

Photo Journal

Description

Photo journals are flipbooks with pictures that tell a story. You will write accompanying words for the photos, but the effectiveness of the journal will mainly come from the power of the pictures. You can really “own” your story as you make your unique photo journal and not be held back by searching for the “correct” words. You can communicate your feelings, interpretations, and perspective through your photos.

You can use the photo journal for a lot of purposes in all the subject areas:

Math: geometric shapes, the practical uses of algebra

Social studies: history or geography of your community

Science: weather, motion, ecology, geology, plants

Language arts: autobiography, character study, inspiration for poems and stories

In making your photo journal, you will learn important technology, creativity, communication, and collaboration skills and how to properly credit multimedia sources. If you use a digital camera for this project, you can learn to adjust background colors and crop photos in shapes that help tell your story.

Planning

1. Figure out the main theme of your photo journal. What are you going to show and through whose point of view? Will it be an essay on the need to do something (The school needs a litter crew)? Will it be a process (How we raised funds for the homeless project)? Will it make a statement (The school uniform policy is not working)?
2. You can take pictures of places, objects, and people, including self-portraits; for an extra challenge, you can take photos of things as symbols or representations of other things or situations that cannot be photographed. For example, a photo of a park scene showing a group of pigeons vigorously fighting for a scrap of food might fit in a journal with a theme of competition or a journal expressing feelings about the scarcity of necessary resources.
3. You will likely take many more photos than will actually appear in your final photo journal. Select only those that tell the story and make the ideas flow. If you have taken a great photo that simply doesn't fit your theme, use it for another project. Eight or ten carefully selected photos are more effective in telling a story than a larger number of pictures lacking distinctive focus.
4. Ask your teacher whether you can learn how to change the color and tone of a photograph using Photoshop and also how to crop photos; look at some artistic

productions and websites to start thinking about cropping, placement, and framing. Consider whether you will want to use colored paper, stickers, stamps, and doodles to create borders or keep the pages simple and clean.

5. You will glue your images on cardstock paper after you
 - a. Plan the layout of each page.
 - b. Make color and tone changes and crops that are needed.
6. Write either *about* each of your photographs or *in response* to each of your photographs. You can write a journal entry, a poem, an essay, a story, a first-person narrative—whatever form best gets your message across. You can use more than one form of writing for your book, and you can type or handwrite your words. Carefully study your photos to see what they reveal about your topic.
7. Proofread your book and exchange work with another student for peer editing. After revising and refining your work, make your final pages and assemble your book.
8. Design a cover page.
9. Share your work with your classmates.

Assessing

Adapt the product rubric to show the criteria you think should be used to evaluate your final product, and get your teacher's approval before starting the activity.

Technology Connection

1. If Flickr (www.flickr.com) is available for students to use at your school, make a media album of your photo journal in slideshow format.
2. If VoiceThread (<http://voicethread.com>) is available for students to use at your school, create an interactive album of your photo journal using the microphone, text, and audio file. Organize and implement an authors' showcase for the community or translate your essay into a digital story with added background music or sound effects.