Finding Nature

Inspired by the project **Waterkeeper Warriors**, presented by Waterkeeper Alliance in partnership with Culture Trip at Photoville from September 12-22, 2019

Students will define and make personal connections to the environment around them through photography. They will identify the issues important to them, and through research and storytelling, they will present solutions-driven journalism about their topic.

Photo by Mark Schäfer

Featuring various stories by Culture Trip Contributing Photographers

Authors: Judith Ryan, Michelle Koza, April Saul, Darius Richards , Robin Nagle, Ruth Ebel, Casi (kc) Callaway

Facilitator/Editor: Jasmin Chang

Grade Level: 9th - 12th grade

Subjects: Photography, English Language Arts, Science, History

Time Required: 7 sessions

Key Images:
Waterkeeper Warrior portraits

Materials Needed:
- Disposable cameras or cell phones
- Computers for research
- Worksheet: Nature Scavenger Hunt

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Students will be able to:

- Raise awareness of nature and their environment through photography
- Define how they are impacted by nature.
- Define challenges and solutions to the environmental issues they have identified.

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SESSION 1: Discussion

1. Define nature vs. environment.
2. Where do you find nature in your daily life?
   - If you live in the city, where do you find nature around you?
   - Is it under the streets? Is it in the parks? Is there a little nature? Is there a lot?

Use this discussion to gauge and expand students awareness of nature.

SESSION 2: Nature Scavenger Hunt

1. Task your students to spend a week photographing nature around them. Think about how they define nature. Think outside of the box.
2. Provide them the Nature Scavenger Hunt worksheet, where they will be asked to photograph nature in as many situations as possible.
   - A low place, A high place, Inside, Outside, In motion, Manmade, Wild, Vibrant, Decomposing, Growing, Shrinking, Big, Small, The color blue, The color green, The color yellow, Shiny, plus any other suggestions

3. Have students select their favorite image, mark it and submit it to you.

SESSION 3: Excavating your Photo

1. Using the students' favorite photos, conduct a Visual Thinking Strategies discussion on their photo.
   - What's going on in this picture?
   - What do you see that makes you say that?
   - What more can we find?

Additional Resources:

- United Photo Industries' Educator Resources
- Project Drawdown
- Solutions Journalism Network
- Vik Muniz, Wasteland
- Google Earth historical maps
- Muddy Water Watch (monitors water near construction projects)
- National Geographic (iceberg vs. plastic bag)
- Welikia project (Manhattan map from 1609 to now)

Standards Addressed:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.7
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.9-10.7
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.9-10.8
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.9-10.9
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.2.B

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During this discussion, bring out the negatives, positives, feedback from their peers.

2. Ask student photographer to take notes during the VTS discussion. They should resist the urge to correct their peers about what's going on in the picture. Instead jot down notes about different perspectives about what's going on in the picture.

3. **Individual exercise:** Using their image, and taking into account the peer feedback they received, write a POV narrative of their picture. Select an <u>object</u> in the image to personify (i.e. a seagull, blade of grass, discarded water bottle, puddle of water). Write a narrative from the perspective of this object. You may provide sentence starters such as the following: I think, I see, I feel, I smell...

SESSION 4: Categorize + Develop a Research Project

1. Print one photo for each student. (Adorama Printique and Costco Photo Center are both affordable options for printing photos.)

2. Work as a class to cluster photo printouts by topic/theme. (Some themes that may emerge are: water, pollution, growth, etc.)

3. Divide the class up into working groups based on their thematic interest. Each group will select a research project to do on their topic. A list of research projects follow. Define the appropriate deadlines and time to spend on this research project, based on the needs of your class.

4. Have each group submit a paragraph proposal about the research project they will conduct, including roles & deadlines.

Research Project Approaches

Warning label: Write & design a warning label about their issue. What are the impacts, or negative consequences people should be aware of?

Selfie / PSA: Film your group narrating the issue. Ask them to suggest solutions big and small for this issue.

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Who's helping? Who are the people or organizations advocating for their issue.

Photo log: Create a journal/photo diary of their daily interactions with this issue (i.e. documenting their trash, interactions with water etc.). Knowing what they know now, have any of their habits changed?

SESSION 5 & 6: Work on Project

1. Provide your students' class time, as well as a structure for regular check in throughout the research project process.
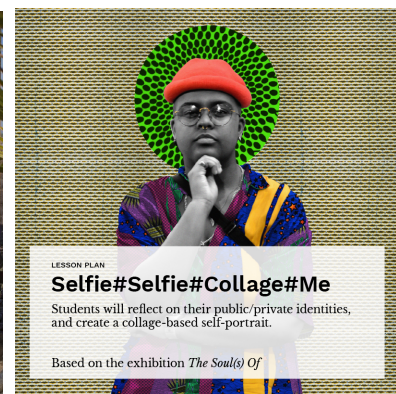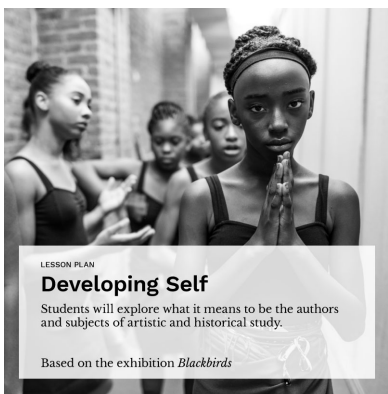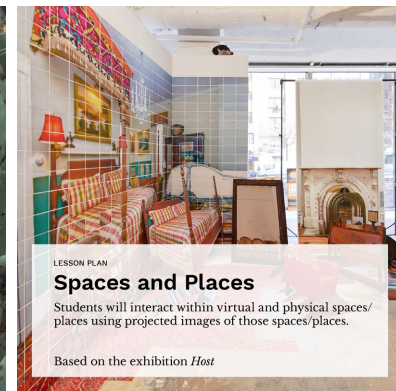
SESSION 7: Final Presentations

United Photo Industries Education

Browse the United Photo Industries' Teacher Resource library for over 20 free lesson plans and resource guides for incorporating photography and storytelling into the classroom.

These lesson plans were developed in collaboration with over 100 educators through our Teacher Professional Development Workshop. Educators across subject matters interested in incorporating visual storytelling into their curriculum participate in a free one-day professional development workshop that culminates in a hands-on lesson planning session in collaboration with the photographer.

We always love hearing how our exhibitions are used in the classroom; if you would like to submit feedback and stories of your experience, please email us:
education@unitedphotoindustries.com.

THE **FENCE**
An outdoor photography exhibition series
8th Edition Education Guide

LESSON PLAN
Hiding in Plain Sight
Encouraging students to see new perspectives on objects, people, and places they encounter every day.

Based on the exhibition *As Usual*

LESSON PLAN
Spaces and Places
Students will interact within virtual and physical spaces/places using projected images of those spaces/places.

Based on the exhibition *Host*

LESSON PLAN
Developing Self
Students will explore what it means to be the authors and subjects of artistic and historical study.

Based on the exhibition *Blackbirds*

LESSON PLAN
Who We Are and Who They Say We Are
Students will create visual projects that tell a counter-narrative about themselves and/or their community.

Based on the exhibition *The Wall*

LESSON PLAN
Selfie#Selfie#Collage#Me
Students will reflect on their public/private identities, and create a collage-based self-portrait.

Based on the exhibition *The Soul(s) Of*

The United Photo Industries Education program is proudly supported by PhotoWings and The Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment!
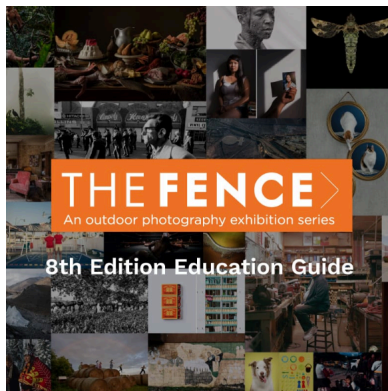
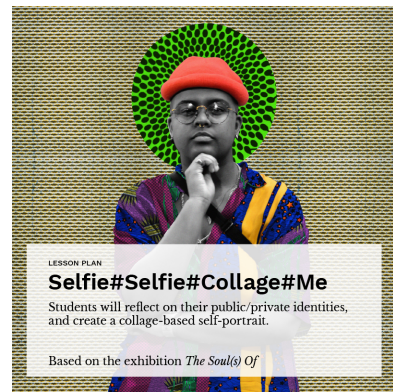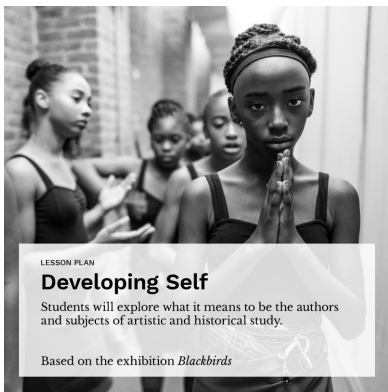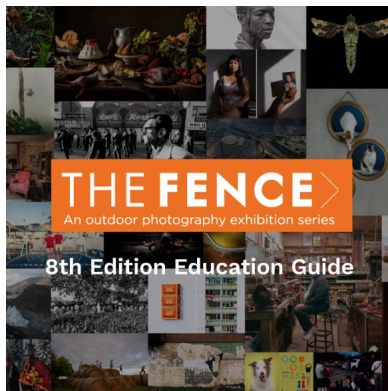PhotoWings

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