

Lesson 3: What makes a good photograph?

Introduction

This lesson introduces learners to the concept that a photograph is composed by a photographer. In this lesson, learners discover what constitutes good photography composition and put this into practice by composing and capturing high-quality photos of their own.

Learning objectives

To describe what makes a good photograph

- I can identify what is wrong with a photograph
- I can discuss how to take a good photograph
- I can improve a photograph by retaking it

Key vocabulary

Framing, subject, compose

Preparation

Subject knowledge:

You will need to be familiar with three key concepts of photography composition: positioning, framing, and detail.

You will need:

- L3 slides
- A2 Paper frame handout (printed and cut before the lesson, ideally on card)
- A2 Devices with a camera which the learners can take photographs with
- A3 Reviewing my photos sheet

Note: you may wish to keep the Paper frame handout to use again in lesson 6.

Assessment opportunities

Introduction and Activity 1: Learners can identify which photographs haven't been taken well, and can suggest where the photographer may have gone wrong.

Activity 2: Learners can compose and capture good photographs.

Activity 3: Learners know what they need to do next time to capture a better quality of photograph, and can use this knowledge to retake one of their photos successfully.

Outline plan

Please note that the slide deck labels the activities in the top right-hand corner to help you navigate the lesson.

**Timings are rough guides*

<p>Introduction (Slides 2–6)</p> <p>8 mins</p>	<p>Which photos haven't been taken well?</p> <p>Show slide 2. Introduce the learning objective and success criteria.</p> <p>Show slides 3–6. For each image, encourage learners to think about how it could be improved. As this is largely subjective, there could be a range of responses, but some of the more likely are:</p> <p>Slide 3: The image has been poorly framed: the top of the boy's head is out of shot.</p> <p>Slide 4: The background is cluttered, the telephone wires interfere with the main subject, and the angle it's been taken from is low.</p> <p>Slide 5: The image is blurry (or out of focus – this is explored further in Lesson 5).</p> <p>Slide 6: The main subject is close to the camera, which distorts the image.</p>
<p>Activity 1 (Slides 7–12)</p> <p>10 mins</p>	<p>How do you take a good photograph?</p> <p>Show slide 7. Explain that taking a good photograph is a skill, and photographers don't always get it right the first time. Explain that there are steps that can help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positioning: Is it obvious what the main subject of the photograph is? ● Framing: How well is the subject matter framed? ● Detail: Are you close enough that you can see the detail? <p>Review the images on slides 8–12, considering the above. Possible discussion points include:</p> <p>Slide 8: The image on the left is well framed, and is suited to landscape format. The cropped image on the right misses some of the main subjects of the photograph.</p> <p>Slide 9: The image on the right is well positioned and is framed with good detail. The framing of the image on the left is not as good.</p> <p>Slide 10: The image on the right is framed better, removing the vertical line from the image on the left that detracts from the main subject.</p> <p>Slide 11: The image on the right is positioned and framed better, with all of the subject matter visible.</p> <p>Slide 12: Both pictures are great. But if you were asked to take a photograph of a butterfly, the image on the left does not include enough detail for the subject of the photo to be clear.</p>
<p>Activity 2</p>	<p>Composing and taking photographs</p>

<p>(Slides 13–15)</p> <p>15 mins</p>	<p>Recap the main things to consider when composing a good photograph.</p> <p>Show slide 13. Set learners the task of taking three photographs, using the principles of positioning, framing, and detail (you may wish to adapt this list according to your setting):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A picture of a classroom display • A view out of the classroom window • A group of coloured pencils <p>Show slide 14 and introduce the ‘Paper frame’. Model to the learners how they can look through it to help them decide if the best way to take the photo is portrait or landscape.</p>
<p>Activity 3 (Slides 15–16)</p> <p>10 mins</p>	<p>Reviewing and retaking</p> <p>Recap what makes a well-composed photograph. Ask learners to consider the three questions on slide 15.</p> <p>Ask learners to look at the photographs they have taken and review how well they think they have applied the three skills to each of the photographs. Ask learners to record their rating for each photo taken, on the ‘Reviewing my photos’ activity sheet.</p> <p>Show slide 16. Ask learners to choose one photograph to take again. Ask them to write down on the sheet which one this is, and what they will do differently to capture a better photo next time. Ask learners to retake their chosen photo.</p>
<p>Plenary (Slide 17)</p> <p>5 mins</p>	<p>Before and after</p> <p>Show slide 17. Ask learners to share their before and after photos with a partner, explaining what they did differently the second time around and why their retaken image is better than the original one.</p>
<p>Next time (Slides 18–19)</p> <p>2 mins</p>	<p>This lesson, next lesson</p> <p>Review this lesson and point forward to the next one.</p>

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