



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

African American History: A Photographic Record

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by Jacqueline Porter - Clinton

Introduction

America has evolved due to social changes that were brought about by masses of people fighting, standing, sitting, boycotting and rallying for what they believe. Photographs documenting these protest and photographs of the situations that were being protested help to bring about change. Photography has been used to document historical moments and the happenings of the time. It has been said that "a picture is worth a thousand words."

"Seeing is believing" is another aphorism. We put great stock in what we see. Stories are told about horrific and wonderful things that are unbelievable until we have witnessed it with our own eyes in a picture. This is where photography has played a great part; it has expanded our world. First pictures, then videos, yet there are things we would never see in our daily lives or places we would never go, but yet we experience them through photography.

In this unit I will use a timeline of photographs to travel throughout history and highlight the African American experience. The experience will not be treated as isolated incidents but as they occurred as part of United States history. It will be taught to an 8th grade social studies class.

Black History is either mentioned slightly or else completely omitted from some history textbooks. In partial compensation, Black History has been assigned the month of February for celebration. During this time most students are exposed to the same few prominent figures and their accomplishments, for example Harriet Tubman's Underground Railroad, and Rosa Parks' Bus Boycott. The most talked about moment is Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. In the past I have chosen to read a novel about a famous black activist. This approach proved to be long and boring for the students. Therefore I want this unit to go beyond Black History month and beyond the same few figures and events students have often been exposed to in class. This unit will be taught throughout the school year woven into the curriculum at the appropriate times. Therefore there is a need for the skills and activities that will accompany each time period to be introduced at the onset of the school year.

Rationale

I have developed this unit to expose my students to new ways to gain information from pictorial representation by improving their abilities to look at images that will in turn improve their understanding of written text. It will teach the students to establish a purpose for viewing to gain better comprehension and to supplement their understanding of the written text. I plan to use many aspects of photography to teach my students how to interpret and to extract information from photography that they can later transfer to other non-print material such as drawings and paintings that accompany print in their curriculum texts, specifically in Social Studies, where I will teach the unit. The knowledge how to interpret photographs will allow students to use the skill to fill some of the gaps in their education, such as utilizing photographs within the text as context clues, to compensate for poor comprehension skills. Incorporating photography into teaching content area subjects will give students an extra way to gain information. Since all students learn differently, this will allow students who are visual learners to have just as much success as auditory learners.

Objectives:

Students will:

1. use prior knowledge to prepare for the viewing experience.
2. identify purpose, tone, theme, and point of view.
3. demonstrate viewing comprehension by interpreting information and responding critically.
4. explore the social culture of African Americans at significant historical periods.

Strategies

As we view and study photographs I will have my students write their reactions to the images that I share with them before we discuss them. I will ask them to include the details that help shape their reaction. After the class shares I will ask them to look at their original reaction and respond with added support to their initial feelings or with details that changed their feeling. Later, I will have them search the internet to look for more photographs that support their ideas to create a photographic story accompanied by a reaction paper.

Lessons will include the students looking at photographs and demonstrating visual comprehension by predicting, answering questions, and summarizing. They will use the summary as a first draft to a paper. They will have to complete the second draft with added information from written text. We will complete the unit with the students using disposable cameras to create a photographic story and titling it.

Photography and History

Historians often regard photographs as a critical form of documentary evidence that hold up a mirror to past events. The public and scholars believe the photographic image is a mechanical reproduction of reality.

"Photographed images do not seem to be statements about the world so much as pieces of it." (Sontag, pg. 23) Many famous documentary photographs have resulted in a photographer capturing a compelling scene, whether by arranging subject matter or experimenting with alternate composition.

Since photographs are regarded as truthful, photographs are frequently used to illustrate history textbooks. Publishers usually select images to accompany history texts, and the images are used merely as illustrations and not as historical documents in their own right, although many of the photographs in textbooks can stand independently as historical documents.

Hurricane Katrina: Introduction lesson on interpreting photography.

I will introduce this unit and the skills by using a major event, fairly current, that was highly publicized with issues that arose afterwards. With this my students will be able to give an opinion and express their feelings on the subject from firsthand knowledge, making interpretation of chosen photographs of this catastrophe easier. Hurricane Katrina's devastation created physical loss and damage to life and property. It also created loss of trust and confused emotions ranging from feelings of worthlessness to abandonment and from fear to rage.

Photograph #1

Caption

"09.01.05 - New Orleans, LA - Residents sent out a desperate plea for help as they waited to be rescued from the roof of an apartment complex." By Smiley N. Pool (Eye of the Storm, pg. 77)

Description

This picture was taken by a photographer in a helicopter directly over a rooftop with one woman (?) and four men (?). Although I cannot see the woman's face that clearly, they don't appear to be adults, instead, teens possibly with one child. The word "HELP!" is spelled out in about six-foot white letters. At the base of HELP stands the female dressed in what appears to be a dress, sandals with a scarf on her head, waving the American flag. About 15 feet away is a young man with black shorts, sleeveless t-shirt also wearing sandals. He is holding one hand across his forehead as if to shield himself from something and some type of stick in the other hand, while looking in the direction of the photographer. Directly in front of him are about two-foot white letters that spell out "The Water is Rising Pleas." Behind him off to the side stands another teen boy dressed in white wind pants, white t-shirt, sandals and a white hat holding a bottle of water. He is also looking in the direction of the photographer. Directly at his feet lie two other young men on the roof with something under their head. The younger of the two boys dressed in tan khakis, blue print shirt, and sneakers has his head

lifted looking in the direction of the photographer. The other teen dressed in black shorts, sleeveless t-shirt, and sandals is lying down, unfazed by the presences of this helicopter. Strewn about the roof with them are several drinking containers, blankets, clothing and another American flag.

Interpretation

The objects in the photograph including the people and letters in the written message are scattered about the roof in a state of chaos. This chaos is a direct representation of the disaster from preparation for the storm to the response efforts after the storm

The two flags seem to be representing two different things. The first flag is being waved in a token of patriotic allegiance to America the land of the free and the home of the brave. It also states that Americans are survivors and conquerors over all obstacles with victory, as well as a reminder that we are American come rescue us.

The second flag is lying on the ground as a sign of disrespect, to mirror their feeling that they have been left on this roof top in this state of emergency as if they are not American and not worthy of rescue.

The photographer took this picture directly over head including only the roof top and possible the entry to the roof. This angle further shows the isolation these people were probably feeling as if they were all alone in the world.

(Complete Lesson I)

Photograph #2

Caption

"09.01.05 - New Orleans, LA - Tossed together by crisis, 81 year old Louis Jones (left) and 62 year old Catherine McZeal joined forces to navigate Poydras Street in their trek to the Superdome and a chance at evacuation. Both said their children couldn't get through to help them out." By Michael Ainsworth (Eye of the Storm, pg. 80)

Description

In this photograph two elderly women are trudging their way across a small river of knee high water that used to be a street. Both women have walking aids. Louis Jones is dressed in a pink skirt white shirt and a blue cap. She is holding on to her walker that doubles as a seat. She has two plastic bags draped over each arm above the wrist filled with things that she felt she could not do without, perhaps food, water or medicine. Catherine McZeal has a walker closed up and leaning on it with one hand as a cane. She is dressed in blue jeans and a pink shirt. Behind the women a monstrous Army vehicle, possibly a tank is parked with seven guardsmen on top with at least one on the inside. They appear to be pointing and looking in a different direction than the women are traveling.

Interpretation

The photographer is focused on the two ladies; all of the surroundings are blurred. Each woman is holding an assisted walking device representing their dependency.

Both women appear to have stopped for a break, possible of disgust or to plea for help, while looking in the direction of the photographer. I can only imagine what they may have been thinking.

The out of focus guardsmen seem to represent distance in proximity and in awareness. They offer no assistance or even to seem to care about their plight with no indication that they even notice them. And on the other hand the photographer is close enough to offer assistance but instead takes a picture.

(Complete Lesson II)

Photograph #3

Caption

"09.02.05 - New Orleans, LA - National Guardsmen helped 87 year old Ester Frederick leave the Superdome and board a bus for evacuation." By Irwin Thompson (Eye of the Storm, pg. 105)

Description

This elderly white lady holding on to a jacket or sweater is being carried down the stairs in a wheelchair at the superdome to a waiting bus by four National Guardsmen. In the background of this picture you see guardsmen walking up stairs to the Superdome.

Interpretation

In contrast to photograph 2 these guardsmen appear to be happy to offer assistance. If one were to view these to pictures simultaneously one might be offended that the efforts of the men of service were not dispensed equally to all.

Pictures of this nature were flashed to America constantly via T.V., newspapers, and magazines that showed similar situations interpreted differently by the media or dealt with differently by those who were there to assist. Equality or should I say the lack of seems to be in question.

Hurricane Katrina has brought to light many questions that need to be addressed. These questions fit into my unit goal to explore the African American experience--for example, specifically the devastation that predominately African American populated New Orleans experienced due to the lack of preparation and slow response. Questions to ask my students include; Why did the federal government fail to offer financial assistance to the local government to repair of the levees when they knew that they would not be able to withstand a major storm? Why did the federal government not assist in the evacuations before the storm hit when the destruction was predictable? Why was their response to rescue extremely slow? Many have speculated that the government's failure to act before the storm and their slow response after the storm has a direct connection to the people who would be and were affected the most, African Americans.

(Complete Lesson II)

Slavery

The beginning of African American history is the slave trade. Slavery existed in America from the start of the Atlantic slave trade in the 16th century to the end of the American Civil War in 1865. Slave owners rationalized slavery by telling themselves that they were doing African and African Americans favor. In fact slaves were anything but ignorant and happy with their conditions.

Interpretation

Photograph # 4

Title:

"Port Royal Island, S.C. African American preparing cotton for the gin on Smith's Plantation" (1862) by Timothy H. O'Sullivan

Description

The photograph shows a two story cabin most likely where bales of cotton were stored. Off to the right side a pool of cotton is sits with slaves wading and working in pool. At the base of the cotton pool stands a dead tree along with a slave man most likely overseeing the work. To the left of the cabin stands a healthy large tree. Off in the distance are more cabins with a wagon parked out front.

Interpretation

The slaves in the pool of cotton appear to be engulfed with whiteness. This is a representation of the slave's role in white America although they labored hard to make

America what it is their many outstanding contributions were swallowed up by those of the majority. Many are still not known today. The dead tree represents the physical exhaustion slaves felt after a day in the field and or their spirits after years of being treated inhumanely.

(Complete Lesson I {guided} & Lesson III {independently})

Photograph #5

Title:

"Slave and Child 1848" (Wilson, pg 1)

Description

A slave women with a scarf wrapped around her head and plaid dress with caped jacket is seated holding small white child. The child looks around 9 months old. She is dressed in white. The little girl is looking at the camera.

Interpretation

It appears to be a white cloth draped over the slave care giver (usually called mammy), before the child is placed in her lap to separate them. Although the mammy's hands are directly on the child it is necessary to hold the child in place so that the picture can be taken. The mammy holds her head away from the camera because her role in the picture is just to ensure the child's picture is taken. Slave women were not allowed to have families in the traditional sense, because they were all property they were often sold off. The gentle touch of the mammy could be longing for her child(ren) that she was unable to raise. The child looks frightened but reassured by the hands of her mammy.

(Complete Lesson I {guided} & Lesson III {independently})

Emancipation

The Emancipation Proclamation was issued in two parts. The first on September 22, 1862 was a preliminary announcement outlining the intent of the second part, which officially went into effect January 1, 1863 during the second year of the American Civil War. It was Abraham Lincoln's declaration that slaves in all states which had seceded from the Union and which had not returned to Federal control by January 1, 1863 would be emancipated. The ten implicated states were individually named in 1863.

Free blacks created institutions that would sustain them and help create independence and empowerment. The key institution was the church. The most popular Christian denomination was Baptist. Faith found expression through song, spirituals. Spirituals served many purposes it expressed faith in God and their own humanity and their ideas of freedom. During slavery is also delivered hidden messages that slave owners would not understand. Another institution that was developed was educational to give Negroes the opportunity for higher education. These institutions also had religion as their foundation. (Manning & Mulling, 14)

Photograph #6

Caption:

"The Fisk Jubilee Singers in London 1872" (Manning & Mulling, 35)

Description:

Ten singers from Fisk University are posed in the lobby of some great hall. Five ladies are seated two to the right of a small chest high decorative table and three to the left. Behind them stand one lady and four gentlemen. The ladies are dressed in fine dark colored dresses with white scarves around the neckline. The gentlemen are dressed in dark suits, white shirts and bow tie. The background has a pair of white columns on opposite's side with a scenic background of sky and trees. Drapes or curtains with rope hang to the right concealing one of the columns.

Interpretation:

The men: tall and strong: support stature seems to be represented in the columns showing that they are the

support beams to this group and to the race.

The draped curtain connects to the last lady seated on the right representing that the ladies dress is made of a similar exquisite material. It also suggests that while in these dresses they are the stage presenting African American beauty and power and struggle to the world.

The rope hanging from the curtain is a constant reminder of their recent past in bondage and gives them determination to continue the positive work they have started for the improvement and empowerment of their people.

The scenic background on stage represents their passageway to tour the world by way of the stage.

The sitting for this picture was needed to show the world who they are. Their lack of posing (everyone with a different stance and gaze) says we are not entertainment or here for celebrity, but, to inform the world that are purpose is of a higher power: to exhibit our potential as a people and to supply economic funding to ensure our potential continues to be nurtured. (Complete Lesson I {guided} & Lesson III {independently})

Jim Crow

Jim Crow generally refers to the laws and regulations that arose in the south following post -- Civil War Reconstruction. During this time, blacks were judge inferior to whites, creating in the whites' eyes the need for segregation. Because of mandated segregation established by these laws, African Americans were prevented from achieving economic, political, and cultural power and equality and persecuted if they overstepped any boundaries, and often even if they didn't. The term is used to refer to both the oppressive laws as well as the general time period during which they were predominant, the mid -- 1870's through the 1960's. We can see this mood in the following photographs.

Photograph #7

Caption:

"Segregated drinking fountains in the county courthouse in Albany, Georgia" August, 1962 (Lyon, 31)

Description:

This picture is in a hallway with ceramic tile floor, white upper walls and wood panel bottom. Straight ahead is a sign that reads ".WHITE", below the sign is a full size water fountain. Extended from the left is a small shorter porcelain bowl with a sign above it on the side wall that reads "COLORED".

Interpretation:

The size and quality of the fountains directly relates to America's view of the worth of a colored person compared to a white person. The small fountain with water coming directly out of the pipe from the wall is sufficient for colored people.

The size of each fountain says a great deal, the short bowl for coloreds says bow down to take a drink and be

thankful that you can. The taller fountain for whites says stand and drink with pride because you deserve it.

The quality of each fountain says just as much. The small bowl gets water directly from the pipe extended from the wall with whatever temperature. The fountain houses a unit that not only filters water but cools it as well.

(Complete Lesson I {guided} & Lesson III {independently})

Photograph # 8

Title:

"Secondhand clothing stores and pawn shop on Beale Street" (October, 1939) by Marion Post Wolcott

Description:

The photographs include "Hotel Clark the Best Service for Colored Only". Hanging outside from the doorway and in front of the window are samples of clothing. Men are standing outside the store. In the distance is an Angel Loans, I am not certain who it service.

Interpretation:

The sign correlates to the fact blacks and whites are not equal. It also says that the best service for coloreds is used. It speaks to their limited funds by being a pawn shop as well. Come sell us what you can do without so you can buy something you need. The fact that it is only for colored also states that the quality of the second hand clothing is already second hand.

Angel Loan sign in the background seems to represent something else that they are not privileged to. Although it is not stated, the fact that the only place you see colored men standing is in front of Hotel Clark.

(Complete Lesson I {guided} & Lesson III {independently})

World War II

On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked the U.S. Naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The United States found itself in the war it had sought to avoid, for more than two years.

Over 2.5 million African Americans men registered for the draft, black women also volunteered in large numbers. While serving in the Army, Army Air Force, Navy, Marines Corps and Coast Guards as within society they experience discrimination and segregation. But as history shows they met the challenge and persevered. Although they served with distinction and made valuable contributions recognition did not come easily or readily.

During World War II, civil rights groups and black professional organization pressured the government to provide training for black pilots on an equal basis with whites. Their efforts were partially successful. African Americans fighter pilots were trained as a part of the Army Air Force, but only at a segregated base located in

Tuskegee, Alabama. Hundreds of airmen were trained and many saw action they were called the "Tuskegee Airmen." (White, web)

Photograph # 9

Title:

"Pilots Gambling in the Ready Room" by Gordon Parks (Parks, pg. 67)

Description:

This photograph depicts five "Tuskegee Airmen", fighter pilots of the black 332nd Fighter Group playing cards. The pilots are in full pilot gear ready for the call to battle. Two pilots on opposite sides are seated in chairs, while the dealer is standing on the left side, leaning over the table while smoking. Another pilot opposite the dealer is seated on the table giving him the same visual point as the dealer. Between these two is the fifth pilot standing while leaning on his gear that is on the table. It is not clear if he is playing in the game or just a spectator.

The table is loaded with gear, ashtrays full of cigarettes butts and matches, and their bodies, leaving a small area for the actual game of cards.

The backdrop of the picture directly behind the pilots is a blackboard with a chart of Operations, with white columns. The first column reads Pilots, with their names listed. The second column is not legible due to the glare from the flash and the dealer's body. The third column reads Land, it has numbers listed, possible identification of where each pilot is to land. The fourth column reads Mission, beneath is a listing of numbers and letters possibly in code. The last reads Remarks, has nothing listed underneath, possibly waiting for the completion of the mission to rate.

Also in the backdrop off to the right is a window. The scene outside the window is not in focus but it appears to include buildings and a vehicle.

Interpretation:

At a glance one would think that these men are playing a casual game of cards and assume that their attitude toward their waiting assignment (mission) is also casual.

After examining the pilots face and posture this game appears to be for high stakes, (money, material objects) a direct correlation to their waiting mission also high stakes (life). An addition to the small free space on the table that they have available because of their pilot / fighting gear also suggest that they recognize that their waiting mission is far more important and the game is just making the wait easier.

The dark black strip running down the table symbolizes the runway. The pilot seated on the table with his hand resting on the strip (runway) suggests he is ready for take off.

(Complete Lesson I {guided} & Lesson III {independently})

The Harlem Renaissance

The Harlem Renaissance was a creative out burst of activity among African American from 1920 -- 1930. It was a literary artistic movement and social revolt. This was partly the result of the African American great migration north and their need to celebrate their heritage. A reflection of the mood of the Harlem Renaissance can be seen in these photographs.

Photograph #10

Caption :

"Couple in Raccoon Coats" by James Van der Zee 1932

http://www.eng.fju.edu.tw/ron/American_lit2/Images/harlem.htm

Description:

The focus of this photograph is a couple dressed in full length raccoon coats. The man is seated in what appears to be a brand new convertible automobile, with the door open and hands folded in lap. The woman is standing outside the car with hands in pocket. The car is parked outside of brownstone homes in Harlem, New York.

Interpretation

The picture was taken straight forward at eye level. The picture portrays African Americans' movement up in social class. The coats say that we have arrived. The many stairs, the only viable entry way (doors) into the building that has to be climbed also represents upward mobility. The car represents mobility and suggests that although they have arrived, they are not content and plan to keep moving forward.

The scale of the in focused car appears huge in comparison to the brownstone which is somewhat out of focus. This emphasizes the higher status of the car. While the house is prominent but permanent fixture it represents where they have come from. The car appears larger therefore more important represents where they are going.

Sharp define lines throughout the photograph represent motion. Vertical lines are repeated in the windows and doors side frames of the house and cars, the banisters, lines in the coats and spokes on the wheels all represents upward motion. Horizontal lines are repeated in the top and bottom frames of the windows and doors in the house and car, the shades, the steps, the running and boards. They represent forward motion.

(Complete Lesson I {guided} & Lesson III {independently})

Civil Rights

The Civil Rights Movement was a direct result of African American's feelings of enough is enough. The progressive stages in African American history might seem to signify gradual improvement but for the African American they were just different.

This movement for racial equality had several strategies from the nonviolent protest encouraged by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the by any means necessary encouraged by Malcolm X. No one of these was more important or more productive than the other, but together they created the beginnings of equality. To visualize this period we will look at the following photographs.

Photograph #11

Caption:

"Sheriff Jim Clark arrests two demonstrators who displayed placards on the steps of the federal building in Selma. Howard Zinn, notebook in hand, appears in the final frame just behind Sheriff Clark" photograph by Danny Lyon October 1963 (Lyons, 99)

Description:

Danny Lyon layout one page using seven photos, six small frame one large in successions, three on top and three on the bottom.

Top frame one -- Two African American Men are standing on the top landing of the steps leading into the federal building. Each man stands on either side of the door so as not to block it. The gentleman on the right holds a sign that says, "Register Now for Freedom Now". The gentleman on the left holds a signs that says, "Register to Vote". The picture is framed by the railings of the stairs.

Top frame two -- This is wider view of frame one that shows a seated at the base of the steps and another seated on the landing off to the right at the railing. Finally, it shows two officers walking up the stairs.

Top frame three - The first officer has reached the man on the left and is taking his sign away. Officer number two is walking up the stairs toward the man on the right. The other men are observing the confrontation.

Bottom frame one -- Officer number two has reached the man on the right and is confronting him. Officer number one is leading the man on the left down the stairs. There is a third officer walking toward officer number one. Onlookers continue to observe passively.

Bottom frame two -- Both men have been escorted down the stairs and headed to the sidewalk, by the three officers. Onlookers still observe passively.

Bottom frame three -- They have reached the sidewalk some distance from the federal building steps. Two officers are writing down information. An addition to the previous onlookers stands a white gentleman in a suit with notebook in the back probable a reporter in the back at the base of the steps.

Large Center Final Frame -- The three officers are escorting the two lobbyists away presumably to Jail on a breach of peace charge. In the background a white man holding a wrapped cord is present, probably a

cameraman for the reporter.

Interpretation:

The photographer took these photographs from the beginning of the sidewalk. He progressively widens the lens taking pictures simultaneous to help create a motion picture affect in continuous frames.

The African American gentlemen stances are not threatening; the signs offer an encouraging message and direction on where to go. The passive onlookers only add to the peacefulness of the display. Officers enter the scene with billy clubs in hand as if to attempt to aggravate the situation to some sort of violence.

The demonstrators maintain their calm demeanor, showing no emotion throughout the ordeal. The disruption of this peaceful demonstration is being recorded by the photographer in still photos and possibly on film by the reporter.

This demonstration shows these men acting on their inalienable "Right to Assemble" and to have "Freedom of Speech". Rights that have not been granted to them to share with their fellow Americans, although the constitution says all men are created equal.

(Complete Lesson I {guided} & Lesson III {independently})

Lessons Plan I: Learning To Look

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce techniques for looking at photographs to gain information using Hurricane Katrina photos. This lesson will continue to be utilized throughout the unit for guided discussions of each photograph presented for each time period. All elements of this lesson will not be discussed for every photograph. Comments and response should relate to something seen within the photo.

Objective:

Students will:

- identify visual elements within a photograph.
- describe the design of the photograph.
- identify and describe the feeling / mood.

Time Frame:

One class period

Materials:

- copy of photograph or visual on overhead
- Historical Photographs notebook. (created by teacher)

Procedure:

1. The teacher will guide the students as they describe the photograph by completing the following steps that apply to the specific photograph being observed together for complete analysis.

What you see.

Term | Description

Light and Shadow | Does the light seem to be natural or artificial? Harsh or soft? Does the light create strong contrast?

Value | Is there a range of tones from light to dark? Where is the darkest value? The lightest?

Focus | What parts of the image are clearly in focus? Are some parts out of focus?

Shape | Do you see geometric shapes? Are they objects or voids?

Scale | Does the scale or size of objects appear to be natural?

Color | What colors do you see if any?

Texture | Do you see visual textures within the photograph?

How things are arranged.

Term | Description

Angle | From what point was the photograph taken? Would a different angle change the photograph?

Framing | Describe the edges of the view. What is included? What does the framing draw your attention to in the photograph? Can you imagine what might have been visible beyond the edge of the picture?

Dominance | Close your eyes. When you open them and look at the photograph what is the first thing you notice? Why is your attention drawn there? Are there other centers of interest?

Contrast | Are there strong visual contrast -- lights and darks, textures, solids and voids?

Repetition | What elements are repeated if any and do they contribute to a sense of unity?

Balance | Is the visual weight on one side of the photograph about the same as the other? How about top to bottom?

Feelings you get from the photograph.

What do you think the work is about?

What does it mean?

How do you know?

What word would you use to describe?

2. The students will now write a description and interpretation in their Historical Photography notebook. They continue to use this procedure when looking at photographs for this unit.

This lesson adapted from CCP--Learning to Look Guide

<http://dizz.library.arizona.edu/branches/ccp/education/guide/sisyavgd/lookguide.htm>

Lesson Plan II: Connecting to Photography

Purpose:

The meaning we find in a photograph is influenced by our culture, values and beliefs. When using a photograph for information, the viewer must take an active role its interpretation. Being able to discuss why we think something about a photo or why a photo makes us feel a certain way shows that we are connecting to the photograph and decoding instead of a passive look.

Objective:

Students will:

- identify visual elements within a photograph.
- identify and describe the feeling / mood.
- write a create a story represented by two photograph.
- compare and contrast the mood of two photographs

Time Frame:

- Two class periods.

Materials:

- copy or visual on overhead of photograph # 2 and #3 in unit.
- Historical Photographs notebook. (created by teacher)

Procedure:

1. Answer the following questions for each of the two photographs.
 - As you look at this picture what do you see? (use previous lesson as a guide)
 - What would you hear if you were in this picture?
 - What would you smell if you were in this picture?
 - What could the people in this picture be feeling?
 - What emotions do you feel as you view this picture?
2. Write an imaginative story that relates to the one of the photographs. Use your thoughts and ideas from the questions answered as a resource, along with good writing skills and creativity.

Homework:

Take the questions that you answered for both photographs home. Using just your notes and not looking at the picture compare and contrast the mood of each. Describe how you expressed the moods, were they similar or different and why?

Lesson III: Time Travel with Photographs

Purpose:

To gain a sense of what it was like to live in an historical period for African Americans. This lesson will be completed after each time period photograph discussion.

Objective:

The students will:

- place themselves in a historical period using source material to get a sense of what it was to be African American that period.
- write descriptive and accurate essay / journals about a historical period.
- understand the historical perspective.
- gather and use information for research purposes.

Time Frame:

2 -- 3 class periods

Materials:

- Access to online photo collection
- Reference materials
- Essay Organizational Sheet

Procedure:

1. Start a discussion on how do we know about the past. Possible responses are: reading past time periods, talking to people who lived in a certain time period, or looking at art, photography and film. (Only needs to take place at the beginning of the first time period slavery)
2. Introduce the time period along with the photograph discussed in the unit that represents that

period using Lesson I: Learning to Look as a guided discussion.

3. Allowing students to choose a picture from an online collection as a point of focus for their essays / journals. (This will be done after each time period)

4. The students will gather information about their chosen period and about photography at that time. Questions to think about: Was camera ownership common? Why were photographs taken? Were photographs in magazines and/or newspapers? Based on the information gathered, students should place themselves in the historical period and imagine how they would have responded to one of the photographs of that time.

5. Have students write their essay / journal using the essay organizational structure worksheet. Students can adopt a perspective while writing about the photograph for example: as it relates to an individual, a family, or the community.

Essay Organizational Structure

- Opening Paragraph

Statement of place, identity and time period

Identification of photograph and initial response

- Body (three or four paragraphs: response and reason can be combined)

Description of photograph

Response to photograph

Reason for response

Historical Viewpoint

- Conclusion

Culminating Activity

Photographs and essays / journals should be saved electronically for culminating activity. Every student will create a power point presentation of a photographic time line of the African American experiences studied in this unit. Each photograph chosen for each essay written will be framed along with a narrative of the photo including information from their essay. The narrative will include in brief: time period with historical viewpoint, photo identification, and summarization of response.

Bibliography

Barthes, Roland. Camera Lucida: Reflections of Photography. New York: Farrar, Straus

and Giroux, Inc, 1981.

The author shares his personal insights about photography.

Kasher, Steven. The Civil Rights Movement: A Photographic History, 1954 -- 1968. New

York : Abbeville Press, 1996.

This book contains work by more than 50 photographers, whose images were borrowed from photo agencies, galleries, and private collections. Accompanying essays break the Civil Rights movement into chronological periods.

Marable, Manning, Leith Mullings and Sophie Spencer -- Wood. Freedom: A

Photographic History of the African American Struggle. New York: Phaidon Press,

2002

A photographic journey of the African American struggle for equality begins with abolitionist to the present. It engages black and white, heroes and unheralded, public acts of protest and private moments of introspection.

Orvell, Miles. American Photography (Oxford History of Art) USA: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Examines 150 years of photography using well known and unknown photographs. It looks at the different ways photography is used: photographic exploitation, experimental techniques, the power of the photograph to shock, and whether we should believe that photography can serve as visual history.

Parks, Gordon. Half Past Autumn, a Retrospective. Boston: Bullfinch Press, 1997.

This collection of approximately 300 photographs, is accompanied by Parks reflections and recollections about his life and

development as an artist.

Sontag, Susan. *On Photography*. New York: Picador, 1977.

Sontag first explains why it is necessary to step back and think about photographs. An analysis of the changes photographic images have made in the way we look at the world and at ourselves.

White, George. *African Americans, World War II BookRags* . 17 Jul 2006.

<http://www.bookrags.com/history/americanhistory/african-american-world-war-ii-aaw-03.html>

This site give details about African Americans participation in World War II.

Wilson, Jackie Napoleon. *Hidden Witness: African American Images from the Dawn of*

Photography to the Civil War.

Hidden Witness contains reproductions of 69 photographs from Wilson's private collection and the Getty Museum. They depict African Americans in informal studio portraits and outdoor scenes from 1840's -- 1860's. Each photograph is accompanied by commentary of personal reaction and interpretation.

Teacher & Student Resources

Black Archives of Mid -- America. Kansas City Public Library, 1998. 7 Jul. 2006. <http://www.blackarchives.org>

This site was created to collect and preserve the history of African Americans in the Midwest. It offers educational resources as well as every repository of every facet in African American culture.

Burger, Barbara Lewis. *The National Archives: Research of the National Archives Pictures of African Americans During World War II*. 12 Jul, 2006. <http://www.blackarchives.org>

This site describes and illustrates images of African American participants in WWII. The pictures were selected from the holdings of the Still Picture Branch (NSP) of National Archive and Records Administration.

Harlem History: Columbia University Digital Knowledge Ventures. 2005. Columbia University. 7 Jul. 2006.

<http://www.columbia.edu/cu/iraas/harlem/neighborhood/neighborhood.html>

Harlem History presents a wealth of archival treasures and scholarship from Columbia about the history of one of the world's most famous and influential neighborhoods.

Dodson, Howard. *Digital Schomburg Images of 19th Century African Americans* . The 1999. New York Public Library. 7 Jul. 2006.

http://digital.nypl.org/schomburg/images_aa19/fineprint.html

A selection of images of 19th --century African Americans, to introduce you to the various types of visual images on the African-American experience that are contained in the Photographs and Prints Division of the Schomburg Center as well as other selected units of the Research Libraries of The New York Public Library.

Image Gallery of Encyclopedia Britannica's Guide to Black History. 2006. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 7 Jul. 2006.
<http://search.eb.com/blackhistory/browse?browseld=252386>

Represents efforts to trace the African American experience and achievements in the United States and elsewhere.

Jim Crow Images Gallery. The History of Jim Crow 31 May 2006. <http://www.jimcrowhistory.org/scripts/jimcrow/gallery.cgi>

These collections offer teachers and students visual perspectives on the Jim Crow years. Many of these images have never before been published online and are exclusive to this site. They reveal many aspects of the themes of segregation, disfranchisement, civil rights, and violence that lay at the heart of the Jim Crow experience.

Library of Congress: *American Memory: African American Odyssey*. 17 May 2006.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aaotml/aohome.html>

It showcases the black America's quest for equality from early national period through the twentieth century. This African American collection of the Library of Congress displays more than 240 items.

Library of Congress: *Prints & Photographs Reading Room*. 2002. 2 May 2006. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/listguid.html>

The collections are particularly rich in materials produced in, or documenting history of, the United States and the lives, interests and achievements of the American people. Including selected images on frequently requested topics, focusing on images for which there are no known restrictions.

The Face of Slavery & Other Early Images of African Americans., The American Photography Museum, Inc. 2001. 31 May 2006.
<http://www.photography-museum.com/faceof.html>

This website tells a story with a glimpse of early photographs including those of and by African American. These photographs offer an un-doctored glimpse of the past that sometimes helped by being a true account or sometimes being hurtful by fueling prejudice.

APPENDIX

Social Studies Standards: Grade 8th

Content Standard 1.0

Diversity

Performance Standard 1.0

Students will explore the social culture of the U.S. at significant historical periods.

Content Standard 2.0

Civics/Government

Students will investigate the goals and struggles of minority groups in America.

Language Arts / English Standards: Grades 5th - 8th

Content Standard 2.0

Writing

Students will progress along a developmental continuum as they become proficient writers.

Performance Standard 2.1

Students will develop strategic writing skills that ensure successful communication:

A. Students will organize the content of their writing and demonstrate contextual understanding

Performance Standard 2.2

Students will demonstrate strategic writing behaviors before, during and after specific writing task.

A. Students will demonstrate effective strategies before writing. They will:

1. Establish a purpose for writing.
2. Use prior knowledge as a basis for writing.

B. Students will demonstrate effective strategies while writing. They will:

1. Write a first draft.
2. Add descriptive language (adjectives, synonyms, clarify vocabulary)
3. Complete the final edits, and submit their final draft.

C. Students will demonstrate effective post-writing strategies. They will:

1. Use the entire procedure for process writing: writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.
2. Use technology that supports and enhances effective writing.

Content Standard 5.0

Viewing

Students will develop strategic viewing skills by interpreting and constructing meaning from visual resources.

Performance Standard 5.2

Students will demonstrate strategic viewing behaviors before, during and after viewing tasks.

A. Students will demonstrate strategic viewing behaviors before viewing. They will:

1. Establish a purpose for viewing
2. Use prior knowledge to prepare for the viewing experience.
3. Seek information from a variety of viewing sources.

B. Student will demonstrate strategic viewing behaviors during viewing. They will:

1. Make assumptions and predictions on purpose, tone, theme, and point of view.
2. Use active viewing strategies.
3. Use technology information sources in an interactive manner.

C. Students will demonstrate strategic viewing behaviors after viewing.

1. Demonstrate viewing comprehension by interpreting information and responding critically.

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