

Digital Photo Safaris: **Authentic Learning Across the Curriculum**



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Digital Photography Project Ideas

Take photographs to serve as a visual record of people, places, things, activities, or ideas.

People

Take photographs of people. Consider visuals where people are active. What stories can photographs tell?

Take photographs from different points of view such as outside a group meeting looking in and in the center looking out. Use over-the-shoulder shots to gain the view of a person as they conduct a demonstration.

Take photographs that show the emotions of individuals. Are they happy, sad, frustrated, or concerned?

Take photographs of people interacting with other people, animals, or objects. Are they helping each other or fighting? How do people react to each other? Who is leading and following? What are their roles? Are people working as a team?

Take photographs of people working in different situations. What is their goal?

Places

Take photographs inside and outside. Be sure to provide the context of the place by taking long, medium, and close-up shots.

Take photographs of natural and human-made places. Show where nature and people interact.

Take photographs of a field trip. Then, create an electronic scrapbook or virtual field trip for others to experience.

Things

From basketballs to national monuments there are billions of objects you can photograph. When photographing objects it's often helpful to provide the context of the thing. Is the lion in the wild or in the zoo? Is the tire on a swing or on a car? Also, it's sometimes difficult to see the size of the object. Place a coin, ruler, or person in the photo so viewers can see the relative size of the insect or plant.

Digital Reproductions. Take photographs of primary source materials to use as digital reproductions such as historical photos, birth certificates, maps, and other materials that can be used to write local, family, or personal histories.

Artifacts. Take photographs of student artifacts such as diorama, bulletin boards, models, and other physical objects. Place the photos in PowerPoint and provide narration for the photos. Or, create transparent shapes over pieces of the photograph and add narration to their focus on the elements of the photograph. For example, each team member could describe a contribution to the Native American Village. One student might focus on the teepee while another might talk about the fire pit.

Take photographs of objects such as concert tickets, favorite pieces of clothing, or pieces of furniture. Use these photos in the construction of electronic scrapbooks that address specific learning outcomes such as comparing past to present or writing autobiographies.

Artwork. Take a photograph of a piece of student artwork such as a sculpture, collage, mobile, or painting. Use narration to discuss the steps in creating the artwork, particular areas of ease or difficulty, or describe the materials or approach.

Take a photograph of a piece of professional artwork. Use narration to discuss how the artist may have created the work, critique the piece, or focus on technique used.

Take a photograph of a piece of artwork that could be used as part of a larger digital project. For example, create a comic book using markers, paints and other traditional media and take photos of individual frames. Add the bubbles and narration in PowerPoint.

Take photographs of events such as skits, shows, experiments, and other activities. Create electronic scrapbooks of the event and narrate the sequence, activities, and key events. Use bubbles on the photos to indicate what people said or may have thought.

Activities

Consider taking photos of events such as demonstrations, sporting events, or speakers. If there's lots of action, you may need to take many photos to get a quality shot. You may even need to "pose" photographs after the event. In other words, have people recreate their action and stop for the photograph.

Take photographs of events such as skits, plays, field trips, and other activities.

Take photographs of humorous happenings such as a young child with ice cream dripping off his face or a group of people trying to pile into a small space.

Take photographs that illustrate the steps in a process, procedure (i.e., how to use equipment), or cycle (i.e., life cycle of plants/animals, rocks, water).

Take photographs of the correct and incorrect approach, technique, or rule application. Be sure not to allow students to participate in dangerous activities particularly in safety projects.

Ideas

Is it possible to take a photograph of an idea? Can you photograph a thought or emotion? Can you express irony, fear, or happiness in a photo? Try it! Many of the most interesting photographs come from careful composition. Other

wonderful visuals happen spontaneously. Be on the lookout for the following situations that make good "idea" photos.

Contrasting Colors. Look for interesting use of colors such as a bright yellow leaf on rocks, a blue bird on a brown field post, or white snow on red rock. Shoot the top of a tree against the blue sky or the reflection of swings off the puddle after a rainstorm.

Unusual Events. Seek out unusual events such as a spring snow on the tulips or a rainbow after a storm.

Frames. Look for opportunities to take photographs through arches or windows; with water, flowers, or rocks in the foreground along the bottom of the frame; or with trees, buildings, or statues along the side of the frame.

Digital Photography Across the Curriculum

Art

Points of View. Take photographs that represent different perspective such as above, below, behind, under, over the shoulder.

Representation. Take photographs of objects that represent colors, shapes, textures, or patterns.

Communication Arts (Reading, Writing)

Autobiographical Writing. Take photographs that represent important people, objects, places, and activities in your life.

Basic Concepts. Take photographs that can be used in illustrating language concepts such as alliteration or idioms. Also use photos to illustrate action words, descriptive words, opposites (short/tall), positions (in/out), and other concepts. Take photos of objects of particular colors and create color word games. Write words that rhyme with the photo.

Cause/Effect Writing. Take photographs that illustrate cause and effect. Then, write about this situation.

Comparison. Take photographs of good/bad, happy/sad, proper/improper, example/nonexample. Then, share the results.

Descriptive Writing. Take photographs that students can describe. Then, create class books.

Dialogue. Take photographs of people interacting. Write dialogue for the photos using "call out" bubbles.

Directions. Take photographs of people completing a procedure. Write about that procedure.

Documentary. Take photographs that can be used in a documentary.

Emotion. Take photographs that represent emotions. Ask students to write about situations where they might empathize with the person in the photograph.

Interview. Take photographs that can be used in an article based on an interview.

Impact. Take photographs before and after an event. Then, write about the impact of that event.

I Spy. Take photographs that can be used in an I Spy book.

Letters. Take photographs of objects that appear to be in the shape of letters of the alphabet. Create an alphabet book.

Narrative Writing. Take photographs for use as writing prompts.

Take photographs that represent beginning, middle, and end of a story. With older students, focus on particular approaches such as the use of climax in a story. The photos help students visualize each aspect of the process.

News Writing. Take photographs to illustrate news stories.

Mystery Writing. Take photographs that can be used as elements in a mystery story.

Perspectives. Take photographs that can be used in writing activities that put yourself in a particular positions. You are an insect, firefighter, or emperor.

Photo Diary. Take a series of photographs related to a single day, weather event, building construction, plant growth, growth of mold, etc.

Sequencing Communications. Take photos that can be used for writing about order, sequence, or storytelling. Take photos that students can use as sequencing cards. Use photos that represent yesterday, today and tomorrow.

Storytelling. Take photographs that represent different aspects of storytelling including plot, setting, characters, action, climax, and conclusion. Then, use the visuals to write about the planning process.

Students at Work. Take photographs of students working on projects. Ask students to write reflections at the end of the day, week, or unit.

Ask students to write about positive social activities and character traits such as sharing, helping, and thanking.

Wordless Books. Take photographs for use in wordless books. Ask students to write their own stories.

Word Books. Take photographs for use in glossaries, ABC books, pictionaries, and other word-based books.

Math

Alternatives. Take photographs showing two ways to solve a problem or illustrate a solution such as coins for making a purchase.

Math Stories. Take photographs and write stories about numbers such as first, second, last.

Math Mysteries. Take photographs to use in solving math problems.

Geometric Shapes. Take photographs of shapes in our world.

Take photographs that represent geometric shapes. Create a visual glossary for terms such as parallel lines, right angles.

Grouping. Take photographs of objects that are grouped together in different ways such as 2s, 3s, or 10s.

Height. Take photographs of students or other growing things that can be tracked throughout the year.

Math Concepts. Take photographs of concepts such as pattern, symmetry, and tessellation.

Scale. Take photographs of students against a brick wall. Or, take a photograph of a student next to a tree or flagpole. Write questions about students related to their relative height. Define units, use ratios and estimation skills. Ask students to solve the problems created by their peers.

Science

Comparisons. Take photographs that compare and contrast two different situations.

Experiment. Take photographs of the steps in a science experiment (i.e., materials, procedures, results). Provide audio narration for each step in the process. What materials and tools were used? Why? What did you do? What did you observe? If teamwork was involved, what were members thinking and doing at different stages of the process?

Labeling. Take photographs and label parts, objects, supplies, and other characteristics.

Observation. Take photographs for observations such as weather, plant growth, or complicated processes.

Process. Take photographs of examples of chains or cycles in science. Can you see the food chain at work in your neighborhood? If you can't take all of the photos you need, you may need to supplement with online resources. For example, if you go to enature.com you can search for plants and animals by Zip code.

Recycling. Take photographs for a recycling project. Show what can and can't be recycled around the school.

Safety Rules. Take photographs to illustrate safety rules (i.e., weather, water, cooking, fire, science).

Scavenger Hunt. Take photographs as part of a scavenger hunt. Look for particular kinds of plants, trees, animals, processes, or cycles.

Physical Education

Take photographs to illustrate the rules of a game, the steps in playing a game, or to demonstrate a procedure.

Social Studies

Career Study. Take photographs of people in particular careers and the locations and objects associated with these careers. Match the careers with the objects and locations.

Construction Projects. Take photographs of a local construction project. Discuss the importance of growth in a community. Take photos regularly from a single location.

Now and Then. Take photographs to contrast historical events to current events or experiences. For example, locate pictures from your area during different time periods and compare them to photos from today. How have the plants changed? How have the structures changed?

Our Community. Take photographs of key places in the community such as schools, stores, hospitals, parks, fire station. Write about each place and it's role in the community.

Our School. Take photographs of people and places around the school. Create a "new student" guide that includes a virtual tour, description and illustrations of school rules such a lunchroom behavior, dress code, etc.

Re-enactments. Take photographs of historical re-enactments.

Signs in Our Community. Take photographs of signs in the community.

School-wide Ideas

Field Trips. Take photos on field trips and create a virtual field trip to share with other classes. It doesn't have to be a long trip. It could be a trip to the lunchroom or a trip to the playground.

Museums. Create your own museum using student photographs. It could be any kind of museum. Create exhibits using the photographs. Consider mixing historic photos with new photos for a community museum project.

Open House. Create slide shows of classroom activities for an open house.

Portfolios. Use photographs of student artifacts in electronic portfolios.

Screensaver. Select a favorite photograph for use on a screensaver.

Yearbooks. Vote on favorite photographs for inclusion in a class or school yearbook.

Digital Collections Project Ideas

You don't always need to create your own photos. Consider using online digital collections. From art to history, there are many collections already available for you and your students to use. Whenever you use resources found on the Internet, be sure to check the copyright issues. If you're going to simply use them in class project, all you need to do is cite the source. However if you plan to use the outside your classroom such as science, history, or media fair projects, be sure to check on whether you need permissions or a specific type of citation.

Photos of People

Photographs of people are useful in many projects.

Culture. Use photos to reflect culture. Compare cultures.

Change. Use photos of people to show changes over time in a person's life. Or to show changes over decades or millennium.

Historical Figures. Consider photos of historical figures in different situations. What might they be doing, thinking, or saying? Use "call-out" bubbles in PowerPoint to show their thoughts or words.

Careers. Use photos of people for projects involving career exploration and real-world applications of classroom learning. For example, how does a mechanic or nurse use math in everyday life?

Digital Photography Techniques

Background. Experiment with different background such as cloth, paper, gravel, or sky. Try unique backgrounds such as wood, book covers, newspapers, or rocks. Create your own backgrounds such as murals. For example, create a habitat such as an ocean floor. Or make what looks like a buffalo skin from butcher-block paper.

Camera Angles -

Looking up makes an object look large and important.

Looking down on objects makes them look small, weak, or less important.

Extreme Close-up. Use close-ups for I SPY type activities. What is this object? How does it relate to the rest of the object? What is the purpose or function?

Use close-ups for activities that involve patterns, parts and wholes, and relationships and functions. How does a car work? Why do animals have particular adaptations? Why do houses have particular types of roofs? Why are lights placed in particular areas of the parking lot? For example, take photos of pinecone seeds, parts of objects such as trees (i.e., leaves, seeds, branches, bark, trunk), automobiles (i.e., wheels, axle, engine, doors, hood, trunk), animals (i.e., eye, head, ear, tail, nose).

Over-the-Shoulder. Use the "over the shoulder" shot for projects involving people making things such as arts and crafts.

Long Shots. Use wide and long shots to provide context.

Editing Digital Photographs

Crop Photos

Why is context important?

How is the story different when the photo is cropped?

What is happening outside the range of the camera?

How can you tell different stories by cropping a photo in different ways?

Modify Photos

Body Shots. Add new clothing. Put yourself in a different background. Place yourself in a historical photograph.

Head Shots. Add a hat or modify your face. Put yourself on a wanted poster.

Animation

Claymation. Create clay objects. Take a series of photographs with small movements. Create animation.

Time-lapse. Take a series of photos from the same location. Put them in PowerPoint and animate.

Off Computer Connections

Art Show. Hold a class art show of your best photography. Vote on pictures in many different categories.

Personal Critique. Take photos and critique your work. Create a checklist for evaluating photos including topics such as lighting, color, depth, clarity, action, point of view, and framing. Share your checklist with someone else and ask for suggestions.

Print Photos. Cut out photos into different shapes such as people, buildings, signs, and trees. Then, glue them to cardboard.

- Add Velcro on magnets to the back of the photos. Make flannel boards or magnet board to tell stories or match words to photos.
- Use the photos in games.
- Put the photos on stick and have puppet shows.

Photograph Fun in Word

Watermark/Washout. Turn your photograph into a “watermark.” Then, put it in the background or behind your text. Try this for assignments that involve placing yourself into the role of an animal or into a particular habitat.

To create a watermark in Word:

Pull down the Insert menu, select Picture, and locate the file.

Right-click the photograph and choose Show Picture Toolbar.

Select the Image Control button (2nd button) and choose Washout.

Select the Text Wrapping (11th button) and choose Behind Text.

You can now type text over the photograph.

Photograph Fun in PowerPoint

Bubbles. Use the “call outs” in PowerPoint to create photograph comics. Choose 2-5 photographs that tell a story. Then add the bubbles. Use the number of photos that match the elements of a story such as beginning, middle, and end.

Who Lives Here?

Download the **Who Lives Here?** PowerPoint project.

Try the slide show. Read the speakernotes.

To add to this project:

Pull down the Insert menu, select New Slide.

Paste a photograph on the blank slide.

Copy and paste the red question mark graphic on top of the object you wish to hide.

Resize the graphic to cover the hidden area.

Pull down the Insert menu, select Duplicate Slide.

Click on the question mark graphic and delete it.

Copy and paste the arrow button.

Add as many "hidden object" slides as you wish.



Create your project on one of the following topics or brainstorm other applications:

Who works here?

Who plays here?

What are they eating?

What is the time of day?

What is the weather?

What is the word?

Brainstorm activities for addressing Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? questions.

Consider connecting this activity to paper and pencil activities.

Create a worksheet showing the objects and asking students to circle what they found.

Choose one of the images and write/draw based on a prompt.

Add your voice on one of the slides.