

## This Week's Focus: Classroom Photos

Teaching photojournalism can be daunting, and it's easy for students to get overwhelmed. With that in mind, it's helpful to break down the topic into more manageable chunks. There's no better way to do that than to have students use a tool most are probably used to: their smartphone.

### THE LESSON: Practice shooting techniques in class

Before this lesson, I share notes and examples of the basic [elements of photojournalism](#). I also spend time talking about a hallmark of photojournalism — capturing *candid* moments. To practice using those skills, I have the students use their smartphones to practice taking pictures of themselves taking pictures. The activity is a little meta at first, and it's interesting to watch students circling the classroom like lions in the Serengeti, but pretty soon one or two of them dive in. From there, they all start to participate.

The goal is for students to capture a single candid moment that both tells the story of the activity and best meets the criteria of photo composition. They are welcome to crop their photos, but they shouldn't alter or manipulate them in other ways. Some tips include the following:

- Look for eyes and faces to capture action, reaction and emotion, but don't use pictures where people are posing for the camera.
- Don't use the digital zoom on your smartphone. Use your legs to get closer instead.
- Don't wait for a perfect moment; if you do, then you'll miss everything. Just shoot a lot and you can get rid of the bad shots later.

Students send me their best single photo, and we look at them as a class to evaluate them in turn.

## Adviser Advice

Morgan Bricker, CJE, Weir High School, Weirton, West Virginia

### FRONT-LOAD STAFF BUILDING

The better your rapport with your students and among staff members, the more productive and effective they will be when it comes time to create content. Develop a leadership hierarchy that allows you to delegate tasks to students. You'll be surprised how much time and work you can save yourself by entrusting your students. Accept that things will not be perfect or exactly as you envision them, and that's OK. My favorite classroom poster says, "My life is a work in progress. I am a work in progress." I point it out to students every year because not only does it apply to us individually, but it also applies to our staff and publications. Finally, do not be afraid to ask for help — ask your students, ask school colleagues, ask other JEA members, ask your yearbook rep, ask anyone who might be able to help — and ask for it right when you need it. You aren't bothering anyone, and you'll be so relieved that you did.



**My bell-ringers generally are a journal of some sort that connects to our daily lesson content. Sometimes it includes reading a quick article and responding, some kind of personal reflection about an issue, current events reactions, quote responses, ratings with explanations, etc.**

## FIND IT AT JEA.ORG: Capture the Moment

### Description

In this lesson, students will learn about the importance of storytelling in journalistic photography. Using selected student photography, they will discuss the visual impact that can occur when photojournalists capture storytelling moments.

### Objectives

- Students will learn about capturing unique storytelling moments in photography.
- Students will explore recent work in photojournalism and evaluate photos based on Joe Elbert's hierarchy of photography.

### The link

The link to the full lesson is [HERE](#).

NOTE: This lesson is available free to **everyone** during the dates listed at the top of this page. Want to have access all the time? If you're not a member yet, consider joining JEA today for access to all of the resources.



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## You've Got Style

Suggestions from Cindy\*

### WHO, THAT

When referring to humans or to animals with a name, *who* is the pronoun to use.

Write *the person who ate the leftovers*, not *the person that ate the leftovers*.

### T-SHIRT, U-TURN

Spell with the first letters capitalized and with hyphens: *T-shirt*, *U-turn*. After the first reference to a T-shirt, using *tee* is acceptable.

\* Style pro Cindy Horchem, CJE, is a retired adviser and the current JEA business and projects coordinator