

# Topic 7.4: News Photographs & Newspaper Design

Photographs in print newspapers and online news sites convey powerful messages to readers and viewers, but they are not to be viewed uncritically.

Every photo represents a moment frozen in time. What happened before and after the photo was taken? What else was happening outside the view of the camera? Why did the photographer take the photo from a certain angle and perspective? Why did a newspaper editor choose to publish one image and not another?



Watch on YouTube <https://edtechbooks.org/-BuSY>

The meaning of a news photograph depends on multiple levels of context as well as how each of us interpret its meaning.

Photographs can also be altered to create new interpretations or convey specific political messages. David King's book, *The Commissar Vanishes* (2014) details how the Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin used photographs and art to change how history was remembered and understood. One famous photo example shows how Leon Trotsky was airbrushed out of his position standing beside Vladimir Lenin during a November 7, 1919 anniversary celebration of the Russian Revolution. Go here to learn more

about current [deepfakes](#), [fake profiles](#) and [political messaging](#) in U.S. politics.

The following activities will provide you with an opportunity to act as a critical viewer of newspaper photographs and as a member of a newspaper design team who must decide what photographs to incorporate in a class newspaper.

## Activity 1: Analyze Newspaper Photographs

- WARM-UP: As a class, analyze an image from the *New York Times* section "[What's Going On in This Picture?](#)" and collaboratively agree upon a caption that best communicates what is happening in the photograph.
- Then, individually, choose a famous newspaper photograph or a photograph from a recent newspaper (you can also check out [The Most Influential Images of All Time](#) from *Time Magazine*).
- After choosing a photo, conduct a visual analysis using the following questions suggested by Sophia Modzelewski, a 2020-2021 history teacher candidate at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and by *The New York Times* Learning Network:
  - What is going on in this photo? What do you see that makes you say that?
  - What emotions do you see in the expressions/actions of the people in the photo?
  - What emotion do you feel when looking at it?
  - Who is one figure in the image whose actions may be misrepresented by the photograph?
  - Why was the name, caption, or description of this image chosen? What do you think might be an alternate name, caption, or description?
  - How might this photo be perceived differently by different groups of people (e.g., people of different ages, gender identities, culture, socioeconomic status)?
  - What else can you find out about the image?
- **Present your visual analysis findings as an interactive image or screenrecording video.**
  - Interactive image:
    - Start a new [Google Drawings canvas](#).
    - Upload the image to the middle of the canvas.
    - Insert text boxes and shapes to call attention to your findings.
    - Add links to additional information (e.g., the original image source).
  - Screenrecording:
    - If you have a Mac computer, [use this shortcut](#).
    - If you have access to Quicktime, here's [how to screenrecord using Quicktime](#).
    - Otherwise, use a web-based screenrecording tool such as [Screencastify](#), [Screencast-o-Matic](#), or [Loom](#).

## Activity 2: Design a Class Newspaper with Photos and Images

- As a class, identify the different roles and responsibilities needed for creating a class newspaper (e.g., photographer, editorial writer, Op-Ed writer, editorial cartoonist, news writer).
- Then, select the top 3 roles of interest to you and write, draw, or record a statement about why you would excel in those roles.
- As a class, democratically determine how to select who will be in each role (e.g., [ranked-choice](#)

- [voting](#), campaigning).
- Once you have your selected role, learn everything you can about it and then get to work - capture photos, write content, draw cartoons, etc...
  - As a class, democratically determine the design of the newspaper, including the layout, what images to include, and font size and style.
  - Use digital tools like [LucidPress](#), Google Docs, or [Wix](#) to publish the newspaper.
  - Once you have completed your responsibilities for the class newspaper, **create a video or presentation about the importance of your designated role.**
  - Bonus Activity: Create the front page of the class newspaper with and without photos and then ask family/peers to compare and contrast the two options and reflect on their impact.

## **Additional Resources**

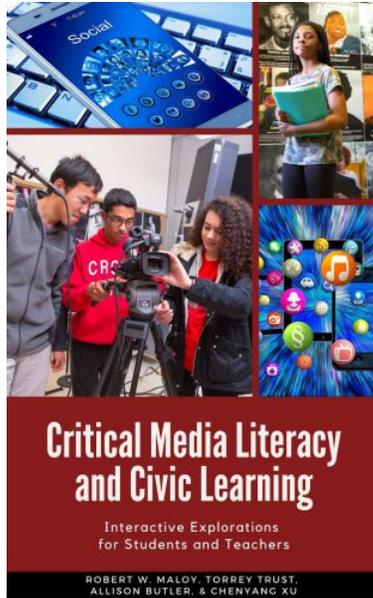
- [How to Read a Photograph](#)
- [Teacher and Student Guide to Analyzing Images](#)

## **Connecting to the eBook**

[Building Democracy for All: News Articles, Editorials, Editorial cartoons, Op-Ed Commentaries, Photographs, Press Conferences, and Sports Writing](#)

## Connecting to the Standards

- [Massachusetts Civics & Government Standards](#)
  - *Explain the different functions of news articles, editorials, editorial cartoons, and “op-ed” commentaries.* (Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for History and Social Studies) **[8.T7.3]**
- [ISTE Standards](#)
  - Digital Citizen
    - 2c: Students demonstrate an understanding of and respect for the rights and obligations of using and sharing intellectual property.
  - Knowledge Constructor
    - 3a: Students plan and employ effective research strategies to locate information and other resources for their intellectual or creative pursuits.
    - 3b: Students evaluate the accuracy, perspective, credibility and relevance of information, media, data, or other resources.
  - Creative Communicator
    - 6a: Students choose the appropriate platforms and tools for meeting the desired objectives of their creation or communication.
    - 6b: Students create original works or responsibly repurpose or remix digital resources into new creations.
    - 6d: Students publish or present content that customizes the message and medium for the intended audiences.
  - Global Collaborator
    - 7c: Students contribute constructively to project teams, assuming various roles and responsibilities to work effectively toward a common goal.
- [DLCS Standards](#)
  - Ethics and Laws (CAS.b)
  - Interpersonal and Societal Impact (CAS.c)
  - Digital Tools (DTC.a)
  - Collaboration and Communication (DTC.b)
  - Research (DTC.c)
- [English Language Arts > History/Social Studies Common Core Standards](#)
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.5
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.5
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.5
  - CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7



Maloy, R. W., Trust, T., , & Xu, C. (2021). *Critical Media Literacy and Civic Learning*. EdTech Books. <https://edtechbooks.org/mediaandciviclearning>