Object Stories: Photographic Storytelling

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Middle School Curriculum

I. **Outcomes:** Students tell stories about their own objects with description and personal meaning.

   a. **Indicators:** Prompts for describing own object with detail.

      **Prompt: Your object in its best light:**
      - Would your object look best in the soft light under a tree, or you in the open, or held up against the sky?
      - Can you find the perfect texture or pattern for your background?

      Take this photograph from 3 different angles or perspectives.
      - Dogs Eye View
      - Birds Eye View
      - Snakes Eye View

   b. **Indicators:** Prompts for supporting story and developing meaning.

      i. *Students tell about the relationship between own object and self: time, place, or people.*

      **Prompts:** Your object in a setting that tells a story:
      - Where will you place your object in order to tell a story with the image you create?
      - Think about your object’s history...has it been through a journey?
      - How could you show your object’s history?

      *Take 3 photographs with the help of your partner.*

      ii. *Students identify the meaning associated with the object.*

      **Prompt:** You with your Object:
      - How would you pose with your object?
      - Brainstorm with your partner a way in which you can be photographed with your object that will reflect your emotions surrounding this object. Ex: joy, sorrow, peace, or pride
      - Will you place the object in your hands? On your head? In your lap?

      *Take 3 photographs with the help of your partner.*

II. **Big Idea:** Objects of all kinds carry personal and cultural stories across time and place.

III. **Materials:** Digital cameras, scavenger hunt list, 4”x 6” color photo printouts, object
IV. Lesson – 90 minutes

A. Opener – Question of the Day
   1. Students are asked to describe a photograph they have in their home that holds significance for them. This could be a photo at home or on their computer, tapped to the fridge or in mom’s purse. Every student takes a turn sharing their answer to the question.
      a. Modifications:
         • Students sit or stand in a circle
         • Students write down answer to prompt before sharing orally.

B. Procedure
   1. Slideshow of photography, mostly by peers, is presented in order to introduce the concept of perspectives (Dog’s Eye View, Bird’s Eye View, Snake’s Eye View) in photography and familiarize the students with still life.
   2. Cameras are introduced; Students learn basic operational and safety procedures.
   3. Students pair up to use the cameras
   4. Activity- Students receive Scavenger Hunt list of “perspective reminders” as well as prompts for creating strong photographs (see Downloads for this activity).

C. Closer – Students return to the circle and share the high point of their photographic experience with their object. Each child shares a six-word story about something they discovered while photographing their object.

 Modifications: If students wrote down the opener then they can write their six-word story on the same paper.
I. **Materials**: 8½ x 11 colored paper, Art paper or cardstock, glue sticks, scissors, markers (black and silver sharpies recommended), best 3 photographs from each student.

II. **Lesson** – 60 min

   A. **Opener** – Introductions and Greetings
      2. Students are asked to introduce themselves and what they remember about the first photography visit.
         a. **Modifications**:
            • Students re-read their six word story

   B. **Procedure**
      5. Pass out photographs. 3 for each student.
      6. Explain the *Final Project* and show an example of photographs mounted with six word stories. Ask students to be thoughtful about layout design, color and shapes.
      7. **Activity**- Final Project: students showcase their photographs on a poster presentation and write their six word story on the project. (See example)
         • Teacher/artist/volunteer should check work and make suggestions before students glue and write on layout.
      8. Students clear their desks, clean up, and set up for a gallery walk to showcase and share their final projects.

   C. **Closer** – Students walk the room discussing the projects of their peers.
Final Project Example:

III. **Common Core Standards**: 6.W.3- Write Narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
   a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
   b. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.