SPARKed
SPARK in Education

EDUCATOR GUIDE

Story Theme: Art Frees the Soul
Subject: Sixth Street Photography Workshop
Discipline: Visual Art (Photography)

Robert Farrell, a photographer working with Sixth Street Photography Workshop, takes a group shot at the Bayanihan House. Still image from SPARK story, February 2004.

EPISODE THEME

Art Frees the Soul

SUBJECT

Sixth Street Photography Workshop

GRADE RANGES

K-12 & Post-secondary

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Visual Arts & Social Studies

OBJECTIVE

To introduce educators to photography as a documentary and expressive art form, through the Sixth Street Photography Workshop.

STORY SYNOPSIS

SPARK follows photographers from the Sixth Street Photography Workshop as they take pictures of their lives and ideas in some of San Francisco's most depressed neighborhoods.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Individual and group research
Individual and group exercises
Written research materials
Group discussions

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

To introduce the form of photography as both a
    documentary process
To demonstrate how photography can be used as a
    form of personal, artistic expression
To innovate with photography as a form of
    communication through which to learn about
    history and culture

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

VCR or DVD player, a TV, and a copy of the SPARK
    story "Sixth Street Photography Workshop"
Computer with Internet access, navigation software,
    speakers and a sounds card, printer
Access to one or more cameras of any kind (such as
    Polaroid, 35mm, disposable, pinhole, etc.)
Access to facilities capable of developing and/or
    printing photographic images (such as at a
    supermarket photo lab, darkroom, etc.)

MATERIALS NEEDED

Access to libraries with up-to-date collections of
    periodicals, books, and research papers, and a
    variety of newspapers and comic art books
Different examples of traditional and alternative
    comic art (see **Resource** section)

INTELLIGENCES ADDRESSED

Intrapersonal - awareness of one's own feelings,
    emotions, goals, motivations
Interpersonal - awareness of the feelings, emotions,
    goals, motivations of others
Visual-Spatial - the ability to manipulate and create
    mental images to solve problems
Bodily-Kinesthetic - the ability to use one's mind to
    control one's bodily movements
Logical-Mathematical - the ability to detect patterns,
    reason deductively, think logically
Linguistic Intelligence –the ability to effectively
    manipulate language to express oneself

See more information on
Multiple Intelligences at
www.kqed.org/spark/education.

CONTENT OVERVIEW

When George Eastman produced the first commercially available camera, called the Brownie in 1900, he hoped that photography would become accessible to everyone -- providing people from all walks of life with an easy and fun method to document the world around them. In 1992 when photographer Tom Ferentz founded the Sixth Street Photography Workshop, his vision was equally as egalitarian, but with a specific focus -- to bring photography and opportunities for creative exploration to San Francisco's homeless and low income residents. He centered his program where his target audience lived - in an area of the City populated with hotels, transitional housing and shelters on 6th Street downtown.

Ferentz started the program with the support of TODCO, a South of Market (SOMA) housing/community development nonprofit organization, drawing on their housing for his photographers, subjects, and exhibition locations. Today, housed in the SomArts Cultural Center, the Sixth Street Photography Workshop serves the residents and residences of Sixth Street, SOMA and the Tenderloin, including homeless, transient residents, and other people living below the poverty line. Ferentz and program associate and darkroom manager, Amanda Herman, manage all aspects of this program from teaching to fundraising as well as organizing and hosting exhibitions and openings.

More than 300 photographers have come through the program during its 12 year history. Despite the many challenges that face its members, participation in the workshop is consistent. The flexibility of membership enable photographers to take just one class, or stay for months or even years to hone their craft in the weekly sessions. Beginning and Intermediate classes offer participants the opportunity to learn how to use a camera, as well as how to take photographs and develop and print their images in Sixth Street's well equipped dark room facilities.

In addition to the facilitation of Ferentz and Herman, a group of some 20 experienced photographers volunteer their time to teach participants the technical aspects of framing, composition, exposure and advanced printing techniques. With this focused attention some Sixth Street photographers commit stridently to the practice, developing full series and other investigations of their subjects or ideas.

Beyond the classes and the darkroom, the Workshop offers its participating photographers different projects and opportunities to show their work in the community, including exhibitions and portrait events. Each year, exhibitions are held in some of San Francisco's low-income and transient housing complexes in gallery-like settings, and providing powerful works of art for the residents. Whether or not they are *in* the photographs, the experience is a powerful one, offering unique and diverse perspectives on a world rarely shown, by artists embedded in its culture.

Workshop founder and director Tom Ferentz helps set up for a location shoot in San Francisco. Still image from SPARK story, June 2004.

SPARK follows a few photographers in the story, including Robert, a long-time participant in the Workshop who takes images of people on San Francisco's streets, people he considers his family. SPARK also accompanies Robert on a portrait project in the Bahaniyan House during which he takes professional portraits of some of the residents of this newly-remodeled City housing project. Robert's captivating images reveal his understanding of his

subjects, showing them with a dignity and self-awareness unique to the Robert's status as an artist and trusted member of the communities he photographs.

THE BIG PICTURE

A VERY BRIEF, HIGHLY CONDENSED HISTORY OF THE INVENTION OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Literally translated from the Greek, the word photography means the writing of the sun (photo = sun, graphy = writing). While photographers have been using other sources of light to make images for many years, the definition expresses the true nature of photography that remains today – the use of light to create images.

A unique hybrid form of creativity between the fine arts (painting, drawing, and printmaking), and science (chemistry and physics), developments in the field of photography grow out of and reflect the understanding of imagery, light, and time. As a result, photographic equipment and processing techniques have changed markedly over the years as our understanding of the technology deepened. These advances and innovations impacted upon how images were taken and how they look.

The technology of a camera is based upon an understanding of light refraction, a concept understood since ancient times. Light is a spectrum of colors that move in straight lines, called waves. When passed through a small opening, the rays bend in order to fit through the opening. When they do so, they stay together and flip upside down.
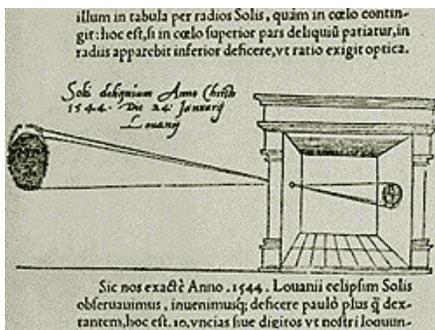
One of the first known drawings of a camera obscura by astronomer Gemma Frisuis De Radio, made to study the 1544 solar eclipse.

This concept is illustrated beautifully in what came to be called the camera obscura, a dark room in which light passed through a small hole, projecting an exact, inverted image of what was outside the room onto an interior wall.

Over the next 200 years, progress was made in the identification of light-sensitive chemicals by different scientists, inventors and artists. However, it was not until Joseph Nicephore Niépce (1765-1833) produced the first photographic image in France in the summer of 1827 that photography was officially born.

Niépce, Landscape in Saint-Loup-de-Varennes, 1827. Reprinted from http://www.niepce.com the official Web site for the estate of Joseph Nicephore Niépce.

Following this first success, in 1829 Niépce joined forces with another creative artist, the architect Louis Jacques Mande Daguerre, who had been using a camera obscura to create theatre sets. Although Niépce died four years later, Daguerre soon discovered a way of developing photographic plates that reduced the exposure time from Niépce's 8 hour-process to 30 minutes.

Daguerre's process produced only single, positive images – that is, without negatives. Many scientists, inventors, artists and photographers built on Daguerre's ideas in the ensuing 100 years with the next major development coming in August of 1835 when William Fox Talbot made the first paper negative. The small, 1" square negative was relatively poor quality compared to the large, sharp images produced by the Daguerreotype process, but it allowed multiple images to be made from one source. Talbot also created paper prints as opposed to the copper plate images made by Daguerre.

From this point forward, the development of photography moves in significant steps forward, shifting from a wet process (collodion) to dry plate in 1871, eliminating the need for a complex darkroom or

specialized knowledge in order to take pictures, and thus making the medium widely accessible.

Following these advancements, photography gradually became more familiar. In 1880, George Eastman established the Eastman Dry Plate Company in Rochester, New York and the first half-tone photograph was published in a daily newspaper called the *New York Graphic*. With photography rapidly becoming a key visual form of communication, the demand for camera production increased and the cost decreased, although cost was still an issue in terms of equal access to photography.

When Eastman's Kodak Brownie camera hit the markets in 1900 it cost $1.00. By comparison, a pound of butter was .22¢, postcards were .01¢ to mail, and it cost .05¢ to take the bus, though many people walked because they were unable to afford it. And, lastly, a reasonably trained and experienced public accountant earned approximately $2,000 per year, making the cost of a camera .05% of his annual income.

Today, a good quality digital camera with all of the up-to-date technology costs about $350. A person working at the same skill level in accounting would today earn on average $65,000, making the cost of the camera roughly the same - .05% of his/her annual income.

SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY
In the SPARK story "Sixth Street Photography Workshop," Tom Ferentz draws an important distinction between the works made by the photographers in his program and those of the social documentary photographers of the early 20th century. This distinction is an important one to make in that while both groups of photographers take images of people living below the poverty line, the works of the Sixth Street Photographers are not taken in the interest of any specific social agenda or idea.

During the Depression, many photographers and artists were compelled to document the challenges of their daily lives, either by personal choice or through employment with various government organizations that paid them to do so. The photographic images they took during these times are considered to be a call to action in visual form, bringing the poverty and devastation of the times to a good sized population of the country. This form of photography is usually

called social documentary. It is characterized by a straightforward style in which subjects are presented "as they are," not posed or embellished in any way.

The federal government recognized the ability of photography to broaden the argument for social change and to persuade people of the good work that their social programs were doing. The Farm Security Administration had been created in 1935 by Franklin Roosevelt to bring financial aid to rural workers who had been forced to leave their farms. In 1936 the FSA hired 11 photographers to document the plight of the afflicted workers. The photographers produced over 265,000 images of workers, their families, food lines, and other daily challenges. One example of an FSA image is one taken by Arthur Rothstein called <u>Wife of an evicted sharecropper, New Madrid County, Missouri</u> from 1939.

Arthur Rothstein, <u>Wife of evicted sharecropper, New Madrid County, Missouri</u>. Black & white photograph, 1939.

Although the photographers working with the Sixth Street Photography Workshop also take images of people facing similarly difficult challenges like those of the FSA, their perspectives are markedly different in that they are part of the communities they are photographing. As with any artists, photographers have rich and varied experiences that affect how they understand the world. This world view in turn affects the way they see, select, and take images. During World War I, photographers who lived with troops were called "embedded" photographers. Since they shared a broader and complex understanding of the officers and their situation, this impacted upon the images s/he took. Many historians, critics, and

artists feel that this shared experience made the images more nuanced and therefore more accurate, revealing the inner complexities of a specific situation compared to an outsider's view into a situation (such as the FSA photographers) who does not share and would not express the same understanding.

RESOURCES – TEXTS

Baldwin, Gordon. Looking at Photographs: A Guide to Technical Terms. Malibu: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1991.

Barrett, Terry. Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images. New Jersey: McGraw-Hill Humanities, 1999.

Beaton, Cecil, and Buckland, Gay. The Magic Image: The genius of Photography from 1839 to the Present Day. London: Pavilion Books, 1989

Coe, B. and M. Haworth-Booth. A Guide to Early Photographic Processes. London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1983.

Crawford, William. The Keepers of Light. New York: Morgan and Morgan, 1979.

Langford, Michael. The Story of Photography. New Jersey: Focal Press, 1980.

Mustardo, Peter, and Nora Kennedy. Photograph Preservation: Basic Methods for Safeguarding your Collections. Technical Leaflet Series 9. Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, 1994.

Nadeau, Luis. Encyclopedia of Printing, Photographic and Photomechanical Processes. New Brunswick: Atelier Luis Nadeau, 1989.

Newhall, Beaumont. The History of Photography from 1839 to the Present. Fifth Edition. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1988.

Reilly, James. The Care and Identification of Nineteenth-Century Photographic Prints. Kodak Publication G-2S. Rochester: Eastman-Kodak, 1986.

Riis, Jacob. How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York (1890). New York: Dover Publications, 1994.

Stange, Maren. Symbols of Ideal Life: Social Documentary Photography in America 1890-1950.

Wilhelm, Henry, with Carol Brower. The Permanence and Care of Color Photographs: Traditional and Digital Color Prints, Color Negatives, Slides, and Motion Pictures. Grinnell, Iowa: Preservation Publishing Company, 1993.

RESOURCES – WEB SITES

Albumen Photographs, History, Science & Preservation - http://albumen.stanford.edu/

American Hurrah: Photographic Archive - http://www.americahurrah.com, including Edward Muybridge's panoramics of San Francisco (1878) http://www.americahurrah.com/SFmenu1800s.htm

American Institute for Conservation - http://aic.stanford.edu

American Museum of Photography - http://www.photographymuseum.com
California Museum of Photography, University of California Riverside - http://www.cmp.ucr.edu

Chicago Albumen Works - http://www.albumenworks.com/

Currier-McCombs Photographs Division of the William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan - http://www.clements.umich.edu/Photos.html

Daguerrian Society (The)– http://www.daguerre.org

Friedrich-Alexander Universitat Erlangen-Nurnberg, Germany - http://www.phil.uni-erlangen.de/~p1altar/photo_html/photographen/bonfils.html
George Eastman House International Museum of Photography & Film - http://www.eastmanhouse.org/

Guides to Quality in Visual Resource Imaging (from the Digital Library Federation, the Council on Library and Information Resources, and the Research Libraries Group) - http://www.rlg.org/visguides/

Joseph Niépce Web Site - http://www.niepce.com

Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress - http://lcweb.loc.gov/rr/print/pphome.html

Royal Photographic Society: http://www.rps.org

RESOURCES – VIDEO

The following are all available from Amazon at http://www.amazon.com.

Ansel Adams - A Documentary Film (DVD) (2002), Ric Burns, Director. Warner Home Video, 2003.

Richard Avedon - Darkness and Light (American Masters) (DVD) Helen Whitney, Director, Wellspring Studios, 2002.

Helmut Newton - Frames from the Edge (DVD) (1989), Adrian Maben, Director, Image Entertainment, 2002.

Alfred Stieglitz - The Eloquent Eye (American Masters) (DVD) (2001), Perry Miller Adato, Director. Winstar Home Entertainment, 2001.

The Adventure of Photography (DVD) (1998), Kultur Studios, 2003.

W. Eugene Smith - Photography Made Difficult (DVD) (1989) Gene Lasko, Director. Image Entertainment, 2002.

War Photographer (DVD) (2001) James Nachtwey, First Run Features, 2003.

Photography: As Told by Life Magazine Photographers (VHS) (1985), David Hoffman, Director.

Henri Cartier - Bresson (VHS) (1994) Home Vision Entertainment, 1998.

American Photography - A Century of Images (1999), PBS Home Video, 1999.

Truth and Beauty/End of Art (VHS) Camera-Early Photography & Moving Images, Mpi Home Video, 1991.

BAY AREA RESOURCES

Organizations dedicated to Photography
Barry Singer Gallery
Fine-art photography
7 Western Avenue
Petaluma, CA
707/781.3200
Hours: Tues-Sat 11am-6pm
http://www.singergallery.com

Dodrill Gallery
Gallery of adventure photographer Jerry Dodrill
17175 Bodega Highway
Bodega, CA
707/876.1993
Hours: Th-Sun 10am-6pm; by appointment Mon-Wed

San Francisco Camerawork
1246 Folsom Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415/863.1001
http://www.sfcamerawork.org

Fraenkle Gallery
49 Geary Street
San Francisco, CA 94108
Hours: Tuesday - Friday: 10:30 - 5:30
Saturday: 11am–5pm
415/981.2661
http://www.fraenkelgallery.com

ArtSeal
Early 20th century rare and vintage photographs including American Salon, Stieglitz's "Camera Work," California and Western Landscapes, Figurative Pictorialism, New York's Photo League, and others
1847 Larkin St @ Pacific Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94109
Tues-Fri 11am-6pm; Sat 11am-5m; by appointment
415/567.3523
artseal@pacbell.net

Sixth Street Photography Workshop
Exhibitions in various San Francisco locations
http://www.sixthstreetphoto.org

Fifty Crows: Social Change Photography
PMB 615, 5214-F Diamond Heights Blvd
San Francisco, CA 94131-2118
415/647-1100
http://www.fiftycrows.org/

Bolinas Museum - Photography Gallery
48 Wharf Road, Bolinas
415/868-0330
Hours: Fri 1-5pm; Sat and Sun 12-5pm

The Darkroom
Classes, workshops, and darkroom use
820 Alhambra Avenue
Martinez, CA 94553
925/372-3275
Email: photography@darkroomz.com
http://www.darkroomz.com

Point Reyes Gallery
Gallery totally devoted to photography
Highway 1 & Mesa
Point Reyes Station, CA
415/663.1615
Hours: Mon-Sun 1-8 pm

Wilderness Collections Gallery
Large-format photographs of the natural world
8 Princess Street
Sausalito, CA
415/331.2954

Organizations that exhibit photography
Catherine Clark Gallery
49 Geary Street, Second Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
415.399.1439
http://www.cclarkgallery.com

Stephen Wirtz Gallery
49 Geary Street, 3rd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
(415) 433-6879
(415) 433-1608 fax
Hours: Tues to Fri 9:30-5:30; Sat 10:30-5:30
http://www.wirtzgallery.com
SF Museum of Modern Art

151 Third Street (between Mission and Howard)
San Francisco, CA 94103-3159
415/357.4000
Hours: Mon & Tues 10am-6pm; Wed CLOSED; Thurs 10am-9pm, Fri-Sun 10am-6pm
http://www.sfmoma.org

San Jose Museum of Modern Art
110 South Market Street
San Jose, CA 95113
408-271-6840
24-hour Recorded Info: 408-294-2787
Hours: Tues-Sun 11am - 5pm
http://www.sjmusart.org

San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA)
451 South First Street
San Jose, CA 95113
408/283.8155
Hours: Tues, Weds & Fri 10am-5pm; Thurs 10am-8pm; Sat 12-5pm; Sun & Monday CLOSED
http://www.sjica.org

Haines Gallery
49 Geary Street, Suite 540
San Francisco, CA 94108
415/397.8114
Hours: Tues-Fri 10:30am-5:30pm; Sat 10:30am - 5pm
http://www.hainesgallery.com

Robert Koch Gallery
49 Geary Street, 5th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94108
415/421.0122
Hours: Tues-Sat 10:30am-5:20pm
http://www.kochgallery.com

California Palace of the Legion of Honor
Lincoln Park - 34th Avenue and Clement Street
415/863.3330
Hours: Tues-Sun 9:30am-5pm; First Tues, 9:30am-8:45pm
http://www.thinker.org

Phoebe A. Hearst Museum Of Anthropology
Kroeber Hall
Bancroft Way and College Avenue
Berkeley, CA
510/643-7648
Hours: Wed-Sat 10am-4:30pm; Sun 12noon-4pm

DISCIPLINE-BASED VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS IN THE SPARK STORY

Documentary
Being or consisting of factual or verifiable evidence

Skid Row
A term popular in the 19th century referring to an urban district or area populated by cheap bars and transient housing, and frequented by alcoholics, addicts, and other people living at or below the poverty line

Sixth Street
A street in downtown San Francisco running from Market Street south into the South of Market district

Develop
A process in which exposed film is treated in a chemical solution in order fix the images on the film to make negatives

Shelter
An establishment that provides food and shelter to the poor and/or homeless

Drop-In Center
An establishment for transients and homeless people offering support, services, and/or referrals

Residential hotel
An establishment offering rooms for rent on a weekly or monthly basis to people transitioning from homelessness or other temporary housing situations

Portrait
A visual representation (such as a painting or photograph) of a person usually concentrating on the face

Composition
The overall placement and organization of elements in a work of art, as well as the interrelationships between individual elements

Asymmetry
A balance of parts on opposite sides of a perceived midline, giving the appearance of equal visual weight

Background
The part of the picture plane that seems to be farthest from the viewer

Balance
The way in which the elements in visual arts are arranged to create a feeling of equilibrium in an artwork; the three types of balance are symmetry, asymmetry, and radial

Color
The visual sensation dependent on the reflection or absorption of light from a given surface; the three characteristics of colors are hue, intensity, and value

Contrast
Differences between two or more elements (e.g., value, color, texture) in a composition; juxtaposition of dissimilar elements in a work of art; also refers the degree of difference between the lightest and darkest areas of an image

Foreground
Part of a two-dimensional artwork that appears to be nearer the viewer or in the "front" of the image; *middle ground* and *background* are the parts of the picture that appear to be farther and farthest away

Focal point
The place in a work of art at which attention becomes focused because of an element emphasized in some way

Middle ground
Area of a two-dimensional work of art between the foreground (closest to the front) and background (furthest receded)

Background
The part of the picture plane that seems to be farthest from the viewer

Point of view
The angle from which a viewer sees the objects or scene in an image

Rhythm
Repetitive visual elements that achieve a specific effect

Scale
Relative size, proportion; the determination of measurements of dimensions within a design or artwork

Space
The area between, around, above, below, or contained within objects; spaces are areas defined by the shapes and forms around them and within them, just as shapes and forms are defined by the space around and within them

Texture
The surface quality of materials, either actual (tactile) or implied (visual).   It is one of the elements of art

SECTION IV – ENGAGING WITH SPARK

STANDARDS-BASED ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION POINTS

Reading & Talking About Photographs
Compile a group of photographs using resources in the Resource or a library collection. Include documentary, celebrity, landscape, adventure, historical, snapshot images, etc. Help students develop a vocabulary to "read" and discuss photographs using the terms on the vocabulary list.

Challenge students to compare two different documentary photographs, one from the early 20th century (1900-1930) and one from the Sixth Street Photography Workshop (available on their Web site or in the SPARK story). Ask students to describe each image, identifying the subject, elements of style, and point of view of the photographer.

Ask students to write short essays about what is happening in the photograph, including who the people are, what has happened in the place, how objects got to where they are, etc. Make sure students tie the specific details of the stories to specific support in the photographs. If the image is an historic one, invite students to do research to discover just what the objects or places are, including year of manufacture, type, tradition of use, cost, etc., and to weave these facts into the story.

If appropriate, invite students to restage the scene in the image and to recreate the photograph it using contemporary elements and a camera.

Once they have seen the elements of the image in "real" life, invite them to discuss the difference between the "real" scene and the image in the photograph? How does the medium of photography impacts on the image?

RELATED STANDARDS - VISUAL ARTS
Kindergarten
Connections, Relations & Applications
Career & Career-Related Skills
5.4 Discuss the various works of art (e.g., ceramics, paintings, sculpture) that artists create and the media used.

Grade 1
Connections, Relations & Applications
Career & Career-Related Skills
5.4 Describe objects designed by artists (e.g., furniture, appliances, cars) that are used at home and at school.

Grade 4
1.0 Artistic Perception
Analyze Art Elements and Principles of Design
1.5 Describe and analyze the elements of art (color, shape/form, line, texture, space and value), emphasizing form, as they are used in works of art and found in the environment.

Grade 7
1.0 Artistic Perception
1.1 Describe the environment and selected works of art, using the elements of art and the principles of design.

Grades 9-12 Proficient
1.0 Artistic Perception
1.4 Analyze and describe how the composition of a work of art is affected by the use of a particular principle of design.
1.5 Analyze the material used by a given artist and describe how its use influences the meaning of the work.

RELATED STANDARDS
LANGUAGE ARTS
Grade 8
Writing
2.1 Write biographies, autobiographies, short stories, or narratives:
a. Relate a clear, coherent incident, event, or situation by using well-chosen details.

Photography & Truth

Address the issue of photography and truth by finding a number of images about the same subject or event, specifically one in which you can locate both single images **and** images published in a larger context, such as those with headlines, situated within articles or with captions. Showing only the single image(s) first, ask students to express the information conveyed the image and to identify how that information was conveyed.

What is portrayed in the image?
How is the object or person portrayed?
What is the point of view of the photographer?

Then show students the image in its broader context. Ask students what is different about the image when it is in context?

What does the context have to do with the image?
How does text change the meaning of an image?
What are the similarities and differences between how the photo appeared before and after?

Once completed, ask students to choose a photograph and to present it in two different ways. Invite them to write a 500-800 word essay for and against a topic and then to situate the images inside the essay, using the image to support different arguments or viewpoints on the same issue. Share the results with the class and talk as a group about how successful the presentations are and using the image and text as a persuasive tool.

Single Subject

Assemble a grouping of images of the same subject, such as trees, flowers, houses, cats, etc. that convey different moods or perspectives. Using the exercise above, talk with students about how different perspectives are expressed. Then challenge students to all take 1-2 photographs of the same object, such as a parking meter, swing set, fire hydrant, flag, sewer cover, fence, banister, etc. Assemble the images in one place and ask each student to talk about his or her image and how they made it and what kind of mood or perspective they were after. Afterwards, invite the other students to respond, assessing how well the image expresses the student's intention. Avoid terms such as "good" and "bad," supporting students to ground their observations to specific elements in the image, such

as "the image successfully communicates sadness because….." and then identifying those elements in the image that communicate sadness.

Portrait Project

Watch the SPARK story, focusing on the portrait project that the Sixth Street Photography Workshop photographers do at the Bahanian House. Develop a similar portrait project of a specific place and group of people, such as the class, another class at the school, a retirement center, a residential treatment facility, a hospital, a hospice, etc. Ask students to develop their approach to making the portrait in order to put the subjects at ease.

If appropriate, consider using the portrait project as a starting point for an interview or project with the students, using the photography as a way into the subject. For instance, students take portraits of residents in a retirement community or other housing facility in the neighborhood. They could conduct an interview that is prepared and exhibited next to the image.

SPARKLERS – TOPICS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND EXPLORATION

✳ Using photographs taken by photographers working for the Farm Securities Act – Office of War Information, compile a visual survey of the Depression. Contrast images of people in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Compare these images against research on the topic and discuss the role the images played at the time, now, and in the future?

✳ Using a Polaroid, 35mm, or digital camera, ask students to take one image somewhere in the classroom or on school grounds. Once developed, invite students to write a short poem or piece of free verse about the image, using the visual elements of the image to inspired choice of words, format, length, etc.

✳ Compare a National Geographic article with images to a history book account of the same place, preferably one of which the students are unaware. What are the most important

characteristics of the place? What images are included in the National Geographic? What are they of? What can you tell about the place just looking at the photographs? How do the photographs relate to the text? How do the National Geographic and the textbook compare?

✳ Consider the role of photography as a document of truth. Research the traditional use of photography as a method of documentation for insurance purposes (as with objects and possession) as well as for people when they have passed away. Compare these uses with the more familiar uses of photography today, such as snapshots, vacation photos, etc. How have our ideas about and uses of photography changed?

✳ Talk about the idea of an embedded photographer – someone from a community – taking pictures of that community. Then compare it to a journalistic photographer who comes in just to take photographs. What are the differences? Look at works of the same place, people, or objects taken by different types of photographers. What are the similarities and differences? Does one appear more "truthful" than the other? How is that expressed? What the points of view of the various photographers? How is that expressed?

✳ Discuss as a group the relationship of photography with truth. Because photography has an analogical relationship with objects and people in the world, it was long held as being a thoroughly truthful document, not manipulated to anyone's particular aims. Choose a number of photos that represent misrepresentations or falsehoods, such as Hippolyte Bayard's self-portrait called <u>Drowned Man</u> (below) from 1840, designed to play with the prevailing belief in photography as a document of truth at the end of the 19th century. Talk about the notion of truth and photography, showing contemporary examples of manipulated photographs. What techniques are used today to achieve similar effects?