

Composition: Center of Interest

“You don’t take a photograph you make it.” Ansel Adams

Each picture should have only one principal idea, topic, or *center of interest* to which the viewer's eyes are attracted. Subordinate elements within the picture must support and focus attention on the principal feature so it alone is emphasized.

A picture without a dominant center of interest or one with more than one dominant center of interest is puzzling to a viewer. Subsequently, the viewer becomes confused and wonders what the picture is all about. When the picture has one, and only one, dominant "point of interest," the viewer quickly understands the picture.

"Point of interest," as used here, has the same meaning as center of interest; however, using the term *point of interest* prevents giving the impression that the center of interest should be located in the center of the picture.

The specific topic, idea, or object to be portrayed must be set in your mind as you prepare to take a picture. The center of interest may be a single object or numerous ones arranged so attention is directed to one definite area.

When the center of interest is a single object that fills most of the picture area or one that stands out boldly, such as a white sail against a background of dark water, attention is attracted immediately to it. As may be expected, not all subjects are as simple to arrange or as bold and impressive.

Assignment: Select a single subject to use as the center of interest. Be aware of everything that appears in your viewfinder when you take the picture, i.e. telephone lines, backs or parts of people, shadows, and things at the edges or behind your subject. Emphasize the uncluttered, simple subject.

Requirements:

1. Take several photographs of one subject focusing and creating a center of interest.
2. Download your images saving them to a subfolder named “center of interest” and move them to your main folder with your name on it.
3. In the center of interest, rename each image.
4. Print out your best example focusing on creating a center of interest (5x7, color).
5. Sign and date in pencil using photographic format.

Teacher Evaluation: Evaluation is based on completing the following activities, quality checks and degree of creativity.

Points

- Photograph several (10+) images of one subject focusing on center of interest. 40/ _____
- Downloaded and renamed properly. 10/ _____
- Select your best example of creating a center of interest. 30/ _____
(Average=20 Good=25 Excellent=30)
- Printed correctly (5x7, color). 10/ _____
- Signed and dated properly. 5/ _____
- Assignment sheet and printed image turned in. 5/ _____
- Subtracted points for late work. (-5 for each day late) _____

Total: _____

Grade: _____



National Geographic photographer Steve McCurry was in the region for a story on the refugee crisis. While touring a refugee camp on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, he entered a large tent that served as a girls school. The first child he saw was a shy girl with fiery eyes, about 12 years old. McCurry approached the girl, and she agreed to let him take her picture. "I didn't think the photograph of the girl would be different from anything else I shot that day," he later recalled. What emerged was a searingly beautiful image of a young girl with haunting eyes who came to symbolize the plight and the pain and the strength of her people. *National Geographic* chose a close-up of the girl as the cover photo for the article, which ran in the June 1985 issue. Her sea green eyes striped with blue and yellow peered with a mixture of bitterness and courage from within a tattered burgundy scarf. The "Afghan girl" touched the souls of millions.