Between the Waters – Analyzing Historical Photographs Activity

<u>**Grade 8 Media Arts Standards**</u>

Standard 5: The student will understand the context and history of the development of the media arts from the late nineteenth century to present and will recognize the role of media artwork in world cultures.

MA8-5.2 – Compare and contrast media artwork that portrays the people and cultures of the world and those of South Carolina.

MA8-5.3 – Analyze and describe characteristics of the media arts that exist across time and among diverse cultural and ethnic groups.

<u>**Lesson Progression**</u>

Before beginning this lesson, take time to look at the historical photographs on **Between the Waters** and **Georgetown County Digital Library's Belle W. Baruch Collection** http://www.gcdigital.org/

Select a photo and show it to students. Model an analysis of the photograph by clearly describing the people, objects and setting, and inferring from this the mood of the photo, what additional information the caption provides, and why it may have been taken.

Show students another photograph and guide the students through a whole-group analysis of the photograph using questions from the Library of Congress teacher guide, "Using Primary Sources: Analyzing Photographs & Prints": http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Photographs_and_Prints.pdf

Assign or invite students to select two photographs. Ask students to write down the details of what they see and then to determine what the photo is depicting. Distribute or project the "Using Primary Sources" form. Students may work individually or in pairs to answer the questions on the form.

Create a handout or project the following additional set of questions to guide analysis.

1. What is the caption next to the photograph?
2. What do you see in the photograph? List details such as: Who are the people? What are they doing? What are they wearing, their surroundings, and equipment, etc.
3. What is happening? Support the response by clues you see and have identified in the questions above.

4. We can only speculate who might have taken this picture. Who do you think took the picture? Why would this person have taken the picture?
5. Consider how this image serves as a visual document or record of the people, the time, and the place. What does the photograph tell you about the people, places and times at Hobcaw Barony?
6. What details in the photograph support your ideas?

Extension:

Create a fictional Facebook account for the individual(s) in the photographs. Using the information learned in questions 1- 6 as background to make judgements about your individual/individuals, what would you include in your personality profile that would encourage "friend request" for your person(s)? What groups might your person(s) join? Share this with the class in either a class social network through yammer.com or through a district class site that your teacher has already created and can be shared with other 8th grade classes.

Photography Word Bank/Vocabulary

composition - the arrangement of the elements (subject and other objects) in a scene or photograph

contrast – the range of difference between highlights and shadow areas in an image

focus – the clear and sharply designed condition of an image, as in "this image is in focus," meaning it is sharp and well defined

camera angle – the position of the camera relative to the position of the subject takes up a large portion of the frame

close up – a shot in which the subject takes up a large portion of the frame—focusing on detail and expression

long shot or wide shot – a shot which shows an overall view from a distance

background – the area within the frame that is behind the subject of a photograph

foreground – the area of a scene that is nearest the viewer—usually the bottom third

Rubric ID: **1447586**

Photo Analysis Rubric

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Observations	Student makes a complete and detailed description of the subject matter and/or elements seen the photo.	Student makes a detailed description of most of the subject matter and/or elements seen the photo.	Student makes a detailed description of some of the subject matter and/or elements seen the photo.	Student descriptions are not detailed or complete.
Important Details	Student accurately describes several of the important elements in the photo and gives supporting details as to why these	Student accurately describes a few of the important elements in the photo and gives supporting details as to why these	Student describes a couple of the important elements in the photo.	Student has trouble picking out the important elements in the photo.

	elements are important.	elements are important.		
Historical Context	Student places the photo in an historical context and gives supporting details.	Student attempts to place the photo is an historical time frame.	Student can relate how the photo makes him/her feel personally.	Student find it difficult to interpret the meaning of the photo
Questions Raised	Student lists three or more questions raised by the photo.	Student lists two questions raised by the photo.	Student lists a question that is only tangentially related to the photo graph.	Student does not list any questions raised by the photo.

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