YOUTHFUL ADVENTURES

EDUCATOR GUIDE

SCCPSS 4th Grade Program
YOUTHFUL ADVENTURES: GROWING UP IN PHOTOGRAPHY
9.18.2020–4.18.2021 | JEPSON CENTER

This exhibition celebrates the diversity of childhood experiences as depicted in photographs from the mid-20th century to the present. Childhood long has been a compelling subject for photographers, who look to distill in an image what it means to grow up, both physically and emotionally. Because it is a stage of life that all adults have undergone and many observe with their own children, pictures of childhood often are viewed through the powerful lens of nostalgia.

These images capture a range of emotions, from the playful discovery of childhood to the probing and sometimes awkward search for identity that is an essential part of young adulthood. They reveal broad and changing community influences across the United States from the 1940s to today. Access to photography in the digital age has given rise to a generation of children whose self-awareness is born out of seeing their own images and for whom photography is portable, personal, and yet a highly public form of self-expression.

Photographers Gordon Parks, Bruce Davidson, and Frederick Baldwin consider the bravery and struggle of youths during the Civil Rights movement. Helen Levitt, Keith Carter, and Bill Yates encapsulate the playfulness and rebelliousness of adolescence. Larry Clark, Jill Frank, and Peyton Fulford look toward burgeoning sexuality and the loss of perceived innocence. Eva O’Leary and Shauna Friskhorn consider the encompassing role of technology and social media in the life of modern children. These moments of courage, playfulness, intimacy, performance, and determination illuminate the experience of growing up. Significant life events create conversations between portraits of youths in America in the 20th and 21st centuries, exchanges that traverse time and place and encourage the viewer to embrace their own inner child.
About the Artist

Helen Levitt was born and raised in New York and by age 16 had decided to become a professional photographer. She was inspired by the photographs of Walker Evans and Henri Cartier-Bresson, both of whom became friends. Levitt practiced photography with a small handheld camera on the streets of New York where she captured images of ordinary city people, especially children.

Street Photography is a type of photography that captures images of a variety of subjects and events in public places at unscripted moments in time. The photographer in an observer of behavior, actions, special events and milestones, and even occasions that can become history making. Moments in time are memorialized by the photographer for the viewer’s benefit which can include the importance of remembering a significant personal or public event or the opportunity to provide the perspective of an individual or group in society. These moments can be both ordinary and extraordinary.

HELEN LEVITT

What is going on in this picture?

What do you see that makes you say that?

Do the children know they are being photographed?

How can you tell?

What more can we find?
STEAM ART ACTIVITY: SIDEWALK CHALK ART SHADOW TRACING

Helen Levitt also photographed children’s chalk drawings. She felt they were present-day emblems of a pre-civilized, magical art form.

All over the city on the streets and walks and walls the children have established ancient, essential and ephemeral forms of art... have set forth in chalk and crayon the names and images of their pride, love, preying, scorn, desire. And drawings, all over, of ships, homes, western heroes, and monsters which each strong effaces.

—James Agee, 1939

fraenkelgallery.com/exhibitions/helevitt-vintage-chalk-drawings-1938-1948

This activity can be done by students individually or with a partner. Determine the location of a sidewalk area that can be used at the time of day needed where blocking the sun can be used to create shadows.

**Step 1: Create shadows outside using the sun as the source of light**

Invite children to experiment and play around with creating different types of shadows outside. Encourage kids to use their bodies and other objects such as leaves, toys, bikes, etc. to block the sunlight and create a shadow on the ground.

**Step 2: Trace shadows for sidewalk chalk art**

Trace the shadows of human bodies and objects to make shadow sidewalk art. Trees, flowers, and children toys are a few more fun shadow sidewalk art ideas you can try.

Finding a good position to create shadow art on the sidewalk can be hard for kids at first. Encourage children to keep experimenting. This is how learning happens!

**Step 3: Take pictures of shadow sidewalk chalk art**

Sidewalk chalk art doesn’t last long... Make sure that you take pictures of your students’ beautiful shadow art creations.

**Question and Answer Session**

After children finish the sidewalk art activity, ask them the following questions to solidify science concepts introduced in this activity.

1. **How do shadows form?**
   Shadows form when an object blocks light.

2. **How do shadows form outside?**
   Shadows are formed when an object, person, animal, or the earth itself blocks the sunlight, or, another external source of light such as a flashlight.

3. **What light source did we use to make shadows?**
   The sun.

4. **How did you block the light?**
   The light was blocked when an object or body was placed between the sun (external light source) and the sidewalk.

5. **What happens when you block the light of the sun?**
   It creates a shadow.

**Additional Resources**

issuu.com/telfairmuseums/docs/levitt_educator_guide_c007a847540690

**VA4MC.3** Selects and uses subject matter, symbols, and/or ideas to communicate meaning.

a. Generates different viewpoints for making an interpreting a visual image.

b. Develops visual images by combining or modifying open-ended themes/topics in unique and innovative ways.

c. Observes how the visual relationship of objects and ideas affects contrast and/or proportion and how placement may affect meaning and/or significance.

**VA4CU.2** Views and discusses selected artworks.

a. Identifies elements, principles, themes, and/or time period in a work of art.

b. Discusses how social events inspire art from a given time period.

c. Creates a contour drawing.
Jim Crow Laws

Before the Civil War, the Southern states had no reason to pass laws that would segregate or separate blacks and whites because slavery was still legal. Enslaved people had no rights, lived separately from whites, and did not attend school. After the Civil War, the 13th Amendment (1865) abolished slavery. Many whites however, mainly in the South, wanted the two groups to remain segregated. By creating the Jim Crow laws, states were able to legalize segregation between blacks and whites.

The government called this system “separate but equal,” although the “equal” part seemed to be left out. Jim Crow laws varied from state to state, but they all had the intent to devalue African-Americans. One of the most common Jim Crow laws was that whites and blacks could not marry each other. Another common theme was that at places of business, such as restaurants, blacks had to eat in a separately partitioned room from the whites, and in all public spaces there were separate restrooms for blacks and whites.

Jim Crow laws were in effect until the 1960’s. The example above by Gordon Parks shows a young woman and her niece in downtown Mobile, standing under a sign for a segregated theater.

What is going on in this picture?
What do you see that makes you say that?
What do you see that demonstrates Jim Crow laws?
What more can we find?
“Segregation Story” Series by Gordon Parks

The subject of the “Segregation Story” was the extended family of a black couple in the Jim Crow South, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Thornton Sr. The images show the family doing everyday living activities such as doing chores at home, taking trips to town, and gathering at church. The children attended a black-only school, which was small and sparsely furnished.

This photograph shows six black children standing in front of a chain-link fence that separates them from the whites-only playground. The fence sends a strong message of the separateness these children are experiencing, and while we cannot see the faces of the children, their body language and gestures indicate a longing to be on the other side of the fence. These images were part of an emotional appeal to a nation still grappling with “separate but equal”.

**ACTIVITY: SHARE AND DISCUSS**

Take a few minutes to look at this photograph and imagine what the children may be thinking or feeling at this moment. Write a monologue expressing a first-person point of view as one of the children in the photograph. Describe what you are doing (standing, leaning, looking, listening, etc.) and how you are feeling. Consider including things like: What were you doing before this moment? What caused you to be at this place and time? What will you do next? Share and discuss your story with others.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

nga.gov/education/teachers/lessons-activities/uncovering-america/parks-photography/parks-activity.html

high.org/resource/gordon-parks/
gordonparksfoundation.org/publications/segregation-story

SS4H6 Analyze the effects of Reconstruction on American Life.
d. Describe the effects of Jim Crow laws and practices.

ELAGSE4RL3: Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).

ELAGSE4RL6: Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe differences in focus and the information provided.

What is going on in this picture?
What do you see that makes you say that?
What do you think the children are thinking about?
How do you think they are feeling at this moment?
What more can we find?
About the Artist
Frederick Baldwin had a privileged childhood in Switzerland and Barbados as the son of a diplomat, however his teenage years were lonely after the death of his father. Academic failures and aimless wandering followed before he fought in the Korean War and was awarded two purple hearts. He returned to school as a more dedicated student at Armstrong Junior College in Savannah, Georgia, and then transferred to Columbia. He would end up setting out to learn his craft as a photographer, and widely traveled to document the Civil Rights movement and poverty in the South. Baldwin explains:

“What was magical for me was that a little tiny camera could serve as a passport to the world, as a key to opening every lock and every cupboard of investigation and curiosity. It was also a way of taking me to places and situations that would provide me good stories to tell.”

nytimes.com/2019/05/29/lens/fred-baldwin-photography.html

About This Work
The 1960s-era struggle for civil rights in the United States inspired black and white photographers to chronicle the purposeful, yet peaceful side of protests along with the brutality with which they were often met. Frederick Baldwin offered his services to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Chatham County Crusade for Voters. He documented voter registration drives and daily marches in opposition to segregation. Benjamin Van Clark, a significant leader in Savannah’s fight for civil rights, began participating in protests as a high school student. Taken in the summer of 1963, this image shows the 19-year-old Clark leading a group from City Hall down Bull Street to Wright Square. Clark’s face is resolute as he advances through the midday heat, a man behind him chanting and holding a flag in front of another with a bandaged cheek. More than documentation, this powerful image connects past protests with those seen today.

Frederick Baldwin (American, b. 1929); Benjamin Van Clark Leading a March, Bull Street, 1963; gelatin silver print; 13 1/16 × 8 5/8 inches; museum purchase, 2009.3.23; © Frederick C. Baldwin
WRITING ACTIVITY: USING VISUAL THINKING STRATEGIES

VTS was developed by Abigail Housen and Philip Yenawine more than 20 years ago. The founders of VTS incorporated Visual Understanding in Education (VUE) as a non-profit organization. Their mission is to foster cognitive growth through interaction with art, to boost academic achievement in every school where VTS is implemented and facilitate systemic change in how students learn and how teachers teach. The VTS material presented in this guide is adapted from their website and based on their research. Complete the following VTS writing worksheet about the work shown on the previous page.

vtshome.org/

What’s going on in this picture?

What do you see that makes you say that?

Writing Checklist

☐ Read your work silently to yourself. Does it make sense?
☐ Did you describe what you think is happening in the picture?
☐ Did you include details that help explain what is happening?
☐ Did you check spelling, punctuation, and capitalization?

ELAGSE4RL3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).

ELAGSE4W1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting views with reasons.
  a. Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
  b. Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.
  c. Link opinion and reason using words and phrases.
  d. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

v1.zonezero.com/magazine/dcorner/baldwin/index.php
nytimes.com/2019/05/29/lens/fred-baldwin-photography.html
amazon.com/Freedoms-March-Photographs-Movement-Frederick/dp/0933075081
About The Artist

Born in Nashville, Tennessee, Frank Stewart grew up in Memphis and Chicago. He took his first photographs at the March on Washington in 1963 at the age of 14. He attended the Art Institute of Chicago and received a BFA in photography from Cooper Union in New York. He later joined Kamoinge, a New York-based group of prominent black photographers.

Stewart has had one-man and group shows at The High Museum, Studio Museum in Harlem, the International Center of Photography, Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, and many others. Stewart spent five decades photographing jazz musicians, the subject of the 2019 exhibition “The Sound of My Soul: Frank Stewart’s Life in Jazz,” Ethelbert Cooper Gallery of African & African American Art, Harvard University. Stewart served for many years as Senior Staff Photographer for Jazz at Lincoln Center and for 16 years he also came to Savannah to photograph artists for the Savannah Music Festival.

About This Work

Savannah’s St. Patrick’s Day Parade is one of the largest in the nation, making its way along a route around the city’s many historic city squares. The parade features marching bands from around the state, including Savannah’s own H.V. Jenkins High School marching band, known as the “Marching Warriors.” Photographer Frank Stewart was drawn to the circular tuba in the rectangular format of the photograph, which takes on double meaning as the marchers are physically located in a Savannah “square.” Stewart also captures repetition of this circular shape on the right side of the photograph along the edge.

Refraction vs. Reflection

The terms refraction and reflection describe two ways that waves, as of sound or light, change course upon encountering a boundary between two media. The media might consist of two different substances, such as glass and air, or a single substance in different states in different regions, such as air at different temperatures or densities in different layers.
STEM Activity: Refraction vs. Reflection

Refraction: When light is bent as it goes through liquids and such, we call it refraction. Have students find ways of bending light by using prisms, investigating rainbows, etc. Have them present their investigations to the class to show ways that bending of light can trick the eye.

Reflection: When light does not go through a material it reflects back to your eye so you can see it. Tell students that some materials reflect light differently from others. Shiny, smooth surfaces reflect images. Have students note that the surface shape also can affect the reflection—such as a flat mirror vs. the circular shape of the musical instrument in the photograph by Frank Stewart.

What Do You Think?

Do you think the Frank Stewart photograph shows an example of refraction or reflection? What makes you say that? What are other examples of refraction and reflection?

S4P1. Obtain, evaluate and communicate information about the nature of light and how light interacts with objects.

b. Plan and carry out investigations to describe the path light travels from a light source to a mirror and how it is reflected by the mirror using different angles.

c. Plan and carry out an investigation utilizing everyday materials to explore examples of when light is refracted.

Art Activity: Composition and Sketching

Composition is the way all the individual subjects within a frame combine to form a final image. When capturing an image in photography, a photographer can alter the composition by moving around, zooming in or out, changing lenses, or even just crouching down.

Choose one of the images from previous discussions to sketch. Take a few minutes to thoughtfully look over the composition of the photograph and consider the following:

Think about the how the photographer may have observed the subjects and moved around or used different angles to capture one moment.

Why did the photographer choose that moment?

How does your eye move around the photograph? Do your eyes tend to focus on the center and then move to the background? Do your eyes tend to move in a circle or other direction around the photograph? Does your eye want to move outside of the picture frame, or do your eyes stay within the frame?

Use the activity sheet to give you an idea of how the space is being occupied by the subjects in your chosen photograph. Use it as a guide to maintain the placement of the subjects in the photograph and how they relate within the space, as seen in this image below:

What Do You Think?

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Activity Sheet

Use the following grid to make a composition draft of your sketch. Then on a clean, plain sheet of paper sketch the image again keeping the 9 sections and subject placement in mind.

Activity Sheet

ART ACTIVITY: RECREATE A PHOTOGRAPH

Choose one of the images on this page to recreate. Use a camera that can capture images such as a digital camera, cell phone, or tablet. Use your imagination in finding locations and like-objects to photograph. Practice in front of a mirror to recreate the correct expressions and poses of the people in the photograph. Use what you have learned about observing and creating a composition for your final image.
YOUTHFUL ADVENTURES: RESPONSES

Observe:
Spend a few minutes looking carefully at the selected photograph. Then respond by sketching and writing in the boxes provided.

Sketch:
In the box, draw or sketch the main parts of the composition. Do you see repeated shapes or lines? Sketch them in the area where you see them in the picture. What are the largest or smallest items in the photograph?

Write:
In the box above, write a detailed description of what is going on in the picture. Or
Write a very short creative story about the person or people in the picture. What are they thinking or how do they feel? What were they doing just before or after this picture was taken?
On view through April 18, 2020 at the Jepson Center!
For museum hours and safety guidelines, visit telfair.org

YOUTHFUL ADVENTURES

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