

Critical Analysis of a Photograph



A C T I V I T Y S H E E T

ACTIVITY SHEET: Middle/High School

Using the **elements** and **principles of art**, analyze a photograph of your choice.

Title: _____

Which seems to be the **dominant element**: line? shape? color? value? texture? space? _____

Discuss the use of **line** in the photograph.

What kinds are they? Thick, thin, curved, interrupted or parallel lines? What about line direction? Diagonal lines are energetic. Horizontal lines sometimes are restful.

Discuss the use of **space** in the photograph.

Is there a center of interest? Does space isolate one dominant object? Does the subject fill the space? Do you feel there is too much space?

Discuss the use of **shape** in the photograph.

Is there more than one major shape? Is the negative shape (the area around the main subject) interesting?

Discuss the use of **texture** in the photograph.

How has the photographer used texture? Can you see it? Would the photo be better if there were more textures?

Discuss the use of **color** in the photograph.

Imagine this photograph had color. Would color add or detract from the subject of the photograph? Explain your answer.

Discuss the use of **value** in the photograph.

Differences in black and white are one the major tools of the photographer. A black-and-white photograph should have a pure black, a pure white, and several tones (eight) in between. _____

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Discuss which **principles** of art are employed to arrange the **elements** effectively.

Repetition * Pattern * Variety * Emphasis * Rhythm * Contrast

Use some photographs of your choice to answer the following questions below.

Has the artist used **repetition** in shapes, or lines in his or her work? Identify a photograph that contains repetition of one of these elements.

Title: _____

What **element** is being repeated? _____

There are many kinds of **contrasts**: figure/ground, old/young, rough/smooth, shiny/dull, dark/light, etc. Describe a contrast being used in a photograph.

Title: _____

Type of **contrast** being used: _____

Has the artist used a **focal point** or center of interest in one of the photographs you have selected? Discover what it is by closing your eyes. Open them, and make note of the first thing you see. That may be the portion that demonstrates the principle of **emphasis**.

Are there **varieties** of lines, shapes or values? Are there **varieties** of texture?

Identify another photograph that shows **rhythm** through a use of undulating lines and repetition of forms that lead the eye through the photograph.

Title: _____

In any of your selected photographs, has the artist taken advantage of **patterns** found in nature, calling attention to them through composition or point of view? Explain your answer. What photograph would be a good example of this?

Title: _____

