Dorothea Lange | Teacher Guide

Women Artists Studio • Lesson 033 • Grades K–2 • photo ethics • 3–5 sessions

Essential inquiry

How can we explore documentary photography and ethics through photo ethics and communicate an original idea?

Cultural or technical context

documentary photography and ethics. Research each named artist through credible collection or museum sources. Respect living artists, cultural ownership and attribution. Do not substitute copying a signature style for analysis.

Learning targets

Students will demonstrate photo ethics; research the relevant context; create an original artifact or composition; justify at least one change after critique.

Materials and preparation

Artist images shown with credits, pencils, paper and media appropriate to photo ethics; provide accessible, lower-cost substitutions.

Differentiation

Teacher models a short sample; students select from two materials, use pictures or oral reflection, and work in 10-minute cycles.

Extension beyond Grade 12

Advanced learners may deepen their research, technique and documentation while keeping the same core inquiry.

Ten-step teaching sequence

01. Notice two contrasting examples or observations associated with documentary photography and ethics; name one uncertainty.
02. Investigate who made or uses the source material and what context must be represented accurately.
03. Complete two low-stakes trials of photo ethics; label what changed between trials.
04. Sketch three independent approaches to the question: documentary photography and ethics.
05. Select one approach; plan materials, ethical citation, composition and success criteria.
06. Plan a photograph with informed consent and contextual caption. Record one decision that differs from the first sketch.
07. Give peer feedback using one visible detail and one clarifying question.
08. Revise at least one element based on evidence; photograph or annotate the change.
09. Present artwork with an artist statement, source credit and medium information.
10. Explain how the technique and concept developed, plus one next studio goal.

Discussion prompts

01. What evidence tells you something important about documentary photography and ethics?
02. How does photo ethics change the meaning of the result?
03. Which source is being credited, and whose voice is missing?
04. What feedback prompted a visible or audible revision?

Formative assessment

At entry: one baseline observation. During: two skill trials and a peer critique. Exit: final result, revision evidence and source credit.

Safety and accessibility

Provide accessible participation roles, sensory accommodations and clear consent for any recordings or images.

Reference and standards note

https://nmwa.org/art/artists/
https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection
Align locally with current grade-level arts standards; do not treat this resource as a verified Louisiana standards crosswalk.

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