FREE TEACHING RESOURCE / 6–8 / 30

Beyond the Postcard

TEACHER GUIDE • lesson design & facilitation

Grade band: 6–8 | 5–7 sessions, 45–60 minutes

Media: drawing, print, collage or approved digital media

The artistic problem

Reframe a stereotypical image of Louisiana through an evidence-based alternative.

Essential question: Whose stories disappear when one picture represents a place?

Place-based cultural lens: Contrast tourism imagery with resident archives and everyday art of New Orleans.

Learning targets

- Investigate the question: Whose stories disappear when one picture represents a place?
- Apply cropping, juxtaposition, captioning, editorial layout in a deliberate original composition.
- Use critique evidence to improve cropping and name one next step.

Student-visible success criteria

- The final artwork solves this problem: Reframe a stereotypical image of Louisiana through an evidence-based alternative.
- Artwork includes an identified omission, three alternate compositions, and a source-aware final image.
- Process evidence shows three different options before selection.
- Visual decisions demonstrate cropping and support the intended audience.
- Feedback results in at least one visible revision that the student can explain.

Standards & studio habits

Louisiana 5–8 cluster: VA-CE-M1, VA-CE-M3, VA-CE-M5, VA-AP-M1

Studio Habits of Mind: Observe, Envision, Engage & Persist, Reflect, Understand Art Worlds. These habits are developed interactively, not in a fixed rank or sequence.

Instructional alignment: Louisiana benchmark codes are official broad grade-cluster benchmarks; specific expectations are developed locally. The ten instructional stages come from the supplied Artistic Investigations framework.

Preparation & materials

- Drawing paper or sketchbook for idea studies
- drawing, print, collage or approved digital media
- Samples and images from reliable sources, with attribution
- Tools appropriate to local safety rules and grade level
- Choice of visual, oral, or written reflection tools

10-stage teaching sequence

01 / Engage Present the artistic question: Whose stories disappear when one picture represents a place? Give students two contrasting examples that do not dictate a finished product.

02 / Investigate Contrast tourism imagery with resident archives and everyday art of New Orleans. Gather visual evidence and note what is observed rather than assumed.

03 / Skill Studio Demonstrate cropping, juxtaposition, captioning, editorial layout. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates.

04 / Generate Develop three possibilities for the challenge: Reframe a stereotypical image of Louisiana through an evidence-based alternative. Change the focal point, material, arrangement or viewer perspective between drafts.

05 / Plan Compare sketches to the success check (an identified omission, three alternate compositions, and a source-aware final image); choose a direction and state why it better communicates the intention.

06 / Produce Produce an original visual response using cropping, juxtaposition, captioning, editorial layout; conference on one technical choice and one contextual question.

07 / Critique Partners identify where the artwork communicates the intended idea and locate evidence of cropping in the work.

08 / Revise Revisit the specific checkpoint: An identified omission, three alternate compositions, and a source-aware final image. Make one visible change after critique and preserve the initial view for comparison.

09 / Present Present with a title, medium, one key artistic decision and any needed credit or contextual limitation.

10 / Reflect Reflect: What evidence proves you improved cropping? What will you try or investigate next?

Studio sessions & evidence checkpoints

Session	Teaching move	Capture evidence
Day 1	**Frame the question** Whose stories disappear when one picture represents a place?; Contrast tourism imagery with resident archives and everyday art of New Orleans.	Evidence/interpretation log.
Day 2	**Studio technique** Demonstrate cropping, juxtaposition, captioning, editorial layout. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates.	Practice sheet with labels about choices.
Day 3	**Generate + commit** Sketch three meaningfully different outcomes.	Three proposals and criteria-based choice.
Day 4–5	**Sustained production** Build the work and conference about cropping.	Process photos and source annotations.
Day 6	**Interpret + revise** Peer feedback related to An identified omission, three alternate compositions, and a source-aware final image.	Annotated first and revised states.
Day 7	**Present + reflect** Curate the work with evidence and ethical source credits.	Final artifact, rubric and next-step statement.

Key technique to model

cropping, juxtaposition, captioning, editorial layout

Access without lowering the artistic goal

Invite rural, suburban, coastal, immigrant, Black, Indigenous, and other perspectives on place. Offer physical samples, captioned images, accessible demonstrations, flexible planning modes, and alternate materials while retaining the common visual learning target.

Teacher coaching questions

- What is the visual problem you are solving?
- Which decision communicates your intended meaning most clearly?
- What does your reference prove, and what are you still imagining?
- What could a viewer misunderstand?
- What visible revision will strengthen your next version?

Cultural care

No student must act as a spokesperson for an identity group.

Stretch & explore

Build a two-page editorial spread with source captions.

Design provenance: Original Studio Fieldnotes investigation developed for the 50-lesson library; informed by the teacher-supplied ten-stage Artistic Investigations architecture and reflective Studio Habits framework.