


ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF ART

COMPOSITION



in Photography

Cultural Arts and Heritage
KEHA State Supported Lesson

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for Clothing, Textiles, and Household Equipment



Today we will...



- Briefly explain the connection between light and some of our camera settings.
- Apply our “Elements and Principles of Art”* vocabulary to **composition in photography**.
- Explore the concepts that make a “visually pleasing” photograph.
- Encourage participants to experiment with making pictures.

**from “Year 1” of the 2022-2025 Program of Work*



Is it a “good” photograph?



KEHA Judging Criteria for Photography

- Originality
- Content
- Clarity
- Technical Competence
- Composition



Photography Equipment



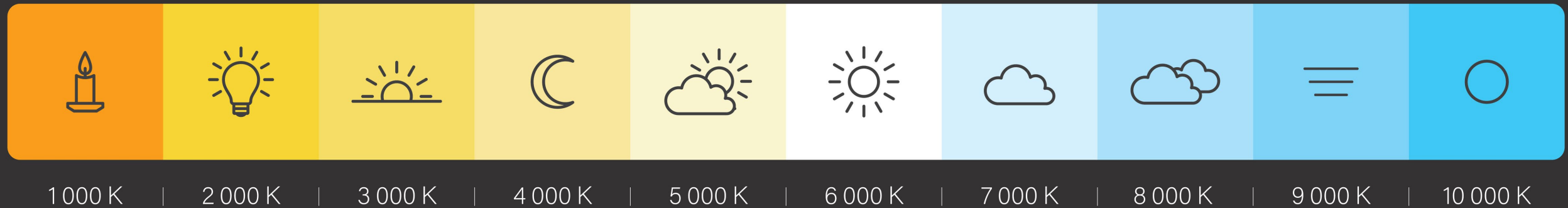
Light

- We need a light source to be able to “see” an image.
- We can “manipulate” the light to make our photos unique.

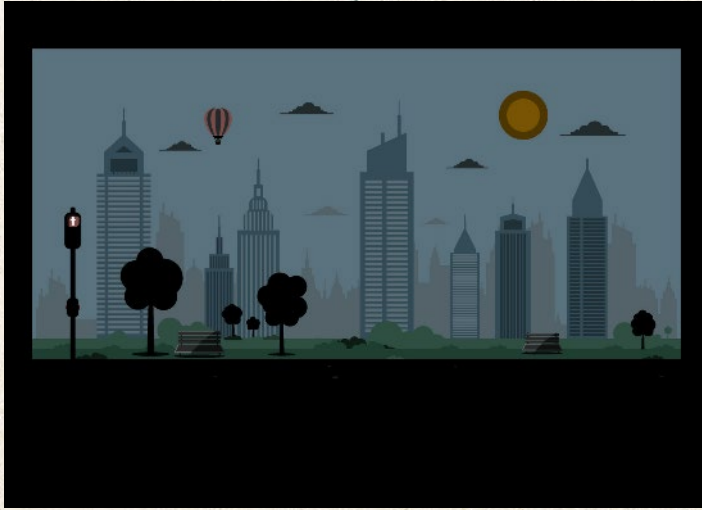
< WARM LIGHT

DAYLIGHT

COLD LIGHT >

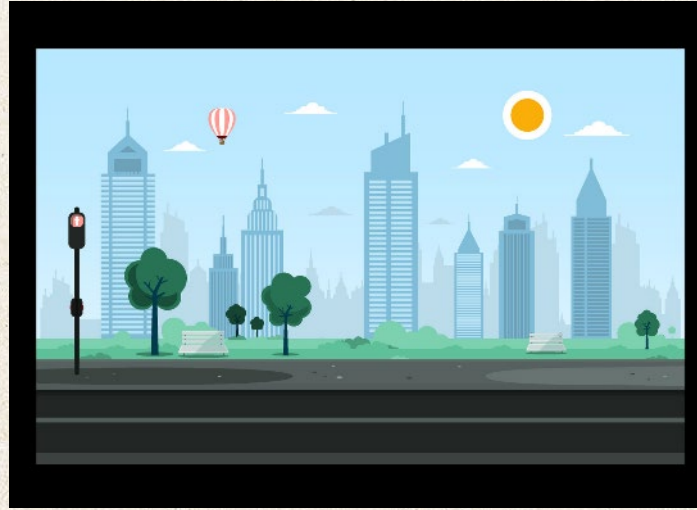


Light Exposure

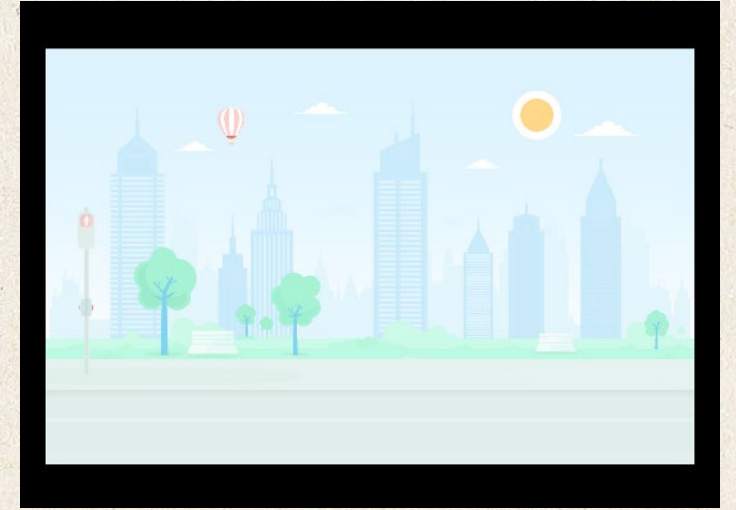


UNDEREXPOSURE

- Not enough light “let in”
- Sensitivity to light is low



CORRECT EXPOSURE

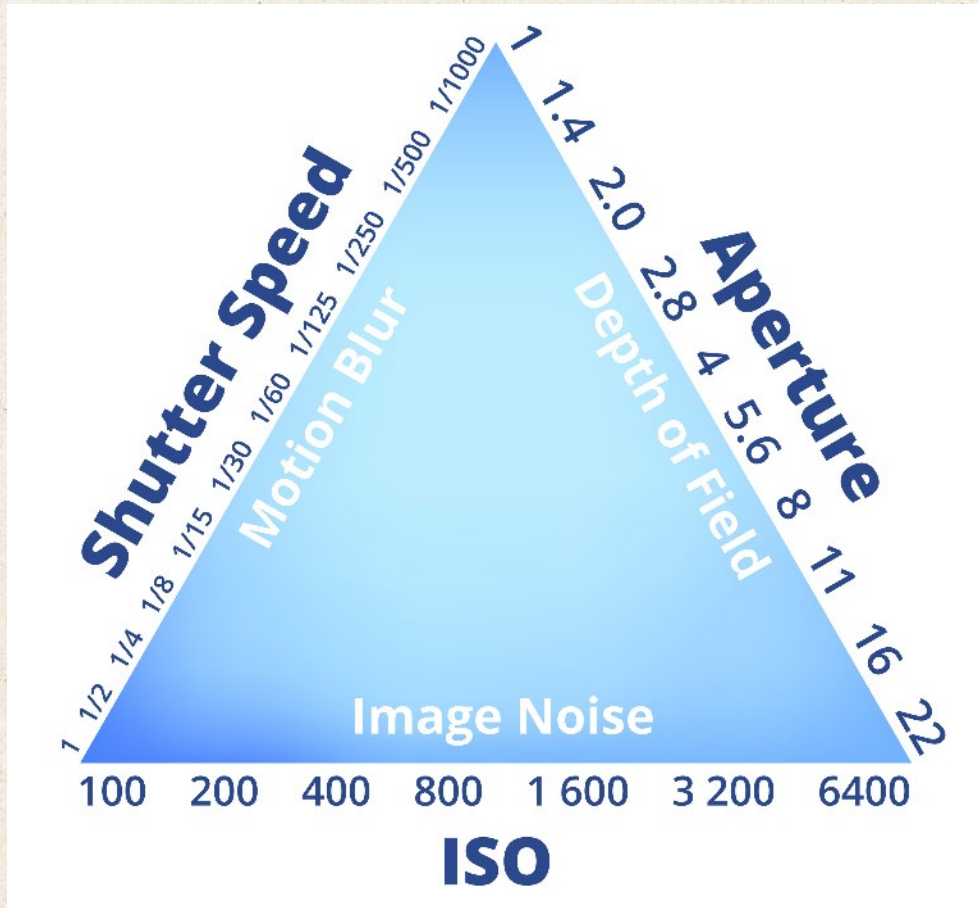


OVEREXPOSURE

- Too much light “let in”
- Sensitivity to light is high



Camera Settings



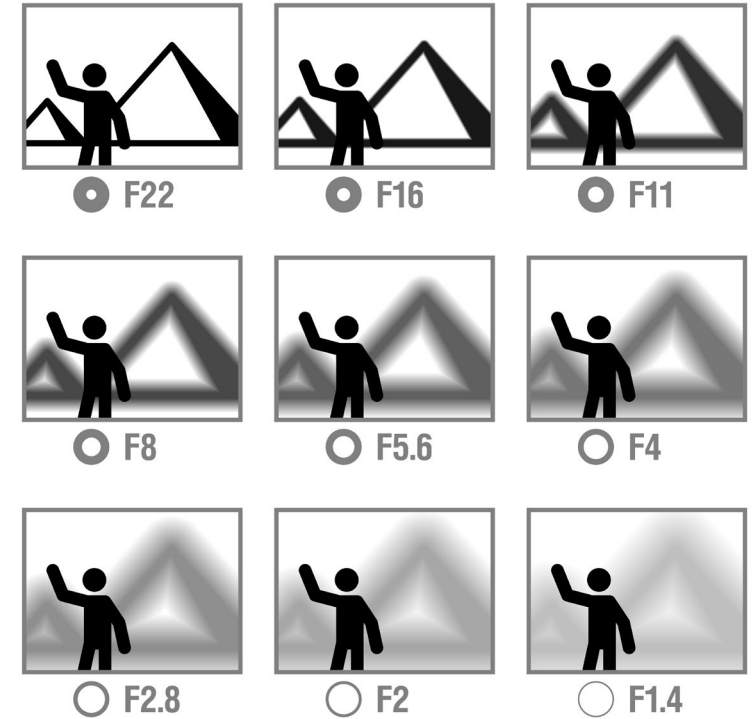
Exposure is a balance of these camera settings:

- **Aperture**
- **Shutter Speed**
- **ISO Sensitivity**



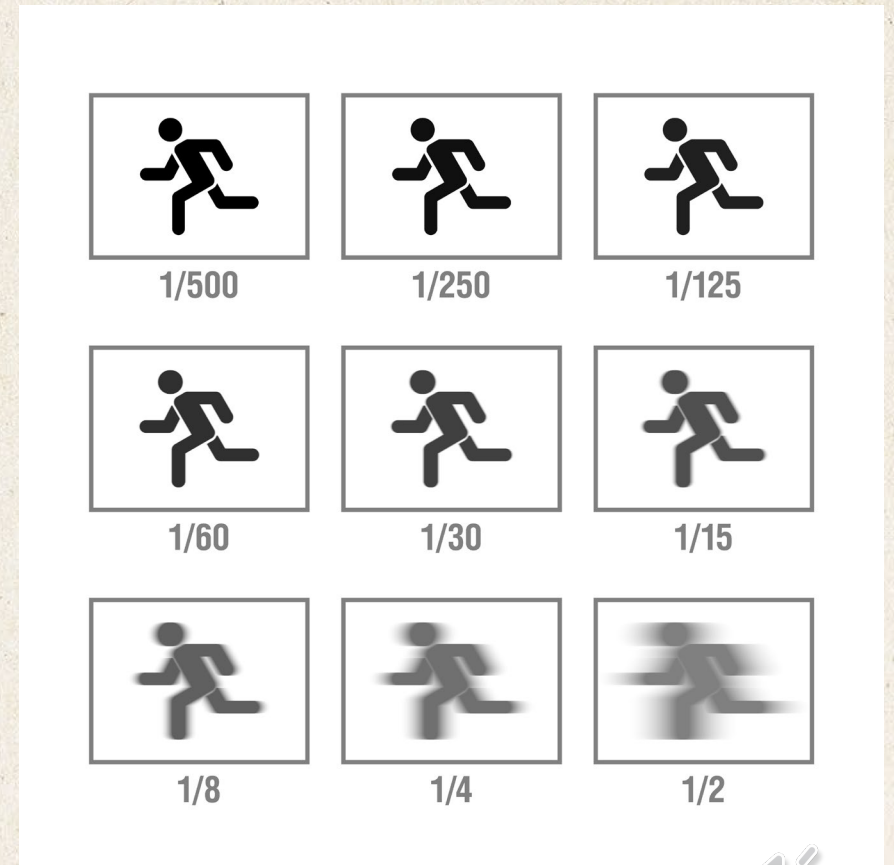
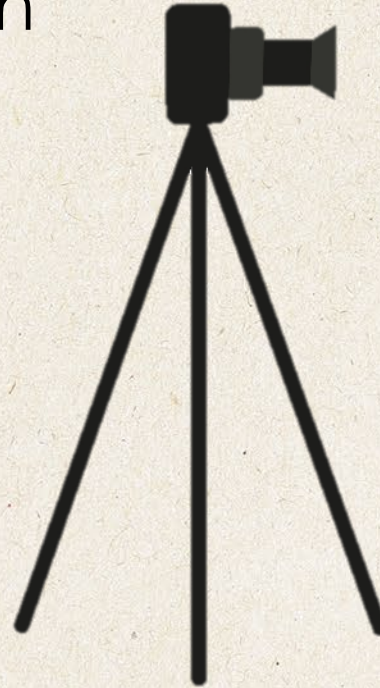
Aperture

- Opening in the lens that allows light to pass through to the image sensor (or film)
- Controls “depth of field”
- Controls what can be in focus
- “F-Stop” or “F-Number”
- Smaller “F-Stop” number = shallower depth of field



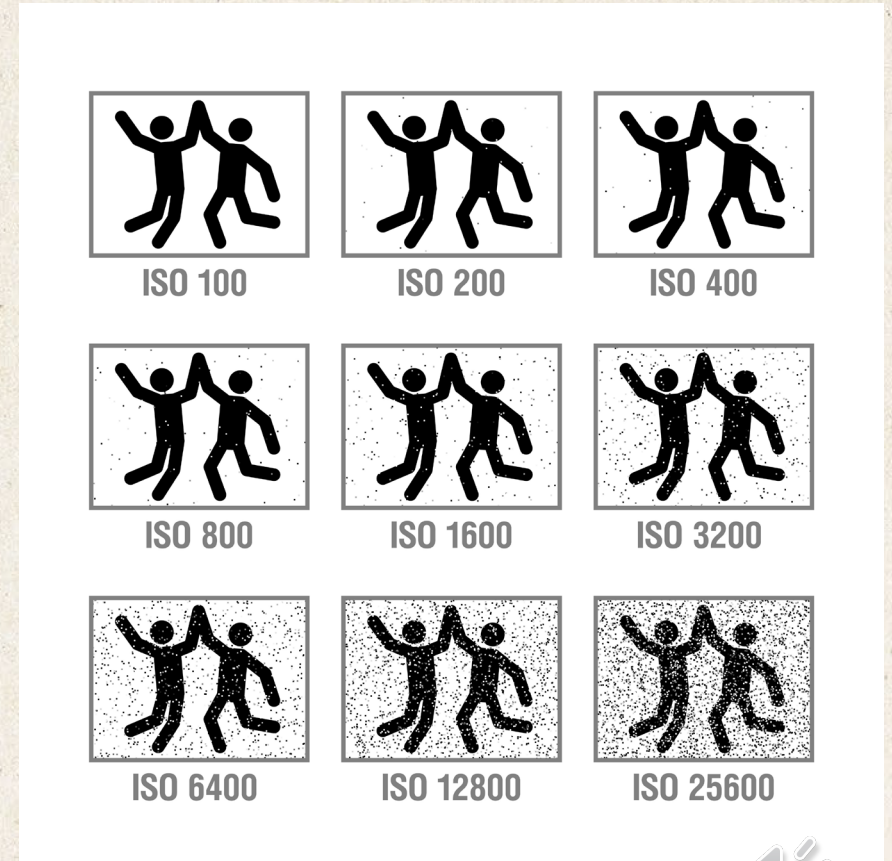
Shutter Speed

- Length of time lens is open
- Controls how much light makes it to the sensor
- Fractions of a second (or longer)
- Use a tripod to limit blur at slower speeds



ISO Sensitivity

- International Organization for Standardization
- How sensitive to light is the film or sensor?
- Lower ISO number
 - lower light sensitivity
 - higher image quality
- Higher ISO number
 - higher light sensitivity
 - lower image quality



“Make Pictures” with a Purpose

By understanding the **ELEMENTS** and **PRINCIPLES** of art and design, we can increase our “visual literacy” and awareness of the powerful images that surround us.



Line
Shape
Form
Space
Texture
Value
Color

ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF ART

COMPOSITION
in Photography

ELEMENTS

The physical and visual components with which a work of art is created.



Unity / Variety
Proportion
Balance
Contrast
Emphasis
Movement
Rhythm
Pattern

ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES OF ART

COMPOSITION
in Photography

PRINCIPLES

The effects or results
that are created
based on the use of
the ELEMENTS of art

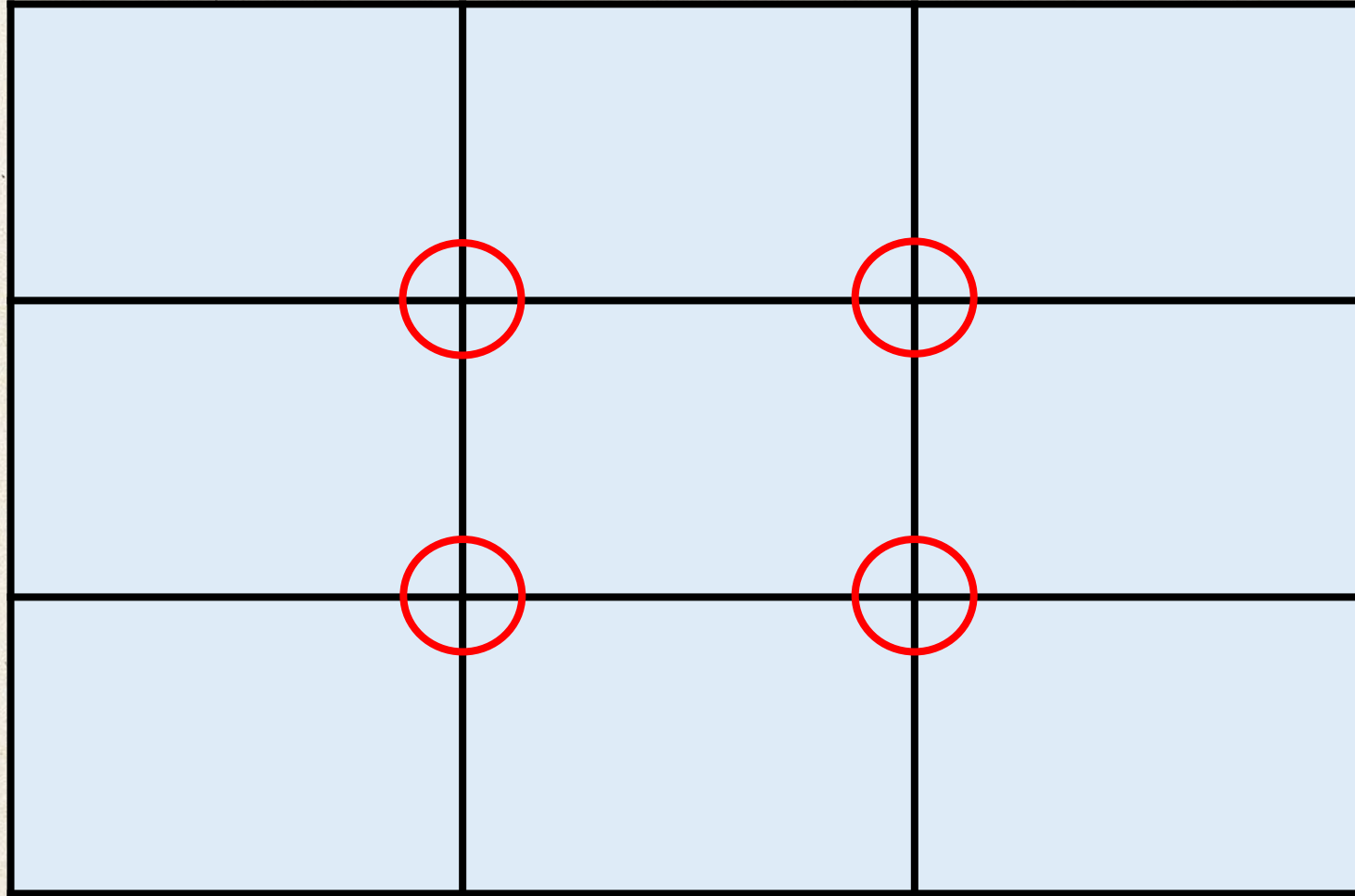


Composition Concepts

- Rule of Thirds
- Framing
- Leading Lines
- Balance
- Perspective / Viewpoint
- Depth of Field
- Background
- Capturing a Moment
- Motion
- Repetition
- Silhouette



Rule of Thirds



Rule of Thirds



Photo by: Brooklyn Walters



Rule of Thirds

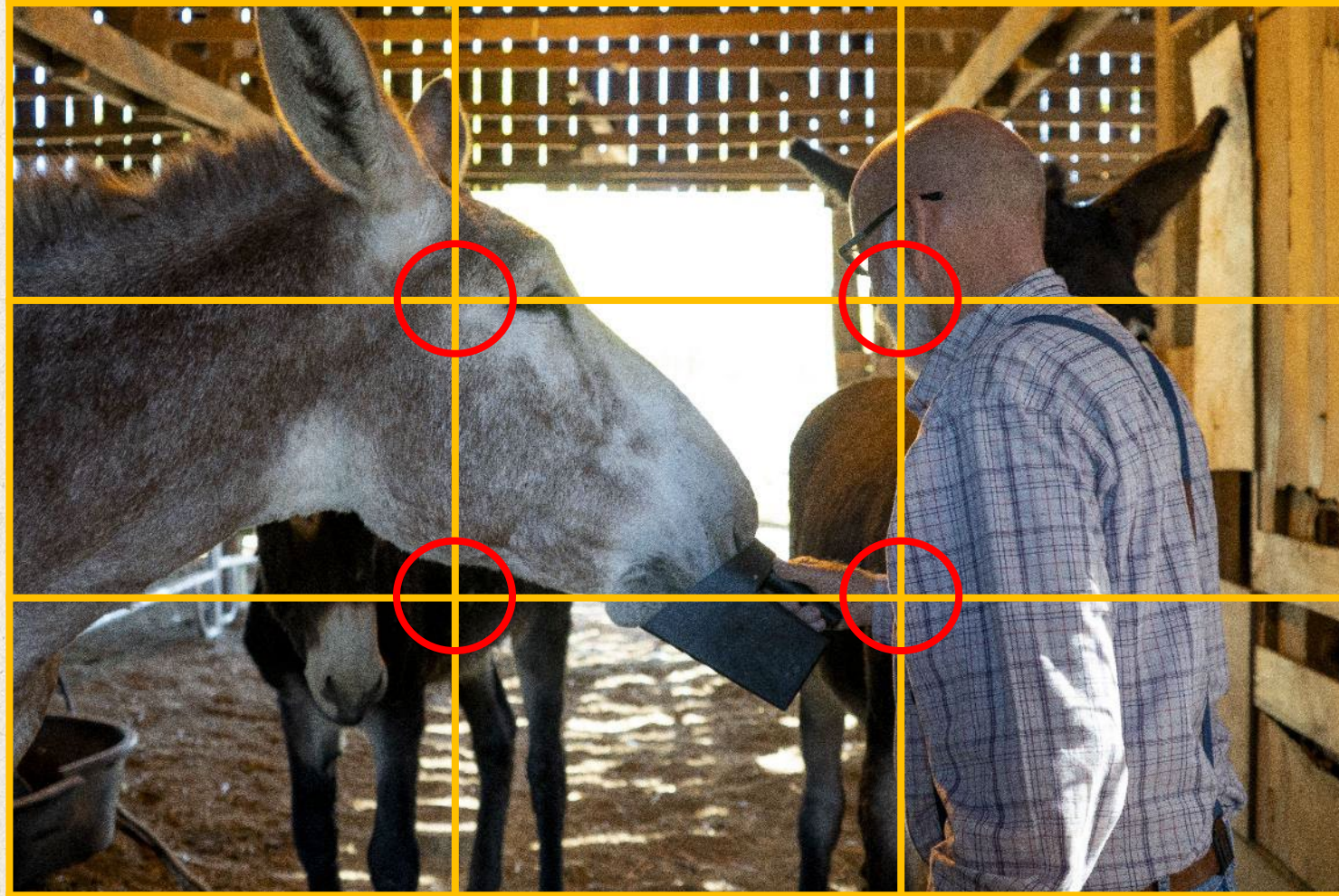


Photo by: Brooklyn Walters



Framing



Photo by: Michael Smallwood



Leading Lines



Photo by: Jack Weaver



Balance



Photo by: Nyah Leveretter



Perspective / Viewpoint

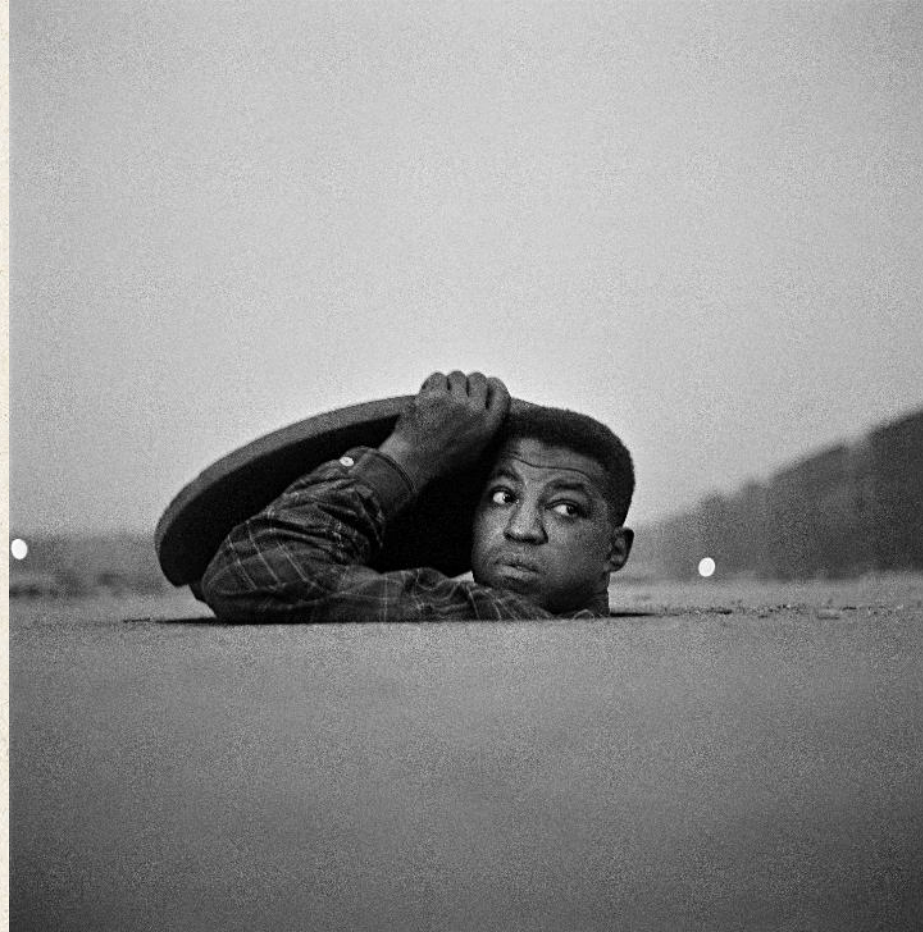


Photo by: Gordon Parks



Depth of Field

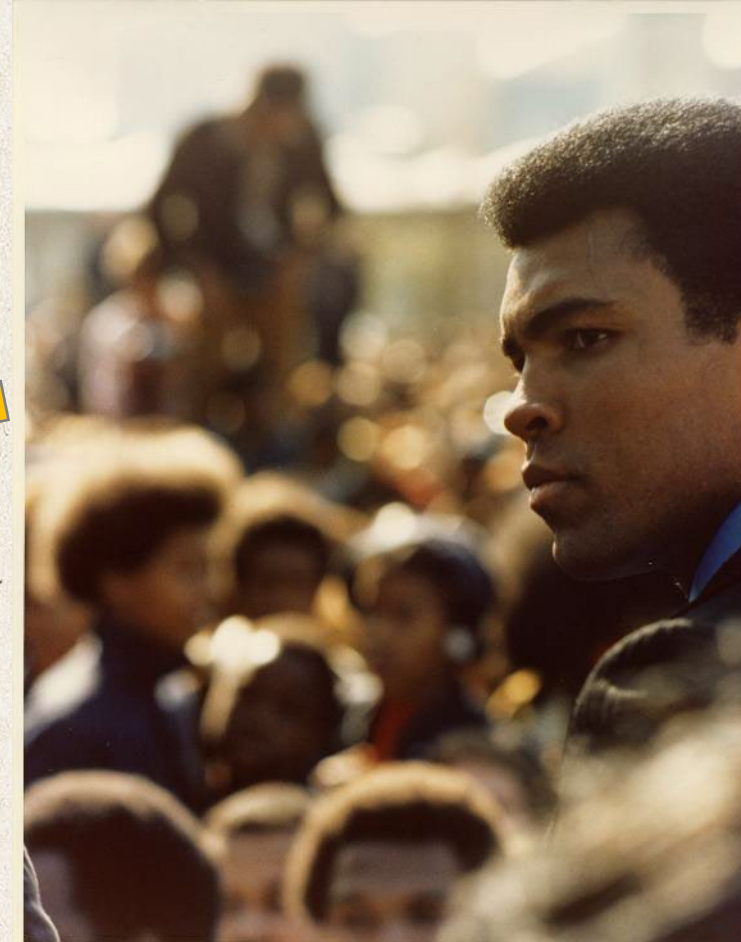
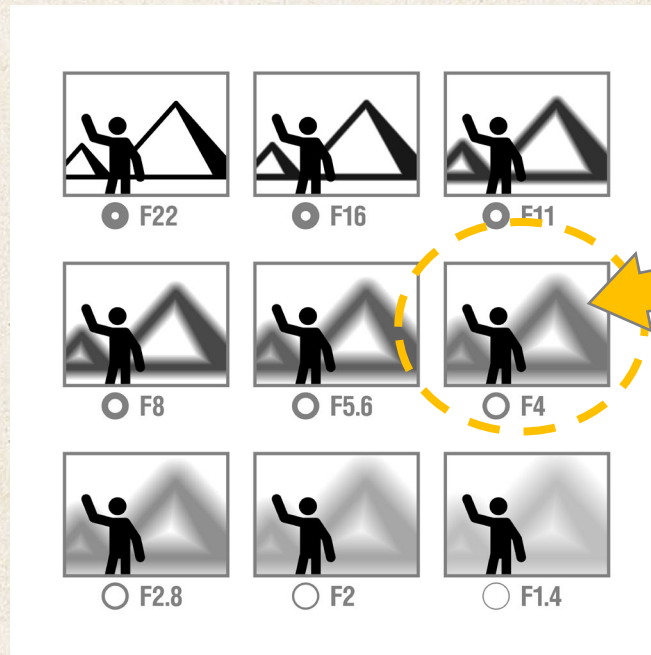


Photo by: C. Thomas Hardin



Background

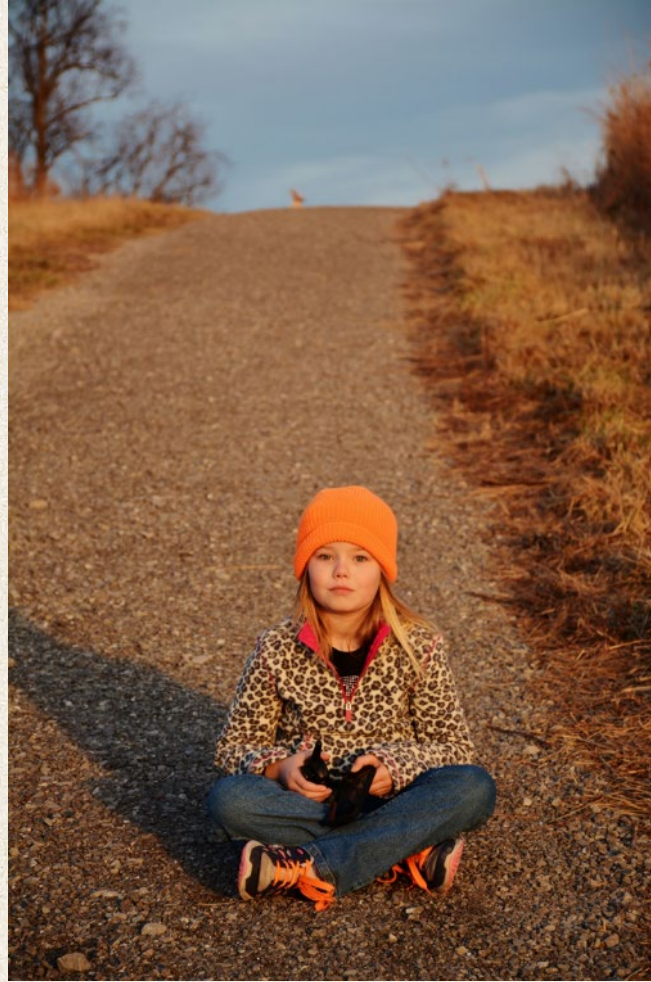


Photo by: Eric Comley



Capturing a Moment



Photo by: Bryce Towle



Motion



Photo by: Brooklyn Walters



Repetition



Photo by: Austin Collier



Silhouette



Photo by: Austin Collier



Color or Black and White



Photo by: Austin Collier



Is it a “good” photograph?



KEHA Judging Criteria for Photography

- Originality
- Content
- Clarity
- Technical Competence
- Composition



What's next?

- Learn the functions of your camera.
- Take some photographs.
- Experiment.
- Delete or toss photographs “without meaning.”
- Display and share your favorite photographs.



Questions?



Resources

Definitions of the Composition Concepts are based on content from *Making Photographs* by Sara Quinn, The Poynter Institute, poynter.org

Photograph examples used with permission from:

- Eric Comley, Garrard County 4-H Agent
- Picture Kentucky <https://picturekentucky.org>
- David Stephenson, Associate Professor, School of Journalism and Media
- University of Kentucky Art Museum

References:

- University of Minnesota Extension. (2023). Photography lessons and resource guide. Retrieved March 27, 2024, from <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oe45tGmujLS5Mpuun8HzH4y5QteQGBJw-5mCZISnl8>
- Way, C. (2006). Focus on photography: A curriculum guide. *International Center of Photography*. Retrieved March 27, 2024, from https://www.icp.org/sites/default/files/icp_curriculum_guide_part1_0.pdf

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