

MUSEUM OF

ENCORE PARK

STREET CULTURE

DALLAS, TEXAS

Photography and Social Justice  
Lessons

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# STREET CULTURE

DALLAS, TEXAS

“Photography and Social Justice”

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Subjects:** Visual Arts, Language Arts, History, Social Studies

**Objective:** Students will gain understanding about the homeless and how to use photography to give them a voice.

## Lesson Overview

Students will discuss what it means to be homeless and the stereotypes surrounding them. Students will gain basic composition, photography, and photojournalism skills to document their surroundings.

**Materials:** Dry Media, Paper

- Discuss as a single group the following questions
  - What are things that you enjoy having?  
(Phone, fancy clothes, car, etc)
  - What are basic human needs?
  - If you had to give up the things you enjoy having, but still had basic human needs, what emotional changes would you experience?
  - If you suddenly found getting basic human needs hard to do, what emotional changes would you experience?
  - How do you think people become homeless?
    - What social, political, and economic issues impact the chances of becoming homeless?
  - How can we help effect change/ end homelessness?
    - Why should we care?
- Students will be shown projected images of *Looking for Home: A Yearlong Focus on the Work of Mary Ellen Mark*
  - Students will discuss their interpretations with the group to further each others’ understanding about the exhibition
  - Students will discuss how Mary Ellen Mark used photography to document Tiny’s life
  - Students will be given a short lesson about composition and photography basics
    - Rule of thirds, bird’s eye/ worm’s eye, balance, leading lines, depth, framing/ cropping
  - Students will be encouraged to discuss the compositional aspects of each work

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DALLAS, TEXAS

“Photography and Social Justice”  
Grades 7-12

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Subjects:** Visual Arts, Language Arts, History, Social Studies

**Objective:** Students will further their understanding about the homeless and how to use photography to give them a voice.

## Lesson Overview

Students will view documentary photographs and discuss the formal elements of the works, but also the context and message each photograph is trying to convey. Students will also engage the photographs by creating reflective text.

**Materials:** Dry Media, Paper

- Students will discuss
  - Stereotypes surrounding homelessness
  - What causes homelessness
  - You can use the following questions to help start dialogue
    - What are basic human needs?
    - What are things you can't live without?
    - What does it mean to be homeless?
    - How do you think someone becomes homeless?
      - Students can focus on one aspect of their drawings/ lists (ie not having money to pay bills)
    - How can we help effect change/ end homelessness?
      - Why should we care?
- Students will view selections from *Looking for Home: A Yearlong Focus on the Work of Mary Ellen Mark*
  - Quotes and other published information about the works in the exhibition will be made available to students
  - Students create reflective writings on the photographs
- Students will share their writings with the group as a whole

- Students will have the opportunity to discuss questions and thoughts about each writing piece
- Students will have the opportunity to share their writings
- Students will discuss whether or not their initial feelings and interpretations changed with the addition of the writings

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DALLAS, TEXAS

“Photography and Social Justice”

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Subjects:** Visual Arts, Language Arts, History, Social Studies

**Objective:** Students will learn about public art in the forms of photography, murals, and sculpture and how it can serve to send a message about issues that sends a message to the community it exists in. Students will create a proposal for a public art project.

## Lesson Overview

Students will discuss social justice issues and what is important to them. Students will view public artwork murals, sculptures, and photography projects created by various artists. Students will learn how to create proposals to submit to public art projects and other open calls.

**Materials:** Pens/pencils, paper, computers (with internet access)

- Students will discuss
  - Issues surrounding social justice
    - What are things that are important to you?
    - What are things that you think are unfair?
      - Can relate to things that are important to them, but not necessary.
    - Why should we care about helping others?
    - What is social justice?
    - How can you advocate for issues that you see as unjust?
- Students will view a presentation on public artwork
  - Students will learn about how artists can use a public platform for social justice
- Students will view several examples of proposals for public art work
  - These will serve as examples for students when they create proposals
- Students will create proposals and discuss as a group
  - Students will select a message (related to the previous discussion) for their artwork and create a proposal based on this
  - Students will discuss what they would feature in their proposal and why

- Images of their own work, mock-ups for new work, scaled down models, etc.
- Students will discuss what the images for their proposal will look like
  - If students do not already have a portfolio of artwork to choose from have them create thumbnails of what their work would look like
- Students are encouraged to pull inspiration from work viewed in previous presentations
  - Their proposal could even feature collaborative works with the featured artists
- Students will search for calls for proposals to submit to
  - Resources for sites that have calls for proposals:
    - <https://www.callforentry.org>
    - <https://www.artandeducation.net/announcements/>
    - <https://publicart.ie/main/opportunities/>
    - <https://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/networks-and-councils/public-art-network/opportunities>
    - <https://www.publicartist.org>

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DALLAS, TEXAS

## “Photography and Social Justice”

**Grade Level:** 6-12

**Subjects:** Visual Arts, Language Arts, History, Social Studies

**Objective:** Students will learn about documentary photographers and how they use their work to send a message about issues to the community it exists in. Students will brainstorm ideas and prepare to create documentary photography projects for the *Photography and Social Justice* exhibition.

### Lesson Overview

Students will discuss what it means to be homeless and specific issues surrounding homelessness. Students will view works by documentary photographers. Students will brainstorm ideas and prepare to create documentary photography projects for the *Photography and Social Justice* exhibition. Students will work through ideas for their projects including, themes, possible “road blocks”, story lines, and possible shots.

**Materials:** Pens/pencils, paper, computers (with internet access)

- Students will view a presentation about documentary photography
  - Students will learn about contemporary artists working in the realm of documentary photography
  - Students will discuss the differences between each artists’ take on documentary photography
  - Students will discuss context in each image
    - How the images work together in a series
    - How the images stand alone
- Students will discuss
  - Stereotypes surrounding homelessness
    - What causes homelessness?
    - What does it mean to be homeless?
    - How do you think someone becomes homeless?
    - What emotions do you think someone who becomes homeless feels?
    - Where do you think homeless people live (where do they sleep at night?)
    - How can we help effect change/ end homelessness?
      - Why should we care?

- These can be things we have discussed before as this is to serve as refresher from last meeting
- Students will discuss and brainstorm as a group
  - Students will discuss their takes on the theme *Photography and Social Justice*
    - What aspect of social justice do they engage with most?
      - The distribution of wealth, opportunities, or privileges within a society?
      - Highland Park V Oak Cliff
      - Greenhill V Woodrow Wilson
    - What are some other themes that relate?
      - Immigration laws
      - Homelessness
    - What are some possible roadblocks that could hinder you from taking the photographs you want to take?
      - Participant permission
        - Ensure to get permission from whomever you are photographing
      - Lighting
        - Ensure you think about how the lighting will affect your photograph
      - Location
        - Ensure you have permission to shoot in a private location
    - What ideas do you have for your shots?
      - Who's your subject?
      - What's your sub-theme?
      - Where is the location of your shot?
      - What is the context?



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**Objective:** Students will learn about public art in the forms of photography, murals, and sculpture and how it can serve to send a message about issues that sends a message to the community it exists in. Students will create a proposal for a public art project.

## Lesson Overview

Students will discuss what it means to be homeless and specific issues surrounding homelessness. Students will walk around the surrounding neighborhood discuss and photograph what they see on the street,. Students will take turns making photographs within small groups.

**Materials:** Pens/pencils, paper, point and shoot cameras

- Students will discuss
  - Stereotypes surrounding homelessness
  - What causes homelessness
  - These can be things we have discussed before as this is to serve as refresher from last meeting
  - What does it mean to be homeless?
  - How do you think someone becomes homeless?
  - What emotions do you think someone who becomes homeless feels?
  - Where do you think homeless people live (where do they sleep at night?)
  - How can we help effect change/ end homelessness?
    - Why should we care?
- Students will break into small groups and be given a camera
  - Students will be given instructions on how the camera works
    - We will also go over a brief refresher on photography basics but students will have entire creative control on their images
  - Students will walk around neighborhood (with instructors) and make photographs while sharing the camera in their groups.