



# PhotoPals Curriculum

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*This curriculum is meant to teach the basics of photography to elementary-aged children. By the end of the program, the children should have: an understanding of the photographic “eye”, a new perception of their environment, and confidence in their photographic abilities.*

*The program can run as short as three weeks, or as long as 2 months, depending on how often the class meets. This document is meant to give an overview of the program structure; a more detailed lesson plan may be needed for each class session.*

## Materials

- Digital Cameras
- Notebooks for distribution to participants
- Thoughtful, mature students

## Unit 1: Introduction to Photography

Objectives	Desired Outcomes
-Teach proper camera care	-Familiarity with Program
-Teach basic camera skills	-Ability to use camera functions
-Show photos from “Born into Brothels”	-Understanding of basic photo concepts

### Lesson One: Introduction to Program & Camera Care

#### Activities

1. Introduce photo pals program: Explain schedule of program and why they were selected to participate. Explain the basic concepts of the class and what we will be learning.
2. How-to Use Camera: Show how to use wrist strap, how to turn the camera on and off, and how to take a photo. Have kids practice while in the classroom. Explain the importance of not getting the camera wet or dropping it. Insure the kids understand that a camera is fragile and meant to be cared for.

### Lesson Two: Basic Composition, Lighting & Angles

#### Activities

1. Show examples from the photo project “Born into Brothels”.
2. Explain the concepts of composition, lighting, and angle based on the photographs shown.
3. Have the kids discuss their favorite and least favorite parts of the photos shown.
4. Do a quick lesson on “Angles” by having the kids take a photo from above, below, and the side.

## Unit 2: Composition

Objectives	Desired Outcomes
-Teach composition techniques through examples	-Well composed photos of the physical landscape
-Location scouting and landscape shooting	-Understanding of location scouting
-Writing activity	-Understanding of composition

### Lesson: Landscape Composition

#### Activities

1. Print images of landscapes and explain the compositional merits of each photo. Have examples of both “good” and “bad” landscapes.
2. Explain location scouting. Emphasize the importance of finding a location that is important to them and not just shooting the first location you see. Explain is it OK to have some objects or buildings in a landscape photograph, it does not have to be completely blank.
3. Allow the kids to go out and shoot landscape photos. They are required to shoot at least 10 photos and no more than 30.
4. Writing Activity. Spend the last 10 minutes of class with the kids writing in their notebooks about what they took pictures, and what they liked/disliked about the project. Ask specific questions such as, “Why did you choose this location”, “Why did you choose this composition”, “How did taking the picture make you feel about your surroundings” or, “Did taking the photo make you feel differently about something you have seen every day”?

## Unit 3: Natural Lighting

Objectives	Desired Outcomes
-Teach natural lighting techniques through examples	-Understanding of “good” and “bad” natural lighting
-Take indoor portraits	-Understanding of working with people/subjects
-Writing activity	-Understanding of impact of lighting on the photo

### Lesson: Indoor Portraiture

#### Activities

1. Print examples of portraiture photos, be sure to include examples of “good” and “bad” natural lighting.
2. Use the windows/doors/lights to do a live demonstration of different types of natural lighting.
3. Have the kids choose partners, and take portraits of each other in their desired natural lighting scenario. 15 photos total.
4. Writing Activity. Spend the last 10 minutes of class recapping what was learning, and have the kids write about the lesson that day. Ask questions such as, “Why did you choose this lighting”, “How did the light impact the appearance of your subject” or, “How did the light affect the mood of your photograph”?

## Unit 4: Adding a Subject

Objectives	Desired Outcomes
-Combine elements of first two classes: composition, lighting, landscape, and portraiture	-Understanding of shooting a subject on location
-Take photos of a subject in landscape	-Understanding of outdoor lighting
-Writing activity	-Understanding of overall composition

### Lesson: Adding a Subject to a Landscape

#### Activities

1. Show examples of landscape portraiture. Explain the use of light on the subject and composition.
2. Split the kids into groups of two, and have them take photos of each other. Min. 10, Max. 30.
3. Writing Activity. Ask questions such as, “What were the challenges with introducing a subject to the landscape” or, “How did you deal with the lighting”?

## Unit 5: Environmental Portraiture

Objectives	Desired Outcomes
-Photograph personal subjects	-Connection with photographer and subject
-Use all previous lessons on composition/lighting	-Outside perspective on family and home life
-Writing activity	

### Lesson: Family Photos

#### Activities

1. Meet with kids and introduce the topic. Explain environmental portraiture and the significance of photographing a subject in its natural environment. Reiterate the importance of composition and light in a photograph.
2. Have the kids return home with their cameras for 1 hour, and take photos of their families, rooms, houses, pets, kitchens, etc. Ask for photos of the inside and outside, with and without human subjects. They can take as many photos as they want, but must take at least 10.
3. Writing Activity. When the kids return, discuss the challenges of the project and have them write about their experience. Ask the question, “How did taking these photos make you feel about your family and your home” or, “Why did you choose to photograph these things”?

## Unit 6: Documentary

Objectives	Desired Outcomes
-Take photographs at a local store in the community	-Creativity and exploration of environment
-Teach about taking photos in public	-Working with the community
-Writing activity	-Understanding of choosing a subject

## Lesson: Tienda Project

### Activities

1. With this project, we will take the kids to a local store and have them spend 30 minutes photographing people and things at the store. They will be asked to choose multiple subjects, human or otherwise, and take photos inside and outside the store. Attention must still be paid to composition and lighting.
2. Writing Activity. At the end of the 30 minutes, we will regroup and discuss the challenges of shooting in such a hectic environment. We will also discuss what it was like to take pictures of people in the community and the challenges associated with it. Ask questions such as, “What was the hardest part of taking photos publicly” or, “How did this project impact your view of the community”?

## Unit 7: Documentary, cont.

Objectives	Desired Outcomes
-Take portraits and landscapes in the community	-Connect with subject matter
-Take pictures in both public and private space	-Re-evaluate the things they see in a photographic manner
-Writing Activity	-Confidence in photography skills and photographic “eye”

## Lesson: Life and Community through Photography

### Activities

1. For the final project in the PhotoPals program, the kids will be asked to take their cameras for the afternoon, and photograph their community, friends, and lives. The students will be asked to choose a route they regularly take, and look at the things they encounter through a photographic “lens”. This can include their route to and from school, to and from a favorite tree, to and from their friend’s house, etc.
2. When we regroup, the kids will do their final writing project. We will discuss how the process of taking photos has changed the way they view the world around them, and how they feel about taking photos. We will also have the kids fill out an exit survey about the importance of the class in their lives and how it changed their attitude/perspective.

## Program Conclusion

At the end of the program, photos will be selected for print by the teacher and presented to the students.