

THE NARRATIVE PHOTOGRAPHS OF DOROTHEA LANGE

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This art lesson was based on narrative photographs taken by Dorothea Lange for the Farm Security Administration during The Great Depression and taught to fourth graders at Westside Elementary School in Valdosta, Georgia. Students were introduced to the concept of artworks serving as visual narratives and viewed two of Lange's photographs without initially being told their context. The students were prompted to work together as a class to create a verbal narrative for the first photograph viewed and next, to individually create written narratives for the second photograph viewed. Context and intent were revealed to the students at the end of the class period. The purpose of this lesson was that of enhancing instruction across the curriculum. It was later discovered that the students had been shown the same photographs by their third grade social studies instructor, and it is remarkable that many mentioned context specific details in their writings.