

Photography Field Trip

Description

All communities offer unlimited sites for meaningful field trips. A list of suggested sites appears below. The keys to any successful outing are the planning before the trip, the activities during the trip, and the post-trip follow-up activities. When students create photo essays, they have both a personal (because they are choosing the perspective) and academic outlet for the field trip experience. Students can photograph events and record information about each picture in the form of descriptions, explanations, observations, and/or summaries of sites and situations. Cameras can be brought from home, borrowed from the school, or included in the cost of the field trip if throwaway cameras are used.

Planning

1. Make the arrangements with the site:
 - Locate the contact's name and phone number.
 - Establish the date and time of visit.
 - Prepare the materials/directions to be given to students and chaperones.
 - Select which areas of the site will be visited and the availability of a guide.
 - Research Web materials about the site.
 - Invite a person from the site to visit your classroom.
 - Confirm the day before the trip.
 - Discuss safety and behavioral expectations for the trip.
 - Discuss photo essay guidelines.

2. Potential field trip sites:

Botanical garden

Cemetery

City hall

College campus

Construction site

Courthouse

Dairy

Factory

Farm

Fire station

Historic sites

Hotel

Humane Society

Junk dealer

Recycling center

Landfill

Library

Monuments

Museum	Ship, ferry
Newspaper	Sports stadium
Orchard	State capitol
Orchestra	Theater
Parents' businesses	TV station
Planetarium	Utility
Police station	Veterinarian
Printing company	Animal refuge
Radio station	Zoo

3. Select a field trip site that has relevance, interest, and potential for enhancing a topic in your curriculum. Once the place, time, and date are decided, prepare students for the trip by having them complete one or more of the following tasks:
 - a. Stimulate ideas about the trip using Internet sources, reference books, videos, brochures, or artifacts.
 - b. Design a series of scavenger hunt questions that will help note locations of important items or details.
 - c. Discuss with students expectations for their photo essays and possible settings/activities that would make interesting photographs. Encourage students to take photos of what interests them but ones that at the end, will have a theme or thread tying the photos together and to the content they are studying. Giving them examples of what you consider good work will help them meet your expectations.
 - d. Invite a professional photographer or a person who takes great photos, perhaps a teacher or even a student with a good eye, to speak to the class about how to take good photos.
4. During the trip, encourage the participants to do one or more of the following:
 - a. Work in pairs to complete the scavenger hunt questions.
 - b. Take pictures of several interesting and informative people, displays, exhibits, events, or facilities.
 - c. Record several varied pieces of information for each photo such as historical data, numerical data, cultural data, etc.
5. Following the trip, have students
 - a. Review their digital images (or developed film images).
 - b. Arrange them in a logical sequence for display and dialogue.
 - c. Place them in an album (purchased or constructed from poster board and construction paper).
 - d. Create a model, quiz, Jeopardy-type game, chart, poster, or booklet of information learned on the trip.

Assessing

1. Study the photos in the finished album along with the recorded information about each one, and decide how you will rate each entry on the basis of these criteria:
 - a. Choice of subject area for photo
 - b. Quality of photo itself
 - c. Relevance and completeness of information for photograph
 - d. Other (to be determined by student and/or teacher)

Technology Connection

Using digital cameras will greatly increase the ease and flexibility of manipulating, storing, and sharing the photos.