

Investigating Pictures

This modelling the tools is incorporated into critical challenges at grades 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 7, however, it can be adapted for use at all grade levels.

Overview

The detailed activities that follow help students learn to extract information from photographs. The focus is on using pictures to learn about community life, but the activities could be altered to suit other purposes. Students take on the role of detectives, looking for clues in photographs that depict various community scenes in order to answer the questions: what, where, who and why. They then use their findings to draw conclusions about the community.

Preplanning

Assemble a collection of pictures.

- Using trade books, textbooks, the Internet or travel magazines, accumulate a range of pictures on the community or topic you are studying. Look for pictures with a dominant person or main activity as their focus. Select one of the more straightforward pictures to use as a demonstration example with the class.

Session One

Introduce clue and conclusion.

- Ask if anyone in the class knows what a clue is. Offer several examples of clues, such as those suggested below, and invite the class to reach a conclusion.

Here's my Clue About ...	What is Your Conclusion?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• how I am feeling (Cross your arms and look nasty.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sad• mad
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• what I am thinking about (It has something to do with lunch...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• food• eating• time off
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• what I am going to do tonight (Mime typing on a computer.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• work on computer• play a video game
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• my favourite activity (Mime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• reading

reading a book or skiing.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> skiing
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After several examples, help students suggest words to define the concepts of clues and conclusions; e.g.,

- *Clues* are hints or pieces of information that help you find out something.
- *Conclusions* are answers or ideas that you think of because of a clue.

Invite students to suggest clues.

- Suggest several sample conclusions, such as those below, and invite students to offer clues that might lead to these conclusions.

My Conclusion is ...	What Clues Might Make me Think This?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that you are feeling happy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> smiling laughing having fun
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that you want to say something to me 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> raising hand trying to get attention call your name
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> that you are hungry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eating asking for food

Introduce the demonstration picture study.

- Indicate to the class that one way people get clues is by looking at pictures. Explain that police officers and detectives study photographs for clues about who someone is and what they might be doing. Display an overhead transparency of the picture selected for demonstration purposes or distribute a copy to each pair of students. Explain that the class will be community detectives—trying to find out about everyone in the community shown in the picture and what they do, where they do it and why. As good detectives, students will take one step at a time and they won't jump to conclusions. Explain that these phrases mean that students will answer one question before moving to the next question and that they will look for clues before coming to a conclusion.
- Create a chart with three columns. Label the first column Questions and the second column Clues. Print What is the person doing? in the question column and ask students to look for clues to the answer. Write their clues in the second column. If students suggest a

conclusion instead of a clue, do not write it down, but ask what they see in the picture that encourages them to think that the person is doing this; e.g., Why do you think the person is selling fruit and not selling meat or newspapers? Why do you think the person is selling fruit and not giving it away? Collect student clues and offer some of your own for the what question. Then, label the third column Conclusions. Record students' suggested conclusions and add some of your own. Encourage students to locate additional clues in support of the conclusions they offer. Repeat this procedure with the other three questions until you have a chart similar to the following.

Studying the Picture

Questions	Clues	Conclusions
What is the person doing?		
Where is this? (What is the place?)		
Who is the person?		
Why is the person doing it? (What needs is the person meeting?)		

Present a practice challenge.

- Distribute a copy of [Studying Pictures](#) to each pair of students. Present the critical task:

Find the clues for what, where, who and why in the photograph and then offer your conclusions for each question.

Ask students to look at the picture for clues to the what question. They are to record these in words or simple drawings in the clues box on the chart. Ask students to share their answers as a class and to add any clues to their chart that they had not already noticed. Discuss the conclusions that might be reached about the what question. Invite students to record these answers in the conclusions box on their sheet. Repeat this procedure until the clues and conclusions to the remaining three questions have been addressed. With the final question, encourage students to discuss why the person is acting in light of the needs that he may help to meet. For example, a taxi driver may be helping people meet their health needs by providing emergency service to people who must get to a hospital. Collect the completed charts to determine how well students understand the task.

Session Two

Present additional challenges.

- Direct students who successfully completed the practice challenge to work independently on a picture they select from the collection. When completed, quickly review their work before directing them to select a new picture to study. In the meanwhile, gather students who struggled with the practice challenge and repeat the practice procedure, using less challenging pictures. When students in this group are able to work on the task with a partner, give them a new picture and chart to complete the challenge. Encourage students to find as many clues as possible and to use the clues to reach conclusions for each question.

Session Three

Share findings.

- On the board, create a chart, such as the one below. Invite students to share their findings in summary form. For each photograph, ask for volunteers to identify what they have learned about communities by connecting the four questions to the features of a community.

Features of a Community

People (who)	Places (where)	Activities (what)	Needs met (why)
#1			
#2			
#3			

Evaluation

Assess the picture study.

- Assess students' ability to draw conclusions from pictures, using the rubric [Assessing Picture Studies](#). Use students' responses to the class discussion and their answers to [Studying Pictures](#) to assess students' ability to:
 - distinguish clues from conclusions

- recognize relevant clues and draw conclusions from them.

Reaching the basic understanding level on the rubric may be appropriate for primary students who are new to the study of community.

Credits

This lesson is adapted from *Contributing to Family and Community*, edited by Mary Abbott, Roland Case and Jan Nicol (Richmond, BC: The Critical Thinking Consortium, 2002, ISBN 0-86491-262-5) pp. 15-21. Permission granted from The Critical Thinking Consortium for use by Alberta teachers.

Documents

Documents Summary

The following documents are referenced in the above modelling the tools. They can be adapted for your needs and re-saved.


Graphic Organizers

- [Studying Pictures](#) 

Assessment

- [Assessing Picture Studies](#) 

Lesson Material

- [A Classroom Example of Investigating Pictures](#)
- [Samples of Student Work](#) 

Images

- [Community Images Collection](#)