

NOTES ON PORTRAITURE
FEBRUARY 1998

The goal of a portrait is not merely to capture a person's _____, but more his or her _____. A portrait should convey that person's _____, of course, but also their _____.

I. The Subject's Feelings:

- A. Why do people often look tense or frozen in formal portraits?

- B. Name two things the photographer can do to put his/her subjects at ease
 - 1.

 - 2.

- C. If you were the subject of a formal portrait, what type of setting would make you feel most comfortable?

II. Technical Excellence:

- A. The only time people notice the technical aspects of a portrait is when _____ is poor.

- B. Lens Selection
 - 1. Portrait photographers should use what type of lens length?
 - 2. Why?

 - 3. What are other lens options to enhance portraits?

C. Camera Height — Unless you are going for a dramatic effect, the camera should be the same height as the center of your frame.

1. In a head and shoulders portrait (ex., school picture), where should the camera height be?
2. In a full body shot, where should the camera height be?

III. Corrective Techniques — Although a portrait should capture reality, a good photographer tries to minimize features which the subject finds unflattering. After experimenting on each other, write down how the photographer could correct the following features. Consider angle, lighting and tonal contrast.

<u>DIFFICULTY</u>	<u>SUGGESTED TREATMENT</u>
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Prominent Forehead

Baldness

Long Nose

Wide Nose

Angular/Sharp Nose

Narrow Face

Broad Face

Wrinkled Face

Double Chin

Facial Scars

Prominent Ears

Deep-Set Eyes

Protruding Eyes

Wide Set Eyes

Close Set Eyes

Cross-Eyed

Wears Glasses

Heavy-Set/Overweight

IV. Choosing Backgrounds and Settings:

- A. When deciding upon backgrounds and settings, the photographer should consider the subject's _____, _____ and _____ color, and the _____ of the photograph.

- B. Be very aware of potential problems. Busy backgrounds can be _____, although you can partially solve the problem by blurring the background using a _____ aperture. Also, watch out for objects which appear to be _____ out of the subject's head.
- C. Explain how you would shoot the following portrait situations. Be specific in your description, detailing any backgrounds or props you would use.

<u>SITUATION</u>	<u>BACKGROUND/SETTING/PROPS</u>
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Political Candidate

Graduate

Newborn Baby

Easter Family Portrait

Summer Wedding

Religious Sacrament

Christmas Family Portrait