

June, 2017

Dear 7th graders and parents,

Your young adult should have three rolls of tri-x 400 film and a Canon film camera which were given out around June 5th. Please have them review the techniques for successful black and white photography and go over all these communications regarding this assignment. They are encouraged to shoot more than the three rolls over the summer, if it is warranted.

Your 7th grader has borrowed a school film camera, and they are responsible for bringing it back in one piece. Cameras do malfunction and that's expected. If negligence is involved, then the student may be held responsible for the cost of the camera. I've requested payment for only two cameras out of over 450 summer loans, and I have been impressed with how careful Green Acres students have been with the cameras. **Be careful with the camera, do not run with it or drop it!** I no longer provide lens caps, they get lost too frequently. Keep the lens clean and don't bang it against anything.

Most of the students received Canon Rebel or Elan full size single lens reflex cameras. Rebels take two CR2 batteries, and Elans require one 2CR5. Some of the cameras require CR 123's. Almost all of the batteries should last through the summer, I have checked them out. However, if you are going somewhere special, you should purchase one extra set of batteries so that you are prepared. Take the batteries out of the camera and see what kind they are.

Digital color photography will be an integral part of the 7th grade program next year. Your young adult has either told me that they have a digital camera, or I have loaned them one from the photography program. In addition to the film shooting, **digital shooting is also required.** At the end of the summer, they should edit their images, first in the camera, and then on the computer, and put them on a **flash drive/memory stick. They should bring in at least 150-200 images, and these should be the very best of what they shot, having edited them down from a much higher number.** They should bring the images to school in the first week in September and download the images to the server, putting them into their own folder so they have them available to work with in Photoshop and to print when possible.

Students should be shooting digital images with a real camera, but I realize that many times, the student may have a phone camera and not a digital camera. It's OK for students to use their phone cameras when their digital camera is not present. Therefore, they should be looking out for good photos anytime they are out with their phone. Phone images can be downloaded to folders at school just as easily. **Phone images and all images should be edited!!**

Have a great summer and I look forward to teaching your 7th grader next year!!

Sincerely,

Victor Stekoll

7th Grade Summer Assignment

1. **Shoot the assignment outdoors.** Avoid indoor flash photographs. Take your camera with you on vacations. Do not just shoot photos around your house. Go somewhere!
2. Never open the camera back until you are sure that the film is rewound-shoot at least the three rolls that you have been given. Extra black and white film (tri-x) can be ordered from Service Photo (410-235-6200). Remember the story about the GAS student who ran home to show his mother that the camera had film inside, and opened the back of the camera, thus exposing (ruining) the film and said, "See, and it has film in it!" **If you do open the back, the whole roll is not ruined.** About 8 photos out of 36 will be ruined, so close the back up and keep shooting.
3. **The subject should fill the frame. Move closer if it doesn't or zoom in. (You have to decide what the subject is, you're not just shooting away!)**
4. Be aware of how your camera lens is set. AF means automatic focus and it will focus for you, but some cameras won't shoot on AF well. **You should shoot on MF, manual focus where you focus the photo yourself.**
5. Don't wait until the last two weeks of the summer, and don't shoot up the film around the house. Go out somewhere. Enclosed is a list of places in the area to go.
6. Remember the techniques for black and white- reflections, repetition, circles and ovals, lines, texture, patterns, rule of thirds, etc. (see the next page)
7. Take **photos of people** whenever possible.
8. Shoot in all sun or all shade, not mixed-the sun should be behind your back when possible.
9. **The cameras and lenses are made of plastic and will break if dropped or you smash them into something. Keep the camera strap around your neck, do not run with the camera, and be very aware of where the camera is. Never throw a bag containing a camera.**
10. **Special subjects: Try these:**
 - Shoot many things that are very close up, the closest you can focus with the camera.**
 - Try shooting lights at night, especially with the digital camera.**
 - Shoot close-ups of people, shoot parts of people's faces, their feet, etc.**
10. Bring in your film, film camera and a flash drive with your digital images on the first day of school in September, and Victor will collect it.

Techniques in Black and White Photography

1. Use lines and patterns
2. Good contrast range from black to white
3. Use of shadows
4. Use Rule of Thirds-have subject off center, not in the middle
5. Sharpness-image must be sharp
6. Repetition of objects, shapes, or subjects
7. Texture in wood, rock, and clothing
8. Geometry, especially circles and ovals
9. Create diagonals in your photos
10. Capture the "decisive moment" when possible
11. The subject should fill the frame, the subject should fill the frame!! Get closer if it doesn't
12. Create mystique-make the viewer wonder how the photo was done
13. Reflection in glass, mirrors, and walls
14. Make the photo 3-Dimensions, have a foreground, middle ground, and background-include trees or vegetation in a mountain shot-keep out the sky, make the sky no more than 1/3 of the image!
15. Camera Tilts! But not too many! Choose what works, look through the camera viewfinder all of the time!
16. Perspective-look up, look down! Don't always shoot straight on!

Study and internalize these techniques for black and white photography. When you see them, shoot them!

Highly Recommended: parades, carnivals, cruises, county/state fairs

Guidelines for using Canon EOS Cameras

1. **Keep the lens clean and be very careful to never drop the camera or bump it into things. It is made of plastic and is fragile. Keep the lens cap on when not using for a while if you have one. Be very careful with what you bump into with the lens. Always keep the camera around your neck! Never run with the camera!**

2. The cameras use two CR-2 batteries (Rebel), one 2CR-5 battery (Elan) or two CR 123 batteries (larger than the CR-2s). **You should purchase an extra set of batteries to have on hand as these may go bad during the summer.**

When you are not using the camera, turn it to the off position (red L on dial).

3. Place the switch on the lens to AF for automatic focus, the cameras will focus for you before you take the photo. Place on MF and you will need to focus it yourself. This might happen if the AF setting won't focus on what you want it to. Also, if you are taking action shots with fast movement, you will have to use manual focus. **I encourage students to use MF, you should be focusing your own shots!** Try different settings.

4. Load the film by putting it into the slot in the back of the camera. Pull the film out right **to** the red dot or black triangle on the other side while keeping the film flat. The common error is to pull the film out too far, putting it down over the roller too far, thus incorrectly loading the film. Pull the film to the red dot, make it lie flat and close the back of the camera. The film should go all the way out to 37, then shoot back to 36, shooting down from 36 to 1 and then rewinding automatically when it's done (for Rebels). For Elan and A-2, the camera will move to one and shoot from one to 36, rewinding all the way back when it is done.

5. The best position for the dial on the top right is **P, for Program, not green.** It will set the best combination of shutter speeds and F-stops for the lighting. Turn the camera to the off position (red L) when you are not using it for several hours or days. You may experiment with other settings. The flower setting is macro, taking real close ups of small things. **Again, think about taking photos of things real close up.**

6. You may use the flash if you need light on subjects. Push the flash button on the top left side of the camera (Rebel) or right side (Elan), and it will pop up. Push it down to close it. The camera setting must be on P (program) for the flash to work this way.

7. Remember to shoot in all sun or all shade, not mixed.

8. Remember that the subject should fill the frame.

9. Happy Shooting!!!

10. A final word about **travel through airports.** Never put film or cameras in the checked luggage, they will zap it to pieces. Always hand-carry a film camera through security. Ask to hand-carry the film through where you walk or not even that, have them check it without a machine. If they claim that the machine where you placed carry-on luggage is safe for the film, tell them that their photography teacher said no, it varies with airports. Insist on hand carrying the camera and film, but don't get arrested, be friendly and courteous and tell them that you don't want your summer assignment to be ruined (it probably won't be if it just goes through the carry-on machine but better not to take chances).