



Association of Texas Photography Instructors

PHOTOGRAPH EVALUATION

To evaluate photographs on the same criteria, the Association of Texas Photography Instructors has developed this critique sheet to help both the judges and the photographers. This sheet should help photographers spot areas for improvement in their photographs according to this judge. The decision of the judge remains final.

FOR STUDENT TO COMPLETE:

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Camera Model _____ Lens _____ Film _____ ISO _____

Lighting conditions: (circle one or more)

bright sun available, artificial light
partly cloudy flash
cloudy timed exposure

Enlarger (applies only to images printed by hand)

Exposure time _____ F/stop _____ Filter No. _____ Height _____

Digital (applies only to digital images)

File size _____ MB Color mode Grayscale RGB CMYK Other Resolution _____ ppi

FOR INSTRUCTOR/JUDGE TO COMPLETE:

TECHNICAL QUALITY

This includes the proper development of film (as evident in the print or digital image), proper exposure, good use of flash when needed, good use of available light when no flash is used, sharp focus and sharp action or action that is intentionally blurred. Digital images should be in the appropriate file format and color mode.

	<i>Excellent</i>		<i>Good</i>		<i>Poor</i>
Focus	5	4	3	2	1
Appropriate shutter speed	5	4	3	2	1
Appropriate quality/direction of light	5	4	3	2	1
Proper film processing/digital imaging	5	4	3	2	1
Proper print processing/digital imaging	5	4	3	2	1
Lack of dust/fingerprints	5	4	3	2	1
Appropriate image density in highlights/shadows	5	4	3	2	1
Appropriate dodging/burning	5	4	3	2	1
Even/straight borders or printed correctly	5	4	3	2	1
Negatives/prints/digital images filed and saved correctly	5	4	3	2	1

COMMENTS:

TECHNICAL GRADE _____/50

COMPOSITION

For most photographs, this includes such things as the inclusion of repetition of shapes, leading lines, and curves. This also includes the lack of mergers where one aspect of a photograph merges into another creating an unnatural look (such as a football goal growing out of a player's head). It also includes simplicity, keeping unwanted objects out of the frame. The rule of thirds provides balance within a photograph by offsetting the subject from the center of the frame. The forms, lines, tones, textures, shapes, hues, patterns and balance within the photograph must contribute to good composition.

	<i>Excellent</i>		<i>Good</i>		<i>Poor</i>
Simplicity	5	4	3	2	1
Clear center of visual interest (clear eye movement)	5	4	3	2	1
Frame filled with subject (no unwanted elements)	5	4	3	2	1
Use of rule of thirds	5	4	3	2	1
Appropriate use of depth of field	5	4	3	2	1
No mergers of subject/background	5	4	3	2	1
Cropped properly	5	4	3	2	1

SUBJECT MATTER

5 4 3 2 1

The subject of a photograph should be appropriate for the photographer's abilities and equipment. Shooting a college football game with a 50mm lens is generally a poor choice of subject matter, for example, as is shooting students in the halls with a 300mm lens. Furthermore, the subject should be visually respected. Photographers are not a part of the action when taking pictures at an event. They are part of the action in the studio. This should be clear from the photograph. The subject matter must also be appropriate for the assignment given.

STOPPING POWER/ORIGINALITY

5 4 3 2 1

People are constantly bombarded by visual images and a good photograph should be unique. It should engage the curiosity of the viewer. In order to do this, the photograph should be unusual in some manner so as to attract attention. However, the photographer should not resort to gimmickry to grab the attention of the viewer. Further, just as a photograph must be high in technical quality and show a good subject doing something unusual, it should also appeal to the emotions of the viewer. A good photograph will invoke the use of such adjectives as: warm, sensitive, lovely, beautiful, serene, lonely, angry and the like.

MEANING

5 4 3 2 1

Finally, a significant photograph must mean something. This is where the truly great photographs will shine above the rest. It's also where the most subjectivity comes in. A good photograph must do more than just record the event – it must give meaning to it. It's the meaning that gives "soul" to an image.

COMMENTS:

COMPOSITION GRADE _____/50

FINAL GRADE OR FINAL PLACE (point total = 100 pts.) _____

Superior	100	Good	85	Below average	75
	98		80	Poor	70
Excellent	95			Unacceptable	60
	90				

SUGGESTIONS FOR JUDGES

There are two basic ways to judge a photo contest. The first involves spreading out all of the entries in any particular category and judging each one against each other. The second involves judging each one against a fixed set of criteria and, in effect, giving the awards to the photographs with the highest "grades." Either of these methods can be used effectively, but the photographers must realize that no matter which system is used, a great deal of subjectivity is involved.