

HAPPY HOME EDUCATION

Telling stories through photos

Photography & Film

KS2

Prepared for: Student

30 January 2026





Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

1. Understand how photographs can be used to tell a story.
2. Learn to identify emotions and themes in photographs.
3. Explore techniques to arrange and create photo narratives.
4. Develop observational skills to capture details in photos.
5. Create a short storyboard or photo series that tells a story.



Introduction

Hello Student! Did you know that photography and film are amazing ways to tell stories, just like books or paintings? You can use photos to capture feelings, moments, and ideas that can help people understand a story without using any words at all! Think about a photo of a beach sunset – by looking at it, people might feel calm or happy, even though they haven't been told how to feel.

In this lesson, you'll explore how to use photographs creatively to tell a story. We'll look at some key tricks used by photographers and filmmakers and then practice creating your own photo story. By the end, you'll be able to think like a storyteller, but with a camera instead of a pen or paper! Are you ready to get creative? Let's dive in.





What You Need to Know

Photography is a brilliant way to communicate without using words. Photographers often take photos to share emotions, ideas, or moments with people who look at them. To tell a story through photos, it's important to think about the subject (what you're capturing), the mood (how the picture feels), and the sequence (the order of pictures, if you're using more than one).

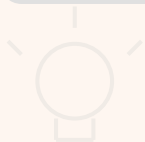
Storytelling in photography can be as simple as taking one photo of something meaningful, like a child with a balloon that's about to float away. It can also be done through a series of photos, like capturing someone baking a delicious treat from start to finish. This technique of using multiple photos is called a photo story.

Professional photographers sometimes use composition (the arrangement of objects in a photo), light (to highlight or darken parts of the image), and angles (how the photo is taken) to make their stories come to life. It's similar to how you might describe the setting, characters, and action in your favourite storybooks!

Here's an inspiring example from the UK: If you visit the British Museum in London, you'll find old photographs and paintings that tell the story of history and people's everyday lives. Another example is the famous wildlife photographer Chris Packham, whose photos often tell powerful stories about animals and nature.

In addition to capturing moments, photos can also provoke questions like, 'What happened before this moment?', 'What might happen next?', or 'How does this picture make me feel?'. As a photographer, asking these questions can help you create an amazing story.

Even though you don't need fancy equipment to tell photo stories, some basics can help! A smartphone camera, a digital camera, or even a disposable camera are all great tools to get started. The most important thing is creativity – think about what story you'd like to tell with your photos. Let's learn how!





Key Facts to Remember

- Photographs can capture moments that tell a story without using words.
- You can use light, angles, and arrangement to make a photo more powerful.
- A photo story is a series of photos that work together to tell a narrative.
- Good photographs make people feel emotions or ask questions.
- The camera doesn't have to be expensive – creativity is more important!
- Photographers use techniques like composition and timing to get the best shots.
- You can practise storytelling in photography at home or outdoors.
- The UK is home to many inspiring photographers like Chris Packham.
- Places like the British Museum showcase photo stories from history.
- Photography can help us understand the world through other people's eyes.

Aa

Key Vocabulary

Composition

The arrangement of objects in a photo.

Lighting

How light is used to brighten or darken a photo.

Mood

The feelings or atmosphere in a photograph.

Subject

The main object or person shown in a photo.

Storyboard

A series of images showing the idea for a story.

Angle

The position of the camera when a photo is taken.

Narrative

A story or sequence of events.

Sequence

The order in which the photos are arranged.

Perspective

The viewpoint or angle from which something is seen.

Detail

Small parts of a photo that contribute to the bigger picture.



Activities

Activity 1: Photo Story Brainstorm

Type: Creative | Duration: 30 minutes

Come up with a story idea and write it down or draw a quick sketch of the scenes.

Materials needed:

- Paper
- Pencil
- Crayons or markers

Steps:

1. Step 1: Think of a story idea that can be told in photos.
2. Step 2: Write down the story or sketch it in 3-4 parts.
3. Step 3: Plan what you will take pictures of for each scene.

Activity 2: Create a Photo Story

Type: Hands-on | Duration: 45 minutes

Capture 3-6 photos that tell a story based on your brainstorming.

Materials needed:

- A smartphone or camera
- Props related to your story
- A safe space indoors or outdoors

Steps:

1. Step 1: Collect simple props if needed.
2. Step 2: Use your camera to take pictures for each scene.
3. Step 3: Arrange the photos to show your story in order.

Activity 3: Story Critique

Type: Discussion | Duration: 20 minutes

Share your photo story with family and ask for their thoughts.

Materials needed:

- Your photo story

Steps:

1. Step 1: Show your photo story to family.
2. Step 2: Ask them what they think the story is about.
3. Step 3: Discuss how emotions or themes were shown in your photos.

Activity 4: Mood Tester

Type: Creative | Duration: 40 minutes

Create photos using different lighting, angles, and composition to show various moods.

Materials needed:

- Camera
- Lamp or source of light

Steps:

1. Step 1: Choose a subject (e.g. object or scene).
2. Step 2: Experiment with lighting – try bright vs dark.
3. Step 3: Take photos from different angles and compositions.
4. Step 4: Decide which mood looks best.





Quiz: Telling stories through photos

Circle the correct answer for each question.



1 Why can photographs be powerful tools for storytelling?

- A) Because they use light, angles, and arrangement to capture meaning.
- B) Because they can only capture beautiful scenes.
- C) Because they do not require expensive cameras.
- D) Because they are always easy to create.

2 What is a photo story?

- A) A photo taken in a museum.
- B) A single photo that stands alone.
- C) A series of photos that work together to tell a narrative.
- D) A drawing based on a photograph.

3 Why don't you need an expensive camera to take good photographs?

- A) Because expensive cameras don't work.
- B) Because creativity is more important than cost.
- C) Because all cameras take the same pictures.
- D) Because photography is only about luck.

4 Which element could a photographer use to make a photo more emotional?

- A) Hiring actors for the photo.
- B) Changing the weather.
- C) Adjusting the light, composition, or timing.
- D) Only taking photos of animals.

5 What could you try if you want to practise photo storytelling?

- A) Taking photos of your daily activities at home or outdoors.
- B) Only taking photographs in a studio.
- C) Only using photos taken by someone else.
- D) Drawing instead of taking pictures.

6

What can visiting museums like the British Museum teach us about photography?

- A) They show how photography has been used to document history.
- B) They have lots of expensive cameras to borrow.
- C) They give photography lessons for free every day.
- D) They only display paintings, not photos.

7

Who is Chris Packham, and why might he inspire UK photographers?

- A) He is a footballer who uses photos in his games.
- B) He is a photographer known for capturing nature and wildlife.
- C) He is a scientist who doesn't like photography.
- D) He is a painter who advises on photo techniques.

8

How can photography help us see the world differently?

- A) By making all photos look the same.
- B) By showing us the world through the photographer's point of view.
- C) By taking pictures with no artistic techniques.
- D) By avoiding any kind of light or colour in pictures.





Extension Ideas

Want to learn more? Try these ideas:

- Look at famous photo stories online or at local museum exhibits.
- Write a short story or poem inspired by one of your photos.
- Practise taking nature photos to create a seasonal story (e.g. Autumn leaves).
- Create a 'Day in My Life' photo story showing your daily routines.



Helpful Resources

- <https://www.npg.org.uk> (National Portrait Gallery – for inspiring photography exhibitions)
- <https://www.tate.org.uk> (Tate galleries – with photography exhibits and workshops)
- <https://www.chrispackham.co.uk> (Chris Packham – wildlife photographer and storyteller)
- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/history> (Explore photo stories in historical archives)
- <https://www.royalparks.org.uk> (Visit natural parks to practise taking wildlife photos)





Answer Key - For Parents

Quiz Answers:

1. **A** - Photographs are powerful because they use visual elements like light, angles, and arrangement to communicate stories and emotions.
2. **C** - A photo story is a collection of multiple photos that combine to tell a larger story or narrative.
3. **B** - Creativity, how you frame your shot, and the techniques you use are more important than having an expensive camera.
4. **C** - Photographers use light, timing, and the way they arrange elements in the photo (composition) to create emotions or evoke questions.
5. **A** - You can practise storytelling by taking photos of everyday scenes at home or outdoors, noticing how ordinary moments can tell a story.
6. **A** - Museums showcase photography that tells stories from history, helping us understand others' perspectives.
7. **B** - Chris Packham is a well-known UK photographer and naturalist, famous for capturing nature and wildlife in his photography.
8. **B** - Photography allows us to see the world through the photographer's eyes, helping us understand their perspective and experiences.

