

PENNSYLVANIA STANDARDS ALIGNED SYSTEM
ART CURRICULUM UNIT

NAME: Melissa Bair

LESSON PLAN CODE: P-11-2

SUBJECT: Photography

GRADE LEVEL/COURSE: 11th Grade

TITLE: *Snap Your Inspiration*

ALIGNMENTS:

ELIGIBLE CONTENT: 9.1.11.A, 9.1.11.C, 9.1.11.E, 9.2.11.D, 9.3.11.A, 9.4.11.A

KEY WORDS: inspiration

VOCABULARY (TIER III):

Carol M. Highsmith: a photographer, author, and publisher who has photographed all 50 of the United States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico for 30 years

Photograph: an image of an object, person, scene, etc, in the form of a print or slide recorded by a camera on photosensitive material

Self Portrait: representation of an artist, drawn, painted, photographed, or sculpted by the artist

Frances Benjamin Johnston: one of America's first prominent female photographers in a field that was dominated by men at the time

Guidelines for Composition: six guidelines, not rules, to enhance the photographs to have the strongest and most interesting compositions (simplicity, rule of thirds, lines, balance, framing, avoiding mergers)

OBJECTIVES: This lesson focuses on the foundation of basic photography skills as well as the use of creativity and inspiration. The students will be able to:

- a. appreciate the aesthetics of photography.
- b. take photographs expressing what inspires him or her.
- c. demonstrate the six basic guidelines for composition in their photography.
- d. research Carol M. Highsmith as an encouragement to create their own inspirational work.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: "How are you inspired to be creative through photography?"

DURATION: about 3 hours (4 class periods)

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MATERIALS:

*Primary Sources: “*Self portrait of photographer Carol M. Highsmith, via a broken mirror that she photographed during the Willard Hotel restoration. Washington, D.C.*”

“*Wigwam Motel, Route 66, Holbrook, Arizona.*”

“*That Trip We All Took Together~It’s As Real TODAY As It Was Last Summer.*”

**Note*: All primary sources are from the Library of Congress. (Copyright free)

Handouts: “Observe, Reflect, Question” analysis tool

Six Guidelines for Composition

Rubric

Students’ personal cameras

Adobe Photoshop on the school computers

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES:

Anticipatory Set:

I will begin this lesson by displaying a primary source by **Carol M. Highsmith**’s titled, “*Self portrait of photographer Carol M. Highsmith, via a broken mirror that she photographed during the Willard Hotel restoration. Washington, D.C..*” This **photograph** is not only unique because it isn’t taken in the ‘senior portrait’ style that high school students are accustomed to, but it signifies Highsmith at the defining moment of her photography career. I will ask the students initially why they feel this photograph is unique and we will briefly discuss a few answers to get their brains flowing. Next, I will each student complete the “Observe, Reflect, Question” analysis tool for the **self portrait** to investigate the photograph at an in-depth level and to introduce Carol M. Highsmith to the class. First, in the ‘observe’ section, the students will take note of what they notice about the photograph and where they believe it was taken. Secondly, they will reflect about the photo by forming hypotheses about the photograph. Lastly, the students will ask questions that will lead to the students reflecting even more about the image. This last step of the students’ questions will allow me to discover what the class is

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curious about when it comes to Highsmith and her self portrait. I will make sure to discuss the students' questions during the lesson.

Study of Highsmith:

After this analysis of Highsmith's self portrait, I will provide the class with a reference sheet of her biography, as I use my Teacher's Guide—Primary Source Set for information. We will discuss her inspiration, **Frances Benjamin Johnston**, one of America's first prominent female photographers in a field that was dominated by men at the time. Highsmith ended up choosing to follow Johnston's footsteps and making her photography footsteps similar. We will go more in depth about her life and her professional photography, publishing, and her great involvement with the Library of Congress.

After this, I will show the students the famous photograph titled, "*Wigwam Motel, Route 66, Holbrook, Arizona.*" I will also show the class a variety of other works by hers from the Carol M. Highsmith Archive presented by the Library of Congress. This will allow the students to understand her body of work, varying from small to huge architecture, whimsical, everyday life, works of Art, and many more.

Photography:

The students will look at the six **Guidelines for Composition**. These should be treated as guidelines, not rules, to enhance the photographs to have the strongest and most interesting compositions. These consist of: simplicity, rule of thirds, lines, balance, framing, and avoiding mergers. We will discuss how these six guidelines impact photographs. We will compare and contrast between photographs that use the guidelines and do not use them to see the difference.

Closure using Primary Source Text:

The class will next review the "*That Trip We All Took Together~It's As Real TODAY As It Was Last Summer.*" advertising article. We will discuss the impact the photographs truly have on so many people and how Carol M. Highsmith's photographs have impacted countless people across the world. Her copyright free donation of her 15,949 images to the Library of Congress has allowed people worldwide to access her archive.

Assignment:

I will then discuss with the students how their project is to find what inspires them. Just as Carol M. Highsmith was so inspired by Frances Benjamin Johnston, my students will need to

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decide what their creative inspiration is. To do this, I will have the students brainstorm 3 ideas of subject matters that they will choose to photograph. For the assignment, they will need to take a minimum of 5 photos of each scene. This is to ensure they get the correct Guidelines for Composition in their photos. The 15 photos will need to be in the students' individual online folder so I can see that they took them. Lastly, the students will choose the best photograph of each scene (3 photos) to print and submit. The last 3 photos need to be edited on Photoshop, which we have covered how to create contrast, fix the curves of the photo and more.

SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES:

- W: At the end of this lesson, my photography students will be able to understand and express the six Guidelines for Composition through photography, as well as be knowledgeable of Carol M. Highsmith and her inspiration, Frances Benjamin Johnston. They will see the impact that the Guidelines for Composition have on photography and how important they are to great photographs.
- H: I will maintain my students' interest throughout the lesson by constantly keeping them involved and listening to their feedback. They will be doing a personal project, which will also keep them interested greatly.
- E: Students will have the opportunity to express themselves through photography and show what it is that makes them creatively inspired.
- R: The students will brainstorm and *reflect* on their own personal inspirations, as well as the Guidelines for Composition. They will *revisit* their photographs that they shot to analyze which one is the best and they will *revise* or edit the best photograph out of the 15. The students will *rethink* the Guidelines for Composition to ensure that their photographs are as effective as possible.
- E: The students will express their understanding of the Guidelines by displaying them through their photographs. They will use the rubric in the "Student Column" to self evaluate. However, my final teacher evaluation is the grade that counts.
- T: I can easily adapt this lesson to every learner in my class. For the less proficient learners, I will have them only photograph 1 or 2 scenes, rather than 3. For the advanced learners, I will have them photograph 5 scenes, rather than 3.

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O: This lesson progresses in sequential order. It begins with the analysis of her self portrait with the students doing some work independently and the class reviewing it. After the class discussion of her work and article analysis, the students eventually will take the photographs using the Guidelines.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT: CHARACTER PROFILES

- The students will complete the “Observe, Reflect, Question” analysis tool worksheet and this will count towards the overall project’s completion points.
- The students will be graded on the use of the Guides for Composition in their required number of photographs.

RELATED RESOURCES:

Carol M. Highsmith Teacher’s Guide—Primary Source Set

Carol M. Highsmith Bibliographic Organizer

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SNAP YOUR INSPIRATION


CATEGORY	4	3	2	1	SELF EVALUATE	ACTUAL SCORE
CREATIVITY/ USE OF INSPIRATION	Student used creativity to the fullest and showed originality in scene.	The student's creativity and inspiration is apparent in work.	Little evidence of creativity or inspiration is present.	Student has shown minimal attempt of creativity or inspiration.		
“OBSERVE, REFLECT, QUESTION” ANALYSIS TOOL WORKSHEET	Student participated greatly. Much time and effort went into the activity.	Some participation; however, more effort could have been put forth.	Student did not participate, but completed work in class. Little effort visible.	Student did not participate. Worksheet not completed. Little or no effort.		
MINIMUM OF <u>15</u> PHOTOS IN ONLINE FOLDER (OF 3 DIFFERENT SCENES)	At least 15 photos or more are in the online folder. There are 3 diverse scenes.	15 photos are in the online folder. There are 3 diverse scenes.	10-15 photos are in the online folder. There are only 1-2 scenes.	5-10 photos are in the online folder. There are only 1-2 scenes.		
3 <u>BEST</u> PHOTOS EDITED ON PHOTOSHOP	Wonderful choice of the 3 best photos. Excellent use of Photoshop.	Great choice of the 3 best photos. Good use of Photoshop.	Satisfactory choice of the 3 best photos. Acceptable use of Photoshop.	Unsatisfactory choice of the 3 best photos. Poor use of Photoshop.		
INCORPORATION OF 6 “GUIDELINES FOR COMPOSITION”	All of the 6 Guidelines are included in the 15 photos photographed.	5-6 of the Guidelines are included in the 15 photos photographed.	3-4 of the Guidelines are included in the 15 photos photographed.	1-2 of the 6 Guidelines are included in the 15 photos photographed.		
TOTAL SCORE					/20	/20

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS/TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES

PRIMARY SOURCE BIBLIOGRAPHIC ORGANIZER (FINAL) – Online Course Session 4 Activity

Name: Melissa Bair

Thumbnail Image of Primary Source	Collection Title Primary Source Title with MLA Citation	LOC PERMANENT URL DIGITAL ID	Annotation – Instructional Use
	<p>Carol M. Highsmith Archive</p> <p>Self portrait of photographer Carol M. Highsmith, via a broken mirror that she photographed during the Willard Hotel restoration. Washington, D.C..</p> <p>HighSmith, Carol M. Library of Congress. <i>Self portrait of photographer Carol M. Highsmith, via a broken mirror that she photographed during the Willard Hotel restoration. Washington, D.C..</i> Washington, D.C: Library of Congress, 1980's. Web. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/highsm.16608>.</p>	<p>http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/highsm.16608</p>	<p>Carol M. Highsmith's self portrait would be a great introduction to this lesson because of the uniqueness of the photograph. The students at first could use the "Observe, Reflect, Question" method on the self portrait to see what they notice about the photograph and where they believe it was taken. Secondly, they would reflect about the photo by forming hypotheses about the photograph. Lastly, the students would ask questions that will lead to the students reflecting even more about the image.</p>

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	<p>Carol M. Highsmith Archive</p> <p>Wigwam Motel, Route 66, Holbrook, Arizona.</p> <p>HighSmith, Carol M. Library of Congress. <i>Wigwam Motel, Route 66, Holbrook, Arizona</i>. Washington, D.C: Library of Congress, 2006. Web. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/highsm.04005>.</p>	<p>http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/highsm.04005</p>	<p>This photograph was taken along Route 66 and I can show my students this and explain that it was one taken on her long journey along the U.S.'s main highway that she traveled along to photograph. This image alone of a Wigwam Motel in Arizona captures the diversity that Highsmith experienced. The students need to be aware of this variety in not only the world, but also within our country.</p>
	<p>Emergence of Advertising in America: 1850-1920</p> <p>That Trip We All Took Together~It's As Real TODAY As It Was Last Summer.</p> <p>Library of Congress. <i>That Trip We All Took Together~It's As Real TODAY As It Was Last Summer</i>. Durham: Eastman Kodak Co., 1921. Web. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.award/ncdeaa.K0364>.</p>	<p>http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.award/ncdeaa.K0364</p>	<p><i>This advertising article is a very timeless piece of text when it comes to the mood that a photograph captures and it doesn't matter that it was written around 100 years ago or more. The text that ages this article is the types of cameras that they made at the time: the Brownie, which is an Eastman camera for a sheer \$2 and Kodak cameras for \$5. I will use this text to close my photography lesson. It will enable my students to see the impact that photographs have had in the past and still do in capturing moments. We will discuss this as a class together.</i></p>



Self portrait of photographer Carol M. Highsmith, via a broken mirror that she photographed during the Willard Hotel restoration. Washington, D.C.
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/highsm.16608>

CAROL M. HIGHSMITH: “AMERICA’S PHOTOGRAPHER”

Carol M. Highsmith has not only been photographing the American scene for the last twenty-five years, she has been an author and publisher as well. Highsmith was born May 18, 1946 and has followed her true passion of photography by traveling all of the fifty states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia for thirty years. Her artistic specialty resides in photographing architecture. This subject matter is evident through her books as well, most of which are published by Random House Publishing.

Historical Background

Johnston, Her Inspiration

Frances Benjamin Johnston was an enormous inspiration in Highsmith’s life. Johnston, born in 1864, was one of America’s first prominent female photographers in a field that was dominated by men. Through her mother’s connections with the nation’s capital, Johnston had many opportunities for extensive photo studies in the Willard Hotel, also known as the “Hotel of Presidents” for the White House during five presidential administrations. One day, Johnston graciously left all of these images to the Library of Congress.

Ironically, Carol M. Highsmith was going to the Willard Hotel, where Johnston first photographed, for a school photography project. However, the difference was that at this time, the hotel was closed and decaying. It wasn’t until after this class project that Highsmith learned of Johnston’s significance on photography. Highsmith then decided to follow in her footsteps and make her own mark on the photography world.

“A photograph by Carol Highsmith is a document of rare precision and beauty, revealing with exacting clarity the look and feel of people and places across our great nation.”

~ Dr. Jeremy E. A. Adamson, Director at the Library of Congress

Professional Photography

Carol M. Highsmith began her career by photographing architecture, both interior and exterior. Both her and her husband, a writer, would travel from state to state and work on the Random House “Photographic Tour,” which is a book series. She would photograph everyday life and sites, while he wrote of their visits. Her focus was traveling to every state in the country for thirty years and photographing a variety of subjects, such as architecture, Americans both at work and play, whimsical scenes, natural landscapes, sculptures, and Civil War battlefields.

Due to photographing the American scene for over twenty-five years, she has been named “America’s Photographer,” as well as called one of the most generous artists of our time. This is because she has followed in Frances Benjamin Johnston’s footsteps and made one of the greatest donations in the history of the Library of Congress. She donated all of her photographs and is one of the six featured collections in the Library of Congress in the Prints and Photographs Division.

Library of Congress

There are fourteen million images in the Library of Congress’s collection. Currently, in Highsmith’s archive, there are 15,949 images. These images feature both black and white, as well as color photographs, all available copyright free; however, this number is constantly increasing. Her archive is anticipating more than 100,000 photographs covering her travels of the United States. Not all of Highsmith’s photographs began digitally; therefore, the images on film needed scanned to become digital before the Library of Congress could acquire them. In 2009, the Library of Congress obtained her 21st Century “born digital” collection, which is projected to be the largest photographic born digital collection they have ever received. Also, she has a collection titled “Disappearing America,” featuring 200 images alongside all of U.S. Route 66, from Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, and Oklahoma. The Library of Congress is fortunate to have such a distinguished photographer composing such an immense part of its collection.



Publishing

“A photograph by Carol Highsmith is a document of rare precision and beauty, revealing with exacting clarity the look and feel of people and places across our great nation.”

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Carol M. Highsmith has both photographed and published six books focusing on topics like Pennsylvania Avenue, the enormous reconstruction of the Union Station in Washington D.C., the historic architecture of Pennsylvania, the Library of Congress, and one book called *America Restored*, featuring two extreme restoration projects in each state. She even has a book titled, *World Trade Center: Tribute and Remembrance*, featuring her photographs from the September 11th attack, including photographs of the Twin Towers that she took two months prior to the attack. The majority of Highsmith's work has been published by Random House Publishing; however, Highsmith is the president of Chelsea Publishing, Inc. and they have also published four of her books. Also, Highsmith's photography has been featured in over fifty coffee-table books and sold more than 1.5 million copies nationwide. In addition to her own books, Highsmith's work has been featured in *The Washington Post Magazine*, *Life Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *Smithsonian*, *Architecture*, and many other national publications.



<http://nsl.loc.gov/loc.award/ncaeea.K0364>

Accomplishments

Carol M. Highsmith has had many great milestones in her professional photography career. In 2002, her photograph of the Jefferson Memorial was chosen by the U.S. Postal Service to be one of the Priority Mail stamps; one hundred million stamps were produced. Highsmith has been commissioned by the General Services Administration for many years to photograph many federal buildings throughout the nation. She was awarded for her work in 2009 for a book titled, *Art in Architecture*, which was created for the GSA. She was also one of four women on the Library of Congress's Women's History Month in April of 2009. She received a \$20,000 USE Fellowship National Endowment for the Arts grant for her foremost book, *America Restored*. There are many other key highlights in her career that she has experienced since she began, for publishing and especially for her passion, photography.

Additional Resources

Highsmith (Carol M.) Archive

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/highsm/>

Carol M. Highsmith's Personal Website

<http://www.carolhighsmithamerica.com/>

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~ Dr. Jeremy E. A. Adamson, Director at the Library of Congress

Carol M. Highsmith Biography

http://www.carolhighsmithamerica.com/data/web/Highsmith_Bio_2012.pdf

Carol M. Highsmith Interview: Famed Photojournalist Documents America for the Library of Congress

<http://smashinginterviews.com/interviews/photographers/carol-m-highsmith-interview-famed-photojournalist-documents-america-for-the-library-of-congress>

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