



NIH SEPA Environmental Health Investigators
PhotoVoice Curriculum: Lesson 2
Grade Level: Middle School
Duration: 1 hour

Living in Our Environment

Standards

NGSS.LS4.D: Biodiversity and Humans
NGSS.ESS3.C: Human Impacts on Earth Systems

NGSS Connections to Common Core State Standards (CCSS): English Language Arts (ELA)-E6: Use technology and digital media strategically and capably.

National Core Art Standards (NCAS): 6th VA:Cr2.1.6a: Demonstrate openness in trying new ideas, materials, methods, and approaches in making works of art and design.

Objectives

1. Students will define the environment.
2. Students will explain the type of environment they live in and the impact its characteristics can have on their health.
3. Students demonstrate photography skills and produce photos of their environment.

Materials

- Projector/smartboard
- PhotoVoice PowerPoint 2
- Cameras (1 per student)
- Guest photography expert (if possible)
- “What is Environment and How to Keep it Clean” video link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gEk6JLJNg0U>

Activities

Bell Ringer: Watch “What is Environment and How to Keep it Clean” video about different types of environments and who lives in those environments. Stop video at 2:00 minutes and have a brief discussion about what an environment is. (5 minutes)

Introduction: Using the PhotoVoice PowerPoint 2, discuss the definition of an environment with the class. Discuss what makes an environment healthy and what does not. (i.e. Healthy: having heat in your home, clean water; Not healthy: having dust on your clothes and furniture, rotten food in your refrigerator or counter, smoking in the home without an open window, etc.). Also, give students examples of environment - related diseases (i.e. cancer, diabetes, lung diseases) and encourage them to give examples that they know about. *Takeaway: your environment is where you live and what you surround yourself with; everything has an impact on your health.* (10 minutes)

Lecture: Pass out a camera to each student. Have a guest photography expert (if possible) demonstrate the basic skills of how to properly use a camera to photograph.

Photography basics (include, but are not limited to):

- Demonstration of how to use basic functions of the camera (turning it on, zoom, photo gallery, etc.)
- Composition
- Lighting
- Angles
- Rule of thirds

(15 minutes)

Activity: Assign students a specific camera that they will sign out during each photography session. Break students up into small groups to practice taking photos of their environment. Take the class to various locations around the school and/or outside. Allow students to take a photo of whatever they see fit, while keeping in mind the purpose of the project - to accurately capture and represent their environment.

**Before passing out cameras, emphasize that this will be their camera throughout the program. It is their responsibility to take care of it, keep track of it while in their possession, and take photos they would be proud to display to a group of professionals during their final projects.* (25 minutes)

Discussion: Discuss what students chose to take pictures of and why. Have students recall the definition of environment and what that consists of (i.e. healthy vs. unhealthy). Encourage students to give examples of environment - related diseases again. Collect all cameras. (5 minutes)

Resources

The article *What is the environment in the context of health?* defines what an environment is and how it relates to health:

https://www.who.int/quantifying_ehimpacts/publications/preventingdisease2.pdf

The material *Environment and Health A to Z* indicates how the environment impacts our health and describes some diseases that are caused by unhealthy environments:

https://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/materials/environment_and_health_a_to_z_508.pdf

The Spruce Crafts and The Photography Life websites provide some tips for beginner photographers: <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/introduction-to-photography-tips-for-beginners-2688546> and <https://photographylife.com/photography-basics>