



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2006 Volume I: Photographing America: A Cultural History, 1840-1970

A Moment in Time: Teaching Point of View Using Photography

Guide for Curriculum Unit 06.01.06
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This unit was written specifically for a third grade class but can be adapted for use with students from second through fifth grade. The premise of the unit is that students have a difficult time choosing topics for writing, and further difficulty making them interesting because they often fail to include interesting and exciting details. Examining photos is one way to increase students' awareness of details and how point of view, whether of the writer or photographer, influences what we as the audience see and feel. By broadening their perception of the choices a photographer makes in selecting what point of view to take when capturing an image, students will gain some similar insights they can use in writing about themselves and their experiences. The unit utilizes a number of well known photographs and photographers from Todd Webb to Joel Meyerowitz to Man Ray and many others. Appropriate comparison photos, or companion photos by the same artist, are also mentioned. Three lesson plans and a final project in which students take and share their own photos are also included. There is a dictionary of terms which are useful in speaking about photography, as well as a bibliography of appropriate books and photos.

(Developed for Narrative Writing, grade 3; recommended for Writing, grades 2-5)

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