

## The Kennedy Center Partners in Education



French philosopher Roland Barthes wrote his short book *Camera Lucida* as both a critique on the nature of photography, and, as a eulogy to his late mother. Within the book, Barthes discusses the universal contextual elements surrounding each and every picture viewed by the spectator, but also defines the *punctum*, a term coined by Barthes to describe the deeply personal and impactful nature of photography for those engaged in the study of photographs.

In the culture of #Selfies and Snapchats, photography for the younger generations has lost some of its gravitas. By following some of the guidelines offered in this newsletter and incorporating photographic analysis into the curriculum, students will be able to make connections between images and develop a critical understanding of the process of photography.



All lesson plans and materials can be found at The Kennedy Center's Art's Edge website. Please click on the hyperlinks

below to access the necessary worksheets and materials for each grade level's project.

### A Lens into the Past: (K-4) How do photographs affect the way we perceive history?

[https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/Lens Into The Past#Overview](https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/Lens%20Into%20The%20Past#Overview)

This lesson will use photographs to create a deeper understanding of the lives of early 20th century immigrants to the United States. Students will gain an understanding of the new life of immigrants in this country, and will learn how the medium of photography can record and recount history. They will also gain historical perspective by comparing and contrasting images of the past and the present.

#### Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the immigrant experience, immigrants' reasons for coming to America, and their lives in America.
- Realize that photographs are a primary source of historical information.
- Analyze photographs from the late 19th to early 20th century and use them to construct a timeline.

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- Gain a historical perspective by comparing and contrasting images of the past and the present.
- Better understand the differences and similarities between immigrant life a century ago and their own lives by creating a display composed of their photographs and magazine pictures.

## Teaching Methods

Brainstorming  
Cooperative Learning  
Discussion  
Hands-On Learning  
Visual Instruction

## Materials

1. One computer per classroom
2. One printer
3. One disposable camera (easily acquired at local Walgreens, CVS)

## DOWNLOAD ALL LESSON HANDOUTS AT

[https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/Lens Into The Past#Preparation](https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/Lens%20Into%20The%20Past#Preparation)

All materials are listed under the “printable resources” tab in the *What You’ll Need* section for teachers. The Kennedy Center’s *A Lens into the Past* lesson is broken down into four steps: knowledge building, application, reflection and assessment portions, all of which can be viewed and modified according to the instructor’s time and resources. Please see [https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/Lens Into The Past#Instruction](https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/Lens%20Into%20The%20Past#Instruction) for the step-by-step lesson plan and assessment rubric.

**Analyzing Photographs: From Theory to Practice (5-8)**  
What can be learned from analyzing photographs?

[https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-6-8/Analyzing Photographs From Theory To Practice#Overview](https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-6-8/Analyzing%20Photographs%20From%20Theory%20To%20Practice#Overview)



Throughout this lesson, students will examine works of art and learn tools to analyze and discuss photography. Following a series of intensive in-class workshops—and, if possible, hands-on activities at a local museum—the participants will have the opportunity to apply what they have learned by using cameras to document daily life in their community. After the students' images are printed, students will supplement their photography by preparing artist's statements about their work. This lesson introduces a simple theoretical apparatus for viewing and analyzing works of art, which students will employ with several different works, including their own.

*Note:* This lesson is easily adaptable to enhance learning in virtually any theme, topic, or historical period that is expressed and/or documented in photography. By carefully selecting images appropriate to a particular subject, this lesson would be a great addition to units as diverse as the **Harlem Renaissance, the Civil War, the Vietnam War, women's roles, and American presidents.** In this lesson, each student will need either a digital or disposable camera, and should be able to develop prints. If your school's budget does not allow for this expense, you could try applying for grants or approaching local merchants for donations. A local merchant might be more inclined to donate if the students exhibit their work

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in the store, thereby increasing foot traffic for the business.

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Look closely and critically at photographs
- Analyze images encountered in museums and daily life through a variety of strategies
- Write responses to the images based on their descriptive, reflective, and formal analytic abilities.
- Apply what they have learned by taking photographs
- Write artist's statements to accompany their photographs

### Teaching Methods

Hands-On Learning  
Modeling  
Multimedia Instruction

### Materials

Classroom Computer  
Projector  
Presentation Software

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[https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-6-8/Analyzing Photographs From Theory To Practice#Preparation](https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-6-8/Analyzing%20Photographs%20From%20Theory%20To%20Practice#Preparation)

The step-by-step comprehensive lesson plan can be found at the provided link under the *instruction* tab. Please follow

[https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/~media/ArtsEdge/LessonPrintables/grade-6-8/analyzing\\_photographs\\_rubric.ashx](https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/~media/ArtsEdge/LessonPrintables/grade-6-8/analyzing_photographs_rubric.ashx)

for the assessment rubric constructed by the Kennedy Center's lesson planners for this assignment. The rubric lends itself to alteration and assignment adaption.

**Photography and the National Park Service (9-12)**  
How did the photographs of the Western Frontier influence Congress' decision to designate national parks?

[https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Photography and NPS#Overview](https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Photography%20and%20NPS#Overview)

As Americans migrated westward in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, photographers captured the splendor of the American west. Ultimately, it was their work that influenced Congress to create and protect national parks.

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- Observe photographs of 19th century city life and compare them with photographs of the western wilderness.
- Write about their impressions of both groups of photographs.
- Discuss, in groups, the contribution of photography to the creation of the National Park Service.

### Teaching Methods

Cooperative Learning  
Visual Instruction  
Discussion

### Materials

1 Computer per small group  
Internet Access

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[https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Photography and NPS#Preparation](https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-9-12/Photography%20and%20NPS#Preparation)