

**Fall 2010 Teaching with Primary Sources Quarterly
Learning Activity – Elementary Level Grades 3-5**

Every Picture Tells a Story



Hine, Lewis W., photographer. "Michael McNelis, 612 Noble St., age 8 yrs. old, newsboy." Photograph. 1910 June. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division: *National Child Labor Committee Collection*.
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004002337/PP/>

OVERVIEW

Overview

Students analyze a Lewis Hine photograph and use their observations to produce a creative writing piece. Working in pairs, students analyze the photograph before using the bibliographic information to answer their initial questions. Using their observations and imaginations, students create comic strips that describe what happened just before and just after the photograph was taken.

Objectives

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- analyze a historical photograph;
- construct new understandings connected to prior knowledge; and
- develop characters using dialogue.

Time Required

One 45-minute class period; activity extension idea requires additional class periods.

Recommended Grade Range

3-5

Topic/s

Culture, Folklife

Subject

Language Arts

Standards

McREL 4th Edition Standards & Benchmarks

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>

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http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/quarterly/elementary/pdf/elementary_activity3-5.pdf

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OVERVIEW (CONT'D)

Historical Understanding

Standard 2. Understands the historical perspective.

Language Arts

Standard 1. Benchmark 8. Writes narrative accounts, such as poems and stories (e.g., establishes a context that enables the reader to imagine the event or experience; develops characters, setting, and plot; creates an organizing structure; uses transitions to sequence events; uses concrete sensory details; uses strategies such as dialogue, tension, and suspense; uses an identifiable voice).

Credits

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PREPARATION

Materials

Have these materials ready before the activity.

-Print one copy for each pair of students:

Photograph: “Michael McNelis, 612 Noble St., age 8 yrs. old, newsboy.”* 1910 June. From Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division: *National Child Labor Committee Collection*. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/nclc.03633/>

**Note: For another topic of study, substitute the photograph for this activity. Browse the ready-to-print PDF versions of images available in the Library’s Primary Source Sets:*
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/>

Primary Source Analysis Tool:

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html>

Bibliographic Record: “Michael McNelis, 612 Noble St., age 8 yrs. old, newsboy.”
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004002337/PP/>

-Print one copy for use in facilitating analysis discussion:

Teacher’s Guide: Analyzing Photographs and Prints

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides.html>

-Print one copy per student:

Comic strip template (see Attachment A)

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http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/quarterly/elementary/pdf/elementary_activity3-5.pdf

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PROCEDURE

1. Ask students if they have ever seen a picture in a newspaper or magazine and thought, “I wonder what is happening in this picture?”
2. Distribute one copy of the photograph, “Michael McNelis, 612 Noble St., age 8 yrs. old, newsboy,” to each pair of students and project the image, if possible. Tell students that the first thing that came to your mind when you saw this photograph was, “What is happening in this picture?”
3. Distribute a Primary Source Analysis Tool to each pair of students. Have students work together to analyze the photograph. Guide students using select questions from the Teacher’s Guide for Analyzing Photographs and Prints. Give students between 5-10 minutes to record their observations, reflections and questions.
4. Ask each pair to choose one question they have about the photograph to share with the class. Then, provide a copy of the photograph’s bibliographic record to each pair. Have students read the bibliographic record with their partner first, then read it together as a class.
5. After reading the bibliographic record, ask students to highlight any questions on their completed analysis tools that have been answered. Students should highlight the parts of the bibliographic record they used to help them answer their questions.
6. As a class, discuss what students have learned about the background of this photograph. Have students consider their unanswered questions and any new questions that arose from the bibliographic record, and brainstorm topics they could research to answer these questions. Students should write these topics under the tool’s “Further Investigation” section.
7. Distribute a three-frame comic strip to each student. Ask students to imagine what happened just before and just after this picture was taken. They should illustrate their story using the three frames of the strip and include dialogue between the characters. Encourage students to think about the background information from the photograph’s bibliographic record.

Ask these questions to focus students’ writing process, if necessary:

- Is there a problem? How is the problem solved?
 - Do these “characters” have names?
 - How did the “characters” meet?
 - How do the “characters” feel? Why?
8. When students have completed their comic strip, they should use the back of the comic strip to write a paragraph describing the details from the photograph and/or bibliographic record that influenced their story.

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PROCEDURE (CONT'D)

9. Post the comic strips around the room and give students time to walk around and read each others' interpretations of the photograph. If time allows, debrief as a class about how their interpretations were similar or different from their classmates' and how viewing others' opinions might have changed their own.

ACTIVITY EXTENSION

-Have students form small groups and write the dialogue for a short skit. Allow for creativity and encourage students to choose a person in the photograph and write from his perspective. Students should write their skit in the form of a play script and include stage directions. Students can assume the roles of the characters in their skit and act out the skit for the rest of the class.

EVALUATION

- Students' active participation in independent group work, including completion of the Primary Source Analysis Tool
- Students' active participation in class discussions
- Students' paragraph reflection that ties their comic strips to their photograph analysis and bibliographic record information
- (Optional) Design a rubric for the comic strip that evaluates grammar skills being covered in class, creativity, and inclusion of evidence from the photograph and bibliographic record



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http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/quarterly/elementary/pdf/elementary_activity3-5.pdf

Create Your Own Comic Strip

Directions: After analyzing the photograph with your analysis tool, use this evidence and the bibliographic record to create your own comic strip.

Box 1: Draw what might have happened right **before** the picture was taken. Use dialogue boxes to write what the boy and man were talking about.

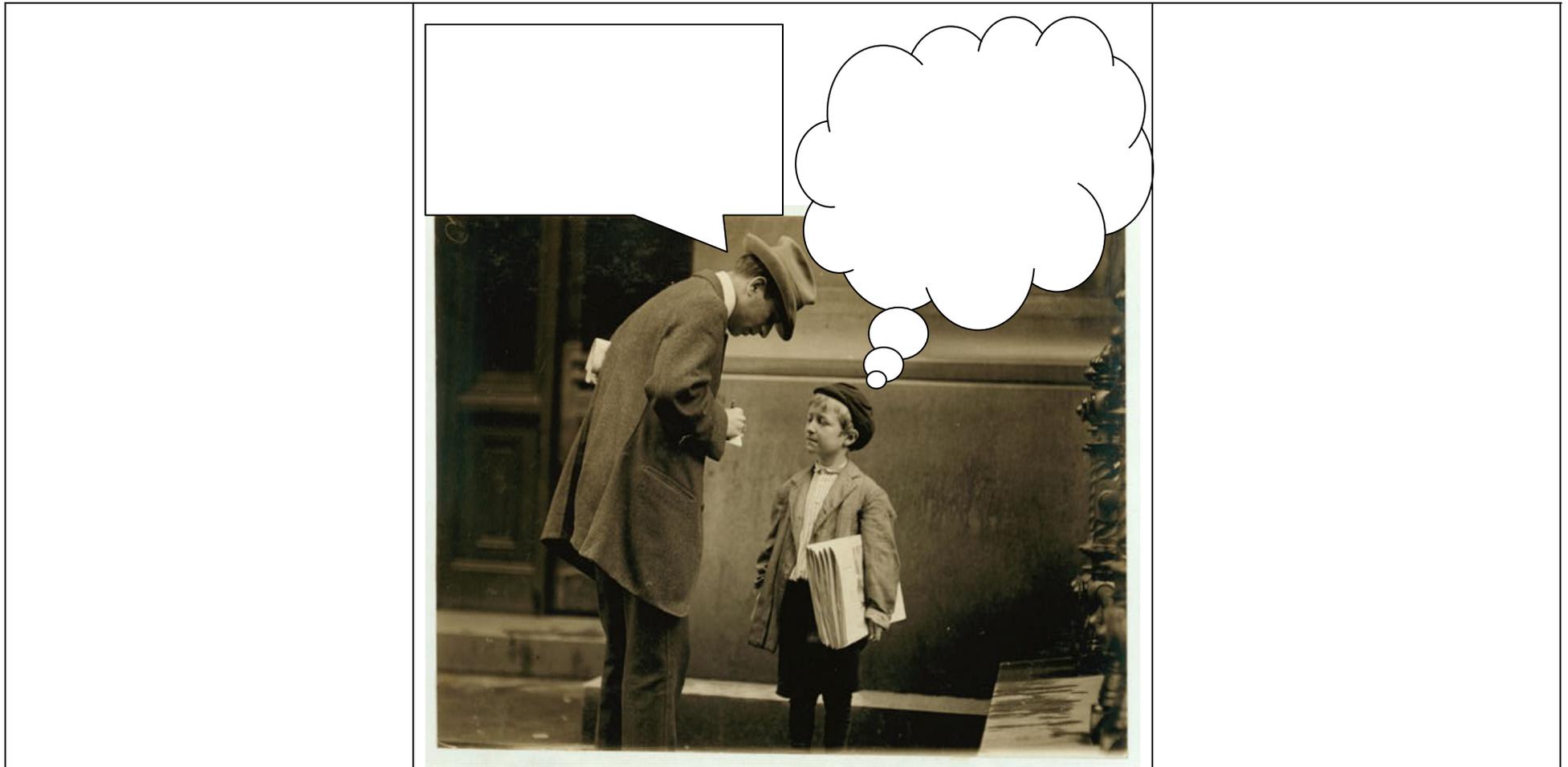
Box 2: Write what you think the boy and man are saying or thinking in the picture.

Box 3: Draw what might have happened right **after** the picture was taken. Use dialogue boxes to write what the boy and man were talking about.

When you finish your comic strip, turn it over and complete the back of this sheet.

Title:

Date:



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Created by: _____

Directions:

1. Think about the evidence you recorded on your analysis tool and the information you learned from the bibliographic record.
2. Write a paragraph describing which information from your analysis or the bibliographic record helped you write your story.
