

# SEE ME, HEAR ME!

## A PHOTO ESSAY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEW ZEALAND AOTEAROA

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

There are many aspects of Democracy, and one of those is the right to your say on issues that are important to you. In an election young people under 18 often feel excluded as they do not have the right to vote. We encourage young people to have their say and bring issues that they would like to see addressed in the election to the attention of their local MP.

In this activity we focus on the way young people can have their say through the medium of digital photography. We encourage young people to identify issues that are important to them and their community, and use still images to express their opinions about those issues. They will take a series of images and use these to compose a photo essay, supported by captions. Through viewing and sharing these digital essays, young people are provided a platform for their voice to be heard. Creating an essay representing the class and sending it on to your local MP is an innovative way of grabbing their attention.

### SUGGESTED LESSON SEQUENCE

Below is a suggested lesson sequence on how to introduce the topic, and to facilitate and support the intended learning and achievement outcomes for the outlined activity.

#### INTRODUCE TOPIC

Teachers are encouraged to discuss the background information about this activity with the students, in order to provide a context for how and why young people can be heard on issues that are important to them. Explicitly linking the activity to the 2011 General Elections provides a real purpose for the learning. For many students this will be a new idea. This activity provides an opportunity for students to be informed, active citizens, who are able to identify and speak out on issues they feel must be addressed in the elections.

#### IDENTIFY AND DISCUSS

Identify and discuss methods of communication. Explore and analyse the negatives and positives of identified methods.

#### VIEW PROVIDED MODEL

View the provided model, 'A child's view – Do you see my world' a photo essay from rural Bangladesh. Discuss the image selection, the issues these young people have chosen to communicate, the relationship between the captions and the image, and how this activity is relevant to New Zealand young people and their communities. Encourage students to identify issues they feel strongly about communicating to the Government of New Zealand, and discuss how these images can be communicated via digital photography to their MP.

## **BRAINSTORM**

Use the circular brainstorm model provided. Begin with the issues that affect the individual, build on to whanau and friends, extend to community.

## **FOCUS IDEAS AND PLAN**

Encourage students to focus their ideas and plan their essay before they go in to the community to take photos. Whilst they don't have to stick rigidly to the plan, it is useful to keep students on task.

## **CAPTURE THE IMAGES**

When students capture images discuss with them your expectations on how they conduct their photography, and the images they will share. If they are photographing people in a public place they do not need their permission, however if they are on private property they do. Verbal permission is adequate. We are filmed by CCT cameras more often than we think without our explicit permission, such as malls, railway stations, some city centres or business districts.

## **COMPOSE ESSAY**

Remind students of the number of images they need, and the use of captions to add power to their photography. If using a slideshow to share, road test your slide show and make sure the images don't disappear off the screen too quickly. You may wish to provide formative feedback and check student progress at this stage.

## **SHARE ESSAYS**

Viewing the essays as a group is essential. This is also an excellent opportunity for peer or summative assessment.

- Do the images clearly reflect an issue?
- Are the images supported by captions?
- Do the captions further develop the idea in the images?
- Does the essay communicate issues that affect or reflect the community?
- Are they relevant to the election?

## **REFLECT**

Reflect on the activity and issues that the students identified in their essays, how do these issues link to the 2011 General Elections? Collaborate and create a class essay that you will email to your MP, and encourage them to respond to your Digital Essay with an invitation to visit to your school to hear your students' points of view.

## **UNICEF**

We would love you to email your digital essays to us, and we will host a selection of essays on our website during November 2011, [jacqui@unicef.org.nz](mailto:jacqui@unicef.org.nz)