

## Inside Art 2015 — *Enhanced!*

### Title

Photographing the Human

### Concept/Main Idea of Lesson

By documenting people's lives through their work, photographers can provide insight on social conditions, past and present.

### Intended Grade Levels

Grades 9-12

### Infusion/Subject Areas

Visual Arts

Social Studies

### Curriculum Standards

#### **NCSS**

*Culture:* Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of culture and cultural diversity.

*Time, Continuity, and Change:* Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the past and its legacy.

*People, Places, and Environments:* Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of people, places, and environments.

*Civic Ideals:* Social studies programs should include experiences that provide for the study of the ideals, principles, and practices of citizenship in a democratic republic.

### **Next Generation Sunshine State Standards**

#### Social Studies

SS.4.A.7.2: Summarize challenges Americans faced during the Great Depression.

SS.912.A.5.10: Analyze support for and resistance to civil rights for women, African Americans, Native Americans, and other minorities. .

#### Visual Arts

Enduring Understanding 2: The arts reflect and document cultural trends and historical events, and help explain how new directions in the arts have emerged.

TH.5.C.3.2: Use a photograph, sculpture, or two-dimensional work of art to inspire creation of an original scene or monologue.

#### **Common Core:**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.C: Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that relate the current discussion to broader themes or larger ideas; actively incorporate others into the discussion; and clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1.C

Propel conversations by posing and responding to questions that probe reasoning and

evidence; ensure a hearing for a full range of positions on a topic or issue; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.D: Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives, summarize points of agreement and disagreement, and, when warranted, qualify or justify their own views and understanding and make new connections in light of the evidence and reasoning presented.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

### Instructional Objective

The student will:

- examine the Great Depression photography of Russell Lee;
- consider how the work of Debbie Grossman sheds light on a social issue;
- explain how photographers can provide insight on social conditions through their work.

### Learning Activities Sequence

**Attention-getter:** Slide 2 --- Ask students to describe the scene. Prompt discussion by asking: When do you think this photograph was taken? Where? Where do you think the people are going?

Slide 3 --- In what ways has this photo been changed? Why?

Slide 4 (side-by-side comparison) --- What point do you think the artist was trying to make with the changes that were made?

**Artist Biography (Russell Lee):** (Slide 5) Russell Lee (1903-1986) was an American photographer who chronicled the lives of ordinary Americans through his work. His best-known work was created under the auspices of the Farm Security Administration during the Great Depression. His work differed from that of other FSA photographers in that Lee utilized flash to take photographs inside buildings, carefully recording the life of his subjects and the environments in which they lived. (Densho Encyclopedia, 2014). He also created series of photographs, painting a more complete and robust picture of his subjects. His most famous series was *Pie Town*, taken in New Mexico in 1940. Lee believed that the series not only showed the difficult conditions in which many Americans were living during the Great Depression; it also showed Americans' resilience and sense of community.

**Comparison of works by Lee and Grossman:** Show slide 6. Explain that this was a photograph taken by Russell Lee as part of his *Pie Town* series. Prompt students to observe as many characteristics and features of the image as possible. Show slide 7: ask students to consider how this image is similar to, and different from, the previous image.

**Artist Biography (Debbie Grossman):** (Slide 8) Debbie Grossman (b. 1977) is an American photographer who likes to “re-imagine history.” Her series, *My Pie Town* (2010), imagines a community comprised entirely of women.

**Comparison of works by Lee and Grossman:** Show slides 9-18.

**Closure:** Allow students to review the images by both Lee and Grossman. Working in pairs, ask them to select one image and imagine the dialogue between and among the characters (or if an image of just one person, that person’s thoughts). Ask students to write out their dialogue/monologue.

### Evaluation

Student participation in the interactive presentation and creation of their dialogue/monologue.

### Optional Extension Activities

Allow students to read aloud or perform their dialogues and monologues before the whole class.

Access some of the many images taken by Russell Lee of the forced removal and confinement of Japanese Americans in the U.S. during WWII.

### Materials and Resources

Computer  
Projector  
PPT for Day 4  
Pie Town Study Guide (teacher resource)

### Internet Links

Artcyclopedia. (2011). *Russell Lee Online*. Retrieved from:  
[http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/lee\\_russell.html](http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/lee_russell.html)

Briscoe Center for American History. (2014). *Russell Lee Photographs*.  
<http://www.cah.utexas.edu/exhibits/lee/> [Sent email inquiry about permission to reproduce on 12/21/14]

University of Texas at Austin. (2007). *Russell Lee Photo Gallery*. Retrieved from:  
<http://www.utexas.edu/features/2007/lee/>

University of Texas at Austin. (2014). *Study of the Spanish-Speaking People of Texas*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cah.utexas.edu/ssspot/lesson.php>

### References

Densho Encyclopedia. (2014). *Russell Lee*.  
[http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Russell\\_Lee/](http://encyclopedia.densho.org/Russell_Lee/)

Ethics in Photo Editing. (2015). Retrieved from:

<https://ethicsinediting.wordpress.com/2009/04/01/photo-manipulation-through-history-a-timeline/>

Grossman, Debbie. (2011). *Debbie Grossman*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.debbiegrossman.com/index.php?/projects/my-pie-town/>

Hendrickson, P. (2005). Savoring Pie Town. *Smithsonian Magazine*. Retrieved

from: <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/savoring-pie-town-85182017/?no-ist>.

Londriguss, Jerry. (2006). The Ethics of Digital Manipulation. Retrieved from:

[http://www.astropix.com/HTML/J\\_DIGIT/ETHICS.HTM](http://www.astropix.com/HTML/J_DIGIT/ETHICS.HTM)

Samadzadeh, Nozlee. (2011). Interview with Debbie Grossman. *The Morning*

*News*. Retrieved from: <http://www.themorningnews.org/gallery/my-pie-town>

University of Texas at Austin. (2007). *Russell Lee Photo Gallery*. Retrieved from:

<http://www.utexas.edu/features/2007/lee/>