

Forming your Identity through Portraiture

Inspired by the project [Shaping a Dialogue for Change](#) presented at The Annenberg Space for Photography presents Photoville LA from April 25 - May 4, 2019.



Through collaborative portraiture, students will consider people who have influenced and inspired them reflecting on how their identities have been shaped, and how they want to pay it forward.



Photo by Lluvia Higuera

Featuring photography by
Lluvia Higuera

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Grade Level: 7th - 12th grade

Subjects: English Language Arts,
English Language Development

Time Required: 5 sessions

Key Images:

[Shaping a Dialogue for Change](#)
images, available on artist
website (It is recommended to
select the images with text
captions)

Materials Needed:

- Camera
- Chromebook/IPad
- Projector or Prints

Students will be able to:

- Examine an environmental portrait to make inferences on the identity of the subject, and their relationship with the artist.
- Interview a portrait subject to discover their key characteristics.
- Collaboratively direct a portrait photo shoot to capture the best or most important characteristics of their subject
- Write a reflection text about the interview and photo shoot experience.

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SESSION 1: Intro

1. Show a portrait (without the caption) from [Shaping a Dialogue for Change](#).
2. Have your students note their observations about the person in the portrait. Who is this person and what do they care about? Prompt them to use "I wonder/ I notice" sentences and direct them to consider:
 - Pose
 - Expression
 - Environment
 - Objects in the image
3. Provide students with the caption that accompanies the portrait and discuss as a class.
 - What were your initial observations of the person? How did your understanding of the person's identity change after you read the text?
 - What parts of the person's identity does the portrait accentuate? What parts does the portrait leave out?
 - What is the tone of the portrait and the quote?
 - How do you think the artist captured these key characteristics? Why do you think the artist chose to highlight those characteristics?

Additional Resources:

- Lesson Plan: [Developing Self](#)
- Lesson Plan: [Understanding Self through Portraiture](#)
- Lesson Plan: [Selfie#Selfie#Collage#Me](#)
- [Identity Web samples](#)
- Identity in Photography (courtesy of Mark Robinson)
 - [Identity presentation](#)
 - [Identity worksheet](#)
- Persona in Photography (courtesy of Mark Robinson)
 - [Persona presentation](#)
 - [Persona worksheet](#)

Standards Addressed:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.2](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.10](#)

SESSION 2: Practice Photo Shoots

1. Have your students brainstorm a personal Identity Map. (see Additional Resources for examples). Have them identify a part of their identity that they're most proud of. (i.e. playing piano, their sense of humor etc.)
2. Pair students up to take portraits of one another highlighting the identity traits they are most proud of.
3. After the practice photo shoot, have a class discussion reflecting on that experience.

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- What strategies did you use to bring that identity trait out of your portrait subject?
 - What questions did you ask your portrait subject?
 - How did you direct them?
4. Then, introduce your students to the main activity, where they will be photographing a mentor or someone who has influenced their life positively. Ask them to think about the identity trait they are most proud of....
 - Who/where did I learn that from?
 - Who brings that quality out in me?
 5. Identify one person with whom they can arrange a photo shoot with.

SESSION 3: Collaborative Photo Shoot

1. Students begin the photo shoot by interviewing their subject about their community, inspirations and influences.
 - How did you form community?
 - How would you like to be remembered?
 - What tradition do you want to be a part of?
 - Who are you looking at to say...I want to be like that?
 - Where is your place?
 - Who helps shape your identity?
 - How do you fit into the storyline?
 - Where do you get your ideas and worldview from?
 - Who do you connect with and what/who speaks to you?
2. Then, students ask their subject/mentor about the identity traits they are most proud of. Ask questions such as:
 - What would you like to be remembered for?
 - What are the key characteristics that you are most proud of?
 - How would you define yourself and what you care most about?
3. Use the information from the interview to direct the portrait session in a collaborative way. Ask your portrait subject:
 - Where do you want to be photographed and why?
 - What objects do you want included in the photo and why?
 - What do you want to wear?
 - What do you want your expression/body language to be?

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SESSION 4: Writing

1. Have students write a letter to their portrait subject which covers the following topics:
2. Why they chose this person
3. What they learned from this person
4. What they enjoyed about photographing them
5. How they want to pay this forward
6. Make prints of all the students portraits and have students deliver the letter alongside their photographs.

SESSION 5: Exhibition/Culminating Event

1. Provide space for students to share their work through a culminating event such as a gallery walk or final presentation.
2. If possible, invite the subject/mentors to the culminating event.

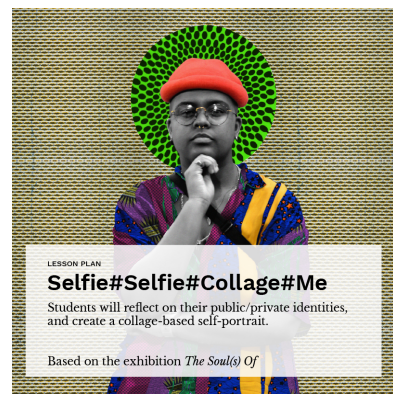
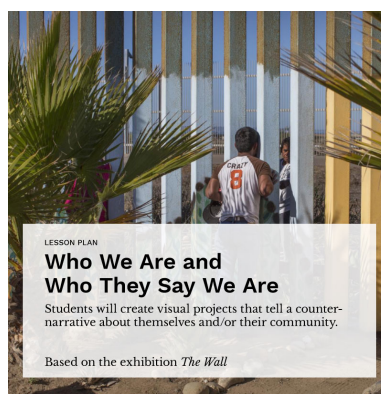
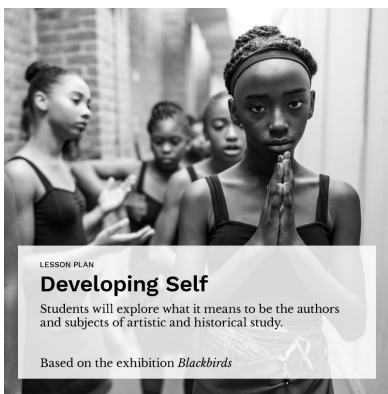
United Photo Industries Education

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 United Photo Industries Education program is proudly supported by [PhotoWings](#)

