

*A PHOTO IS WORTH 1000 WORDS*

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| **Introduction** | |
| There is little else that has the ability to move people like a powerful photograph. Thinking back on every major historical moment, there is likely a visual that comes to mind. Journalism courses often focus on the importance of reporting and writing, but a great photo and caption can be just as effective at telling a story, if not more so. In this lesson, students will research examples of photojournalism to dig into the role of photography as part of the “first rough draft of history.” | |
| **Indiana Standards Connections:**  *Journalism Standards: Grades 9-12*  Media Literacy   JML.1 Critically analyze content found in print and digital media used to inform, persuade, entertain, and transmit social information.  JML.2.1 Evaluate how visual techniques or design elements carry or influence messages in various media.  *Digital Media Studies Standards: Grades 9-12*  MS 2.3 Analyze how the producer’s choices impact subject development over the course of a media product.  MS 3.1 Analyze and evaluate how a producer’s choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a media product contribute to its overall meaning and effect.  MS 4.1 Analyze multiple interpretations or adaptations of a story and evaluate how each version interprets the original source and the impact of the interpretations on the audience.  MS.4.2 Analyze and evaluate media of historical or cultural significance and how two or more media products treat similar themes, conflicts, issues, or topics, and maintain relevance for current audiences. | **Compelling Question(s):**   * How do photographs tell stories in ways that words cannot? * Why are photographs an important part of reporting? * What role do photographers play in the “first rough draft of history”? |
| **Lesson Objectives:**  Students will examine a variety of photos of historical significance. Students will select, research, and share an example of photojournalism. Students will consider individually how and why emotions are communicated through photography. | |
| **Materials** | |
| * [Windows to the World Digital Artifact: Ruins of Nurnberg](https://w2w.indiana.edu/explore-collections/ruins-of-nurnberg.html) * Photography books and websites   + [Library of Congress: Prints and Photographs Online](https://www.loc.gov/pictures/)   + [NY Times Lens Blog](https://archive.nytimes.com/lens.blogs.nytimes.com/) | |
| **Learning Plan** | |
| **Activities**  Hook: Photo Deep Dive   1. Display “Ruins of Nuremberg” photo at the start of class. 2. Ask students what they notice about this photo. What’s going on in this picture? Students may point out the content of the photo or composition elements. Lead a discussion to uncover what students think this is a photo of and what evidence supports their guesses. 3. Read the caption to the photo: “"A strictly candid shot, couldn't have been posed better. A caption for it is as superfluous as asking questions of them would have been. See X-7 Nurnberg, Germany - - 9 July 45." 4. Ask students to now discuss if the caption helped them better understand what it happening in the photo. What did the caption add to their understanding of the photo?   Modeling Analysis   1. Model an analytical breakdown of a powerful historical photo by sharing the following information with the class about the “Ruins of Nuremberg” photo  * What is happening in the photograph? What is the significance of this moment in history? * What did you find about who took the photo and when, where, and why it was taken? * Why did you select this photo? What about this photo attracted you? * What emotions does the photograph evoke? * How does the photographer communicate this emotion (composition)? * How does your experience of the photo change once you read the caption?   Individual Research   1. Explain students are going to be given about 15 minutes to search through photography collections provided. Each student should pick out one photo that speaks to them – it can be a photo that they like, hate, feel some sort of emotion toward, etc. The only requirement is that the photo is somehow visually appealing to them. Give each student a list of the questions they need to answer during today’s activity. Then, give them time to look through the photo collections, pick out one photo, and write down the answers to these questions:  * What is happening in the photograph? What is the significance of this moment in history? * What did you find about who took the photo and when, where, and why it was taken? * Why did you select this photo? What about this photo attracted you? * What emotions does the photograph evoke? * How does the photographer communicate this emotion (composition)? * How does your experience of the photo change once you read the caption?  1. Give students time to share their photo, findings, and analysis with the class, in small or whole group arrangement as time allows.   Formative Assessment  1. Have students fill in and submit an exit slip answering these questions at the end of class:   * Name one emotion that students in the class mentioned very often today. * How did photographers capture this emotion successfully? * Why do you think that emotion is so prevalent in photography? | |
| **Assessment Suggestions**  Formative Assessments  Individual Analysis Presentation: Assess the clarity and depth of analysis presented.  Exit Slip: Assess student understanding after the lesson  Summative Assessment  Written Reflection: Ask students to write a journal entry reflecting on how a single photograph can influence public perception in ways other types of journalism cannot. | |
| **Extensions**  Continued Discussion: Discuss “viral” photos from the recent past, the social reaction to the photos, and the difference the photos made during that moment in history. Some examples include:  [Afghanistan military evacuation flight](https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/20/politics/military-cargo-plane-record/index.html)  [Syrian boy from Aleppo](https://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/22/world/middleeast/syria-omran-photo-children.html)  Black Lives Matter protests  COVID-19 Pandemic scenes  [Sept. 11 flag raising](https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/2021/08/31/raising-the-flag-at-ground-zero-thomas-e-franklin-9-11-photos/5407126001/)  Photography Activity: Encourage students to think about a current issue they care about and how they might capture it through photojournalism. Have students storyboard or take photos about a social issue.  Photographer Research: Research the life and works of Malcolm Fleming, the photographer who took the “Ruins of Nurnberg” photo. Ask them to write a reflection on [his work as an army photographer](https://digitalcollections.iu.edu/collections/7p88df08h?locale=en) and how he chose to capture his experiences during WWII. | |