



Curriculum & Instruction

SUMMIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Content Area: Fine, Performing & Practical Arts

Course: Unified Photography

Grade(s): 9 - 12

Course Overview

This course introduces students to the art and practice of photography as both a technical craft and a powerful means of visual communication. Through a combination of historical study, technical skill development, creative exploration, and critical reflection, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of photography's evolution, processes, and expressive potential.

By the end of the course, students will have built a strong foundation in photographic history, technical skills, and visual literacy—preparing them to pursue photography as a creative practice, form of communication, or pathway to further study in the visual arts.

New Jersey State Learning Standards

Summit Public Schools curriculum aligns with the [New Jersey Student Learning Standards](#).

Content Area Standards:

1.5.12: Use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors

1.5.8.: Explain how a person's aesthetic choices are influenced by culture and environment, and how they impact the way in which visual messages are perceived and conveyed.

1.5.12: Apply relevant criteria from traditional and contemporary cultural contexts to examine, reflect on and plan revisions for works of art and design in progress.

1.5.12prof.Cr1a: Use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors.

1.5.12prof.Cr2b: Explain how traditional and non-traditional materials may impact human health and the environment, and demonstrate safe handling of materials, tools and equipment.

1.5.12acc.Cr1b: Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan works of art and design.

1.5.12acc.Cr2a: Through experimentation, practice and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.

1.5.12adv.Cr2a: Experiment, plan and make multiple works of art and design that explore a personally meaningful theme, idea, or concept.

1.5.12adv.Cr2b: Demonstrate understanding of the importance of balancing freedom and responsibility in the use of images, materials, tools and equipment in the creation and circulation of creative work.

1.5.12adv.Cr2c: Demonstrate in works of art or design how visual and material culture defines, shapes, enhances, inhibits, and/or empowers people's lives.

Date Revised: August 2025

1.5.12adv.Cr3a: Reflect on, re-engage, revise and refine works of art or design considering relevant traditional and contemporary criteria as well as personal artistic vision.

Interdisciplinary Standards:

L.KL.11–12.2. Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

L.VL.11–12.3. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grades 11–12 reading and content, including technical meanings, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

Career Readiness, Life Literacies and Key Skills Standards:

9.2.5.CAP.1: Evaluate personal likes and dislikes and identify careers that might be suited to personal likes.

9.4.8.CT.2: Develop multiple solutions to a problem and evaluate short- and long-term effects to determine the most plausible option.

Career Ready Practices (list if relevant)

CRP 1. Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.

CRP 2. Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.

CRP 3. Attend to personal health and financial well-being.

CRP 4. Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.

CRP 5. Consider the environmental, social and economic impacts of decisions.

CRP 6. Demonstrate creativity and innovation.

CRP 7. Employ valid and reliable research strategies.

CRP 8. Utilize critical thinking to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them.

CRP 9. Model integrity, ethical leadership and effective management.

CRP 10. Plan education and career paths aligned to personal goals.

CRP 11. Use technology to enhance productivity.

CRP 12. Work productively in teams while using cultural global competence.

New Jersey Curriculum Mandates: (list only relevant ones)

This curriculum integrates lessons that address the following interdisciplinary New Jersey Curriculum Mandates:

- [Diversity and Inclusion](#) (Grades K - 12)
- [History and Contributions of Individuals with Disabilities and LGBTQ persons](#) (Grades 6 - 12 Only)

Learning Objectives

Learning objectives are clear, specific statements that define what students should know, understand, and be able to do by the end of a lesson or course.

Students will be able to:

Date Revised: August 2025

- Know when and how photography was invented.
- Identify that photographic images have always played a large role in shaping history and contemporary culture.
- Know that time and light are controlled by the photographer to produce an accurate recording of the world.
- Know how enlargers, photo paper and chemistry combine to produce images that turn negative to positive.
- Learn how cameras are manipulated through focus and exposure to produce images that are unique to the photographer.
- Use all of the functions of a fully manual analogue camera.
- Load, properly expose, advance through the camera and unload roll film.
- Process roll film.
- Use film in the enlarger and turn negative into positive.
- Control contrast in their final prints.
- Use all of the functions of an enlarger.
- Identify a portrait photograph, a work of photojournalism and a work of fine art.
- Produce a portfolio of images representing each genre of photography.
- Produce a series of images in their chosen genre.
- Tell a story with images
- Edit their images into a concise body of work that conveys their original intentions.
- Choose a method of presentation for the final format of their project.
- Display their images for the public.

Units of Study

Units of study are organized collections of lessons and learning experiences focused on a specific topic and set of skills within a course. Each unit is guided by a set of essential questions.

Unit 1: Introduction to Photography (10 - 15 days)

- How, when, where and why was photography invented?
- How does photography play a role in history as well as contemporary culture?
- How do time and light work in conjunction to produce an image?
- What are basic darkroom techniques?
- How does a manual/film camera operate?
- How can I produce images that allow me to express a unique point of view?

Unit 2: Introduction to Film/ Analog Cameras (10 - 15 days)

- What are aperture and shutter speed and how do they relate to each other?
- How is film processed?
- How do I turn a negative image into a positive?
- How does contrast control affect my final prints?
- Why would I want to enlarge only part of my image?

Unit 3: The Photographic Assignment (10 - 15 days)

- What is a portrait photograph?
- What is landscape photography?
- What is photojournalism?
- How is photography used in advertising?
- How can a photograph or photographs tell a story?
- How can I use photography to portray a specific idea or concept?

Date Revised: August 2025

Unit 4: Final Portfolio/Presentation (10 - 15 days)

- How do photographers develop their own personal style?
- How do photographers get their work in front of a large audience?
- How do different cultures and societies value photographic images?
- How are images used to portray an idea or sell a product?
- How do photographers know if their ideas are being understood?

Instructional Resources and Materials

Instructional resources are the information sources teachers utilize to guide their teaching and assessing. Instructional materials are the texts students read or review. The instructional resources and materials may vary in order to meet the learning needs of students.

Required:

- *A History of Photography*, Naomi Rosenblum
- BBC Documentary - *The Genius of Photography*
- *Basic Photography* - Upton and Upton
- Ansel Adams - *The Negative*
- Jack Schofeld - *The Darkroom*
- Upton and Upton - *Photography*
- *A World History of Photography* - Naomi Rosenblum
- *Avedon* - Richard Avedon
- *Haiti* - Maggie Steber
- *The Americans* - Robert Frank
- Photographs- The Museum of Modern Art
- Historical and contemporary magazines - *Life*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair* and *Rolling Stone*.
- Historical and contemporary copies of the *New York Times*.

Assessment Strategies

Assessment measures a student's mastery of a course standard and learning objective. Assessment can be used for both instructional purposes and for evaluative purposes. Teachers may choose one or more of the following ideas to assess learners. They may also modify these ideas to make the assessment more responsive to students' interests and needs.

Formative:

- One on one feedback and group instruction.
- Classroom discussions
- Daily class check ins.

Summative:

- Final Edits of Work
- Presenting work to be displayed
- Class critiques
- Presentation of Final Prints
- Prepared work for exhibition
- Final Portfolio/Display

Benchmark:

- Observation and discussion of proper darkroom technique
- Weekly portfolio check ins.
- Final Portfolio of Images.
- Final Exhibition

Alternative:

- Final Exhibitions
- Portfolio Reviews
- Informal class discussions and critiques.
- Self Assessment
- Informal Critiques
- Hallway Exhibitions

Suggested Strategies for Modification & Differentiation

[Modifications Chart](#) (update for your content area)