

PHOTOGRAPHY CRITICAL ANALYSIS QUESTIONS

Understand.

What do you see in this photograph?

What words would you use to describe this photograph?

How would you describe this photograph to a person who could not see it?

What things do you recognise in this photograph? What things seem new to you?

What is the genre of this photograph? (still life, portrait, landscape, documentary, architecture, abstract, conceptual etc.)

Apply.

What does this photograph remind you of?

Is this a naturalistic or abstract image?

Was this photograph made with or without a camera? How can you tell?

Which Formal Elements seem important? How would you describe the lines in this picture? The shapes/forms? The colours/tones? The textures and patterns?

How has the photographer captured the play of light in this image?

How is space represented in this photograph (foreground, middle ground, background)?

What is in or out of focus? How has the subject been framed/cropped?

What equipment, techniques and processes have been used to make the image? How does this affect the way we view it?

How is this picture different from real life?

Analyse.

Which part of the photograph strikes you as most interesting - captivating, surprising, puzzling, mysterious? Why?

How has the photographer dealt with space and time?

How has the flattening of space (3D to 2D) affected our view of the subject?

What questions would you ask the artist about this work, if s/he were here?

What can you discover about this image and the work of this artist through research? How does this new knowledge affect your understanding of the work?

Interpret.

What title would you give to this photograph? What made you decide on that title? What other titles could we give it?

What do you think this photograph is about (its themes or big ideas)? How did you decide?

Pretend you are inside this photograph. What does it feel like?

What do you think it would be like to live in this photograph? What makes you think that?

Why do you suppose the artist made this photograph? What makes you think that?

Does this photograph remind you of other photographs/images that you know?

Evaluate and Create.

What do you think is effective about this photograph? What doesn't work so well?

What do you think other people would say about this work? Why do you think that?

What do you think is worth remembering about this photograph?

Create a photographic response to this image. What did you choose to create and why? How does it compare to the original stimulus?

What have you learned from exploring this work of art?