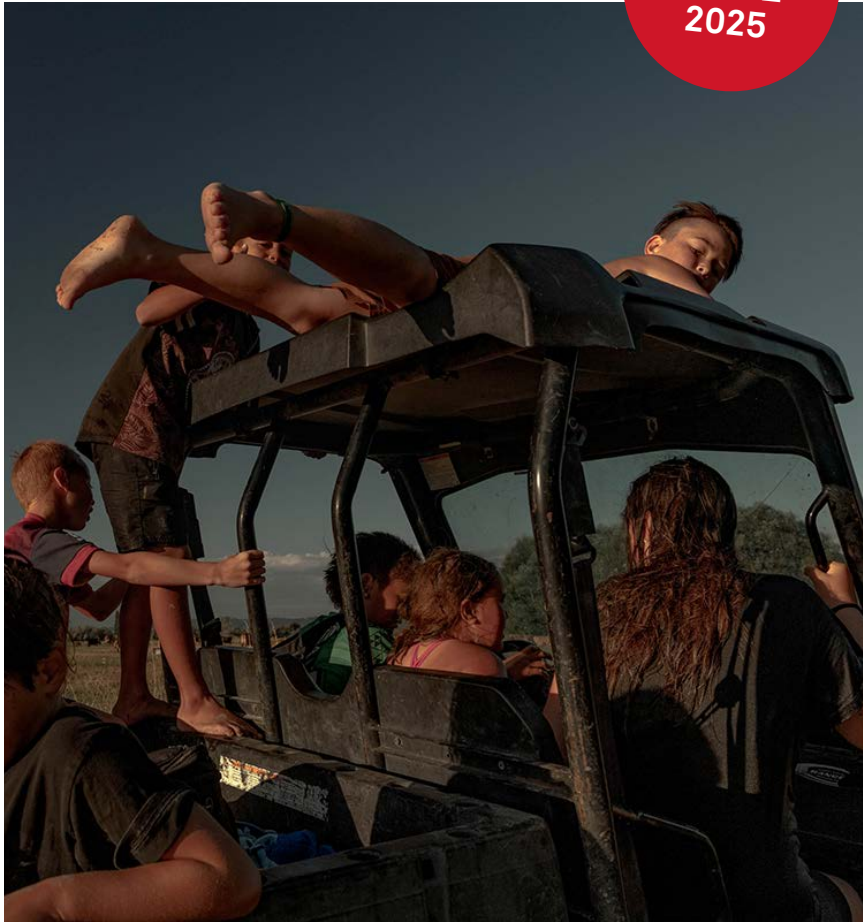


WORLD PRESS PHOTO

EXHIBITION
2025

SCHOOL
GUIDE
2025



© Tatsiana Chypsanava, Pulitzer Center, New Zealand Geographic

Visual thinking: Questions from the stories

Name : _____

School : _____

Welcome to the 2025 World Press Photo Exhibition!

This guide will help you understand more about **photojournalism**. We invite you not only to **look** at the photos, but to **think** about what they show, and to **discover the stories** behind them.

These activities offer **questions to spark reflection**. Write your answers in the empty spaces.

Think about how each photo presents the news, how the way they are taken affects their meaning, and the importance of freedom of the press.

What do the credits tell you?

Each photo includes credits with its title, the name of the photographer, his or her country, and the agency that commissioned it or the publication where it first appeared.

Why do we need multiple perspectives?

World Press Photo of the Year
Mahmoud Ajjour, Aged Nine

This image of a Palestinian boy illustrates the deep scars of war, the silence that feeds the cycle of violence, and the importance of journalism in bringing them to light.

The photographer, Samar Abu Elouf, was herself evacuated from Gaza in December 2023. Today she lives in the same apartment complex as Mahmoud, in Doha, Qatar, where she has documented the few badly wounded Gazans who made it out for treatment like Mahmoud.

Without shying away from the physical impacts of war, this photo approaches conflict and statelessness from a human perspective. It highlights the physical and psychological traumas that civilians have endured in the face of war and large-scale massacres—and will always endure as long as they continue.

Samar’s compassionate eye and her dignified portrayal of people wounded in the war in Gaza can be explained in part by how close she is to the subject. Mahmoud’s story resonated deeply with her, who like him, lost loved ones and her normal life to the conflict.



Mahmoud Ajjour (9), who was injured during an Israeli attack on Gaza City in March 2024, finds refuge and medical help in Qatar.
Doha, Qatar, 28 June 2024
© Samar Abu Elouf,
The New York Times

Questions

1 How can photographers’ personal connection with their subject influence how a story is told?

2 How do lighting and composition shape the emotion that a photo conveys?

What can images from daily life reveal about a conflict?

The news cycle can push some stories out of the headlines as conflicts drag on. Several World Press Photo images show what everyday life looks like in these situations.

Russia’s suppression of critical media and anti-war protests has created an alternate reality where the full-scale invasion of Ukraine is known instead as a “special military operation.”

The photographer, Aliona Kardash, was born in Russia but now lives in Germany. In this photo series, *It Smells of Smoke at Home*, she reflects on the loss of home, and on love for people who live in a different version of reality.

Making a return visit to her hometown, Aliona tries to capture how war transforms us, and holds on to her belief that personal bonds are stronger than the forces that tear us apart.



The photographer, Aliona (left), sits with her younger sister Sanya, a mother of two, 5 August 2023.

© Aliona Kardash, DOCKS Collective, for *Stern Magazine*

Questions

1 Why is it important to document daily life during a conflict?

2 What visual details stand out in this image?

3 How can choosing to shoot a more intimate moment help bring out the complexity of daily life during a war?

What can objects tell us about war?

Women's Bodies as Battlefields

In 2017, Cinzia Canneri began documenting the experiences of Eritrean women fleeing their country's repressive government.

Since the outbreak of war in the Tigray region of Northern Ethiopia in 2020, her scope has expanded to include the stories of Tigrayan women fleeing from armed invasion.

Both groups have been the targets of systematic sexual violence, which remains under-reported by news media due to social stigma, lack of health facilities, and limited journalistic access.

By amplifying the stories and voices of the survivors, Cinzia reimagines the idea of resilience as a complex collaborative challenge against pain, trauma, and loss.



Victims' objects on display at the Martyr's Memorial Monument Museum, which originally memorialized Tigrayan struggles against Ethiopian forces. When war broke out in 2020, the Ethiopian National Defense Force (ENDF) turned it into a detention centre where women were subjected to violence and torture.

Mekelle, Tigray, Ethiopia, 25 December 2023

© Cinzia Canneri, Association Camille Lepage

Questions

- 1** What emotions or symbolism do the objects in this image evoke?

[illegible]

- 2** How can objects act as “witnesses” to an event, exposing unreported stories during a conflict?

[illegible]

Why do we need stories of hope and change?

Gabriel Medina during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games

News reports and news photography often focus on darker, heartbreaking sides of life: conflicts, natural disasters, and humanitarian crises, among others. While these stories are vital and necessary, it is just as important to highlight ones about resilience, hope, and positive change.

Positive stories don't take away from the urgency of global challenges. They give audiences a sense of empowerment, by showing the value of individual and collective action.

Gabriel Medina scored a near-perfect 9.9 in the Olympic heats and went on to pick up bronze, ceding the gold medal to France's Kauli Vaast. This photograph went viral, attracting more than 9.5 million likes on Medina's Instagram alone.

Surfing made its Olympic debut at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. For the 2024 Paris games, the surfing competitions were held almost 16,000 kilometres from France, in Tahiti in semi-autonomous French Polynesia, a region renowned for its challenging waves.



Brazil's Gabriel Medina bursts out triumphantly from a large wave, in the fifth heat of round three of the men's surfing event at the 2024 Olympic Games.

Teahupo'o, Tahiti, French Polynesia, 29 July 2024

© Jérôme Brouillet, Agence France-Presse

Questions

1 Do you think hopeful images can help promote change?

2 What sorts of impact do positive images have in the news?

What are the effects of photojournalism?

Mother Moves, House Approves

Members of the LGBTQI+ community in Nigeria face legal prosecution, widespread social discrimination, and physical violence. Lagos Pride held its third Heavenly Bodies event, one of the largest drag ballroom experiences in Nigeria, in a secret location. Despite all risks, it was an electrifying experience, providing a vibrant space for celebration of love and free self-expression.

Positive representation matters. According to Action for Children, when LGBTQI+ young people see themselves authentically represented in the media, it helps validate their experiences and fosters a society where everyone can feel comfortable being their true selves.



Participants at Heavenly Bodies, an underground drag ballroom event during Lagos Pride, celebrate the “mother of the year” winner.

Lagos, Nigeria, 21 June 2024

© Temiloluwa Johnson, Nigeria

Questions

- 1

How is this image similar to—or different from—others you often see in the media?
- 2

Why are positive perspectives crucial to balance and enrich our view of the world?
- 3

What are the effects when LGBTQI+ communities are represented like this?

What dangers are involved in being a photojournalist?

The creation, publication, and display of the visual stories presented in this exhibition let us reflect on freedom of expression, freedom of inquiry, and freedom of the press.

Press freedom means the right for journalists to share news without anyone censoring them, by telling them what to say, delete, or write.

Creating news stories and photos depends on these freedoms. Even in countries considered open, freedoms are often under threat and can never be taken for granted.

Crisis in Haiti

Along with Israel, Haiti is the world’s top offender in letting the murder of journalists go unpunished, according to the 2024 Impunity Index of the Committee to Protect Journalists, which measures unsolved murders as a percentage of country population.

Lack of financial and institutional backing means journalists in Haiti are often targeted by gangs, facing threats, kidnapping, and assassination.

Port-au-Prince resident Clarens Siffroy photographed the chaos in Haiti, capturing the human impact behind the statistics of the ongoing crisis.

Clarens’ reporting comes at great personal risk. In a country with the highest rate of impunity for the killing of journalists, his dedication and documentation work have a serious impact.



His photo series balances extreme violence with human elements, reflecting the challenges of photojournalism in Haiti.

Photographer
Clarens Siffroy
at work
© Ralph Tedy Erol

Questions

1 What risks are involved in being a photojournalist?

2 How can press freedom be threatened in countries like Haiti?

3 Does Canada have freedom of the press?

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EXPOSITION 2025

**MARK
YOUR 2026
CALENDAR!**

Starting 1 June 2026, you'll be able
to book your next field trip to the
World Press Photo Montreal exhibition:

www.expo-wppmtl.ca/en/groups/

Email : info@wppmtl.ca

Thank you for joining us!

We look forward to
seeing you again next year,
between 26 August
and 12 October 2026!



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