

A level Photography Induction Assignment



How would you capture life over your summer holiday?

We see photographs of people, events and places every day in the media. But what do these images actually tell us? Are they accurate representations of the people and places they show? Or have they been carefully composed to convey a message about their work? How can photography create images that capture reality and tell things as they are?

Your challenge is to create a photographic image that captures your life over the summer holiday – as it really is!

There are four tasks to pursue and document as part of your summer assignment:

Task 1: Analyse photographs (Induction lesson June)

Task 2: Explore digital manipulation and photographic techniques

Task 3: Find out how photographers are inspired

Task 4: Research and create your photograph

You should document your work in a journal and/or on separate boards. We are looking for a well presented assignment supported by good research and responses.

Task 1. lesson activity

Looking at the five images below, what types of photographs are they? Use some of the key words provided to help describe the photographs.

'Kate' by Chuck Close

'Francis the mute' by Storm Thorgeson

Don McCullin's 'Shell shocked soldier'

Martin Parr's 'The Last Resort'

Annie Leibevitz 'Lady Gaga'

Where might you see photographs like these?

What is the purpose of the photograph?

Why was it taken?

Can you think of any other types of photograph?

Exploring the photographs above, begin to analyse these photographs in brief by using the questions provided.

What are your first impressions? How would you describe the photographs? Where might you see photographs like these? Do you think the people in the photographs look posed or natural? How has the purpose of the photograph (what it was made for) affected how it looks?

Choose one of the photographs and begin to explore the photographer's aim and intentions.

What sort of image do you think he/she was trying to create? How do they want us to respond to the work?

How has the photographer used composition, the angle from which the photograph has been taken and the pose of the figures to create the effect of the image?

Has the photographer made use of colour, lighting or any other techniques in creating the effect of the image?

Task 2.

You have looked at how photographs are used to capture or record events or people. But can we always trust the photographs we see?

Can you think of any photographs you might see every day that could have been digitally manipulated? Use the image suggestions below to explore three digitally altered photographs.

Andreas Gursky 'Chicago Board of Trade'
Pedro Meyer 'Five dollars with Che'
Jeff Wall 'A sudden gust of wind'

For each image-

How has the image been altered?

Is it obvious that the image has been altered?

Why do you think the artist has changed the image?

What is the effect of the manipulation? Do you think the photograph is interesting? How does the photograph make you think or feel?

Digital manipulation is not the only way a photograph can be altered. Artists often experiment with photographic techniques to create mood or atmosphere.

Look at the photograph by artist Catherine Yass, 'Corridor'. What sort of atmosphere does the photograph have? How does it make you feel?

Exploring the images below investigate the experimental techniques and processes.

What sort of mood or atmosphere do the photographs have?

What techniques have the artists used?

Do you think the effects make the photographs more powerful?

If you wanted to create a dramatic photograph or a spooky-looking image can you think of any techniques or approaches you could try?

Steven Pippin 'self-portrait made using a house converted into a pinhole camera'

Fischli and Weiss 'flowers, mushrooms'

Agnus McBean 'Agnus McBean'

Ilse Bing 'Silhouettes, Avenue du Maine, Paris'

Task 3.

Photographs can be used to sell products, record people, events and memories, and provide information. Photography can also be a very powerful tool for putting across your ideas and making your voice heard.

Using the search preferences below watch the interviews with the three photographers. Find out what inspires them, and how they have used photograph to express their ideas and concerns.

Tate Gallery search - Fazal Sheikh, Martin Parr and Rineke Dijkstra 'cruel and tender' exhibition

How could you use photography in your challenge?

Choose one photographer to write a short paragraph about the photographer's work. Describe what it is they are trying to put across, and why you like their work.

Task 4.

You have explored why photographers are taking and how photographers create the effects that they want. You have also discovered how powerful tool photography can be.

Now start thinking about your challenge, to take a photograph that captures your summer holiday. Choose one theme from either Portraits or A slice of life as your theme to pursue. Only choose one of the themes.

Portraits.

Lots of individuals in different roles make your life what it is and give it its unique character: family members, friends, neighbors etc.

Who are you going to photograph?

Portraits capture the character, role and interests of people. They can be of groups or individuals. They can be formal or casual. They might concentrate on someone's looks or include clues about a person's character, role or interests.

Explore the three portraits below.

'Kate Moss' (2006) by Corine Day, Gordon Brown by Fergus Greer, Chris Ofili (1998) by Gautier Deblonde

Which is the most formal? Which is the most casual? Do any of the portraits include clues to suggest something about the person's background interests of character? What do you think is the purpose of each portrait? To show us what someone lookalike? To promote or advertise? To capture a mood or emotion?

Photographing groups.

Explore the work of the artist below answering questions as you go. This will help you get ideas for your photograph.

Thomas Struth, Steve Speller, Toby Glanville

What group portraits have you been in? Family? Friends? Class? Sports Team? Can you think of any other situations when a group portrait is taken? In what ways are group portraits different from portraits of individuals? What do you think are the challenges of taking a group photograph rather than one of an individual?

Portraits are used to capture what people look like, and often reflect their character and interests.

Portraits can also be used to create a mood or convey an emotion. Exploring one of the images/artists suggested below, begin to explore the work using the following questions.

Sarah Lucas 'Self Portrait with mug of tea', Johnnie Shad Kydd 'Gillain Wearing', Cindy Sherman 'untitled'

What does the portrait make you feel? How has the photographer created the feel, mood or atmosphere of the work? How have they used the pose of the sitter, the composition of the image and angle and distance from which they have taken the photograph? How have they used contrast, colour and other technical approaches such as focus? What effect do these techniques have? Note your own ideas as you develop an outcome.

Find a number of portraits that are inspiring you from the links below or any other sources you might use and develop your own final photograph.

Save your final image as a digital image if you can as we will print this out A3 in size when you return in September.

Slice of Life.

"Being in the right place at the right time with a great story is more important than being technically brilliant..."
Johnnie Shad Kydd

What happens in your day to day life? What was particularly special about this summer? If you wanted to take a documentary style photograph that captures your life, what would you choose?

Exploring the images below, describe what you think is happening in the photograph. Does the photograph capture ordinary daily life or record a special event? What does it make you feel? Is it funny? Sad? Exciting? Mysterious?

Nan Golding 'Misty and Joey at Hornstrasse', Lee Friedlander 'Salinas, California', Roger Mayne 'Snowballs, East End' Richard Billingham 'Ray's a Laugh'

Explore the following documentary photographs and then using the questions below, begin to analyse them.

Some of the photographs record ordinary, everyday life. Others capture glamorous, special occasions. Some are full of life and movement, managing to capture a moment in time. Others are calm and meditative.

Choose ONE photograph. What does the photograph show? What do you like about it? Does it give you any ideas for your own photograph? Record any ideas and notes alongside your presentation of work.

Life is not always straight forward and easy to understand. Photographs that document life do not have to be straight forward either. They can be ambiguous and mysterious.

Explore the images suggested below and present these and others that may be inspiring you.

Cindy Sherman 'Film Still', Christopher Stewart 'Photograph (2002)', Tracey Moffatt 'from up in the sky'

What is going on in the photographs you have selected? What do they make you feel? Do they remind you of anything? How have the photographers created a sense of mystery? Note any techniques or approaches that you find interesting and might be able to use to add an air of mystery to your photograph.

What aspect of your summer holiday are you keen to photograph? How are you going to create the effect that you want?

You should have lots of ideas for your own photograph. It is time to grab your camera and get started. Take plenty of photographs so you have choices when it comes to presentation

Will others understand why you have selected the photograph you have presented?

Overleaf you can find an analysis sheet to help add to your annotations. Remember to document your decision making and the answers to the questions posed above.

Your preparation work should document and explain your decision making and findings.

You can present this work in a journal (sketchbook) or on separate sheets.

Presentation is essential in providing evidence for your teachers to assess your skills and progress. It is vital that work is completed first and then you consider how you might present.

Any questions can be posed using the details below

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@monkswalkart - Twitter

PLEASE COMMUNICATE VIA YOUR SCHOOL E-MAIL. PERSONAL E-MAILS WILL FAIL TO RECEIVE A RESPONSE.

PLEASE ASK THE DEPARTMENT ABOUT SETTING UP A SEPARATE SCHOOL TWITTER ACCOUNT.

Deadline- First lesson of your first full week back (Week beginning 8th Sept)