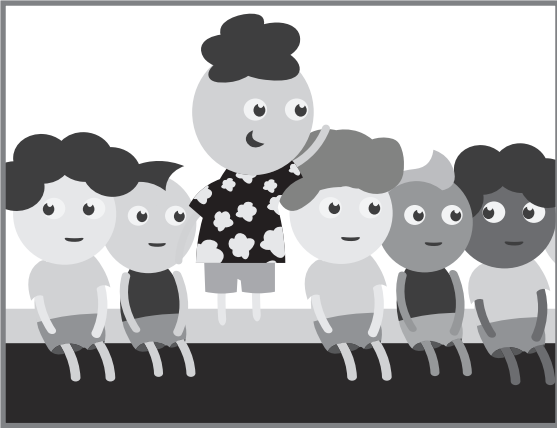
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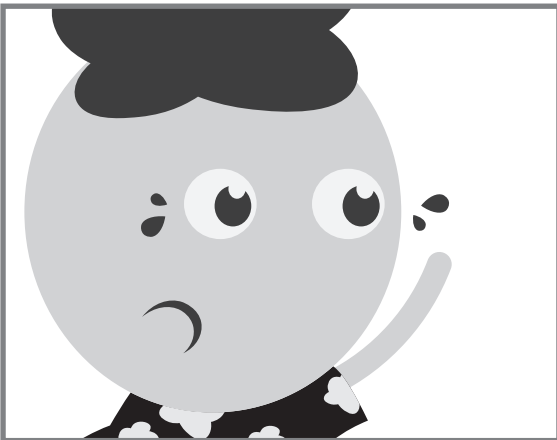
## Caption Critique *KEY/COMPARE*



**PICK ME.** Dood lé Head raises their hand. They were the only student to volunteer to play aside from those already on the field, and led the freshmen to a last-minute win.



**PUT ME IN.** In order to join the ongoing kickball game between the freshman and senior classes, freshman Dood lé Head raises their hand Monday, March 3. They were the only student to volunteer to play aside from those already on the field, and led the freshmen to a last-minute win. "I wanted to prove I'm just as good as these other people," lé Head said. "I was surprised I was the only volunteer. They must have been scared of me."



**CRYBABY.** As their mother drops them off, tears stream while a freshman waves goodbye. "It was overwhelming thinking about being the new person at a school," lé Head said. "I was afraid of being the new kid and having no friends. That changed over time though."



**WATERY WAVE.** As their mother drops them off, tears stream while freshman Dood lé Head bids goodbye on their first day of high school Wednesday, Aug. 13. They transferred from Townston to Cityville over the summer. "It was overwhelming thinking about being the new person at a school," lé Head said. "I was afraid of being the new kid and having no friends. That changed over time though."



On Thursday, July 22, Dood lé Head tries to pet a dove enjoying the birdbath while on a morning walk in Cityville Municipal Park. They said their flower-print shirt is their favorite out of the whole closet. "The park is weird," lé Head said. "It has a strange smell — like hope or sewage."



**SPLISH SPLASH.** While on a morning walk in Cityville Municipal Park, freshman Dood lé Head tries to pet a dove enjoying the birdbath Thursday, July 22. The bird — a white turtle dove — flew off when lé Head was only inches away from its feathers. "The bird let me get way closer than most would," lé Head said. "I think it was so involved in its bath, it just forgot about me. I should have had my camera."



**quiz bowl team** While competing on the JV quiz bowl team, freshman Dood lé Head rushes to answer the last question Oct. 1. Quiz bowl is a team event and competed in several competitions where they competed in a quiz format and trivia knowledge against other school quiz bowl teams. They answer trivia questions to see who is smartest and stuff. "I like quiz bowl," freshman Ima Tryen said. "It's a competition."



**LET'S GET QUIZZICAL.** While competing on the JV quiz bowl team, freshman Dood lé Head, junior Max Vol Hume and freshman Ima Trien rush to answer the last question at the Townston High School Invitational on Monday, Oct. 1. The moderator called on lé Head who got the question about Hammurabi's Code correct. "Without that question, we would have lost," lé Head said. "Luckily, it put us just over the edge and helped get us to district undefeated."