



PROJECT 1: PICTURE STORY

The end product of this project is a picture story with nine to 12 photographs, a caption for each photo, and a written story that enhances the images.

A picture story relates a narrative about a person, event, situation, process, etc. Instead of a news story, a better analog is the short story. The conventions of the picture story include

- **establishing shots** that set the scene
- **portraits** that characterize the protagonist
- **action and interaction** photographs that convey plot and climax
- and **close-ups** that relate symbolic details.

SUGGESTED PROCESS

1. Photograph a picture story that conveys a narrative. Your photos should include the four conventions noted above and discussed in lecture.
2. Using Bridge and Photoshop, edit, sequence, crop and correct your photographs.
3. In Word, write a story that enhances your photographs. Also write captions for each photograph.
4. Using WordPress, post your story—photos (as a photo gallery), captions, text and headline—to the C226 website page.
5. Take a self-portrait and write a brief autobiography. Add them to the same website.
6. In a reflection essay of about two pages, discuss your learning process and analyze your product.

SUPPORT / RESOURCES

I want you to think of this assignment as a learning experience—not a test. If you are having trouble with the assignment's conceptual, photographic or technological dimensions, please seek help from me. I want to work with you to help you create the best project you can achieve.

Although this assignment is complex and ambitious, you should not feel daunted by it. The lectures and creative exercises will prepare you to create a project you will feel proud to show to friends and prospective employers.

SUGGESTIONS / EXPECTATIONS

1. The best thing you can do to improve your project is to *find a good subject* for your story. It should be a real person engaged in an interesting activity. Because of current restrictions, it is perfectly fine for this class to use a family member or roommate as your focus — look to create an engaging profile of this person.

Be a reporter. Find out what your subject does, when and where. Capture action. Setting up or posing a subject is unethical in photojournalism, and produces dull, static pictures.

2. Most amateurs shoot one frame per subject. We want you to begin to think and work like professionals, shooting numerous frames of every situation. Work the situation by varying your camera angle and distance, capturing different expressions, gestures and body language, staying with the action as it unfolds. *Give yourself numerous shots* to choose from to tell your story.

3. Be sure to take *all three kinds of portraits*:

a) Tight close-ups where a face fills the frame and the expression reveals the person's character.

b) Frames from about waist-up that combine expression, gesture and body language.

c) Environmental portraits that add setting.

4. *If possible, use the camera controls* to get frozen action, blurred motion, shallow and deep depth of field.

5. *Add plot* with action and interaction shots. *Add story-telling details* with close-ups.



REFLECTION ESSAY

The fastest way to improve your skills in any new endeavor is to develop the habit of self criticism. That is, to reflect on what you were trying to accomplish, how well you succeeded, what you did right that you can build on the next time and what needs to be corrected.

To help you develop this, I want you to write a self-reflection of your project. Identify its pluses and minuses. Use the concepts and vocabulary you learned in class to articulate your emotional, intellectual and aesthetic reactions to your own photos. Tell us about problems you encountered, ask questions, vent frustrations.

Especially discuss your learning process. Tell me what risks you took, what you taught yourself, what you want to try the next time you photograph, how the experience felt. Describe what you want us to know about your project that I may not get by just looking it.

Write clearly. Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation. In order to be thorough, our self-reflection should be about two pages, but we encourage more.

There is no minimum or maximum in terms of number of words — but look to fully describe your learning and self-analysis through this essay.

GRADING CRITERIA

Did you fulfill the assignment by photographing a visual narrative and by writing a story, headline and captions that effectively support the photos? Does your story have substantive content? Did

THE DETAILS

How to submit: The project and your reflection are due on the same day, but will be submitted in different ways and at different times. You will post your Picture Story on the C226 website by the deadline. Your self-reflection essay is due on Canvas at 11:59PM following the project deadline.

DEADLINES

Post: 10:30AM, Tuesday, Oct. 5

Reflection: 11:59PM the same day

you upload it to our website by the deadline? The full grading rubric for this project can be seen on Canvas and on the next page in this handout. Your project will be scored in the following five areas:

- 1. Visual storytelling:** Overall quality of your project, including choice of subject matter in your images and editing;
- 2. Aesthetics:** Your creativity and ability to successfully compose your images;
- 3. Technical skills:** Does your project demonstrate mastery of the technical skills taught in this unit, including the use of your camera and Bridge, Photoshop and WordPress?
- 4. Verbal content:** Are your story and captions written in lively English with correct grammar, spelling, punctuation and usage? Does your essay honestly and thoroughly evaluate your project and your learning process?

See the next page for the full rubric.



GRADING RUBRIC FOR PICTURE STORY

VISUAL STORYTELLING: 25 points

- Choice of images reflects the conventions of the picture story, with examples of all four: portraits, action, establishing shots and close-up details;
- Quality of pacing of the sequencing in the gallery;
- Subject matter of the photographs must be interesting and compelling;
- Visual focus should (in most cases) be on people — a CCC (Central Compelling Character) is usually necessary to create reader interest in the story;
- Variety of images — repetition of similar subject matter must be avoided.

AESTHETICS: 25 points

- The creativity of images, including inventive camera angles and camera controls and creative use of lighting;
- Composition of the shots, employing the principles of design (BEERPUV) as well as the appropriate use of rule of thirds, internal framing, etc., to create compelling visuals;
- Appropriate and inventive cropping that focuses the content.

TECHNICAL: 25 points

- Images must be properly focused and well-exposed;
- Images must be tonally balanced;
- Project must be successfully uploaded as a gallery to the C226 website.

VERBAL (story, captions and reflection): 25 points

- Quality of the story as posted on the site, with a strong lede, good structure, flowing writing and direct quotes (two at least);
- Captions should be informative, well-written and carry the sequence along in a logical manner;
- Captions should include necessary information about the subject matter, especially the names of people;
- Quality and inventiveness of the headline as an attention-getting introduction;
- Analysis should be thorough and thoughtful, and honestly evaluate your project and your learning process, identifying ways to improve;
- Analysis should explain your creative decisions, including your subject matter, use of creative shots, choice of sequencing, etc.
- Written in clear, correct English (grammar, spelling and punctuation).