**File Name: N8R Black and White Photo**

**Narrative**

**Grade 8**

**Range of Writing**

**Black and White Photo**

**Engages and orients the reader by establishing context for narrative to follow.** The reflection / narrative will be from the **point of view** of the writer, with a focus on the insight drawn from the experience

I walked past the playground. The pigeons swarmed around the crumbs of food dropped by children, and made a cloud filled with feathers, dust, and leaves. Admiring the day with every step, I continued to walk through Central Park. I strode out of the park and onto the sidewalk. As I walked a few blocks, I picked out the tourists from the crowds. Most of them were stopping by every table to buy either and “I love NY” shirt or a postcard.

Finally, I saw the fountains and the big stone columns that protected the Metropolitan Museum. I ran up the endless steps, dodging the people and cameras. I entered the cavernous halls, donated my dollar, and was directed through stairways, exhibits, and halls. After I walked through the Greek pottery section, I entered the exhibit of Richard Avedon. It was my first time seeing his photographs, and I was fascinated.

I saw portraits of Marian Anderson, former presidents, and Andy Warhol. The crowds moved slowly, as if to try to suck up the emotions of the photographs for life. Several people blocked doorways, selfishly. With a little but meaningful push, I moved on. Each room was watched by a security guard, I thought of how lucky they were to be able to see these photos every day and have the time to think about each person being photographed. Most of the people were very important to society and history. Some photos were being blocked off, from the amount of people crowding around them, while other photos were lonely. I felt badly for those photos and made sure I stopped to look at them. Each photograph was in black and white but was able to capture the persons emotions and personality.

**Descriptive details develop the character’s experience** of the photographs.

**Descriptive details develop the experience** of being in the museum.

About three quarters of the way through the exhibit, I came across a lonely photo. I immediately walked over to it, and then when I was two feet away, I realized that the man in the photo must have been upset and lost. The man’s face was round but hollow. His eyes were sunken in a he had dark bags surrounding them. He was beginning to go bald and his hair was warn and messy. He looked as if he hadn’t bothered to shave for a week and little black prickles were starting to grow in where his beard should be. He appeared crushed and broken. Small tears gathered at the bottom of each eye, the type of tears that hadn’t fallen yet but made the world around you look blurry. His mind seemed chained to a memory that he couldn’t escape. I felt awful, sorry, and shocked.

**Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events:** The writer uses sensory language and descriptive details to describe the photograph and the narrator’s reaction to it

**Uses full-sentence transition to signal shift from one setting to another** as the writer arrives at the key photograph.

**Precise sensory details** **develop** both the image of the photograph and the writer’s reaction to the photograph.

Blinking my eyes, I woke myself from my daze. I looked at the bottom left hand corner of the portrait. His name was Colonel Paul Tibbets. I had never heard his name before. Then I noticed the words under his name. He was titled as the pilot of the B-29 Enola Gay. He was titled as the man who dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. As my lips repeated these words to myself, I felt even more sorry and even more shocked. I sensed from the photograph that when he dropped the bomb, he didn’t know what he was doing. The photo told me he regretted it, and I sensed that he felt guilty and responsible for the 200,000 lives lost that day.

**Uses narrative technique of reflection,** ponderingon experienceof seeing the photograph, coming to a new understanding (insight) of the significance of war.

He was a man who made a huge impact on World War II. He is a man who models for us what war really is. He opened our eyes by dropping a monster who could not be tamed. Things like this happen during wars. People are killed. Not just the phony actors who spill their fake blood and fire their fake guns with fake smoke. Real people are killed. Nearly every person sees movies on wars. People are taught through commercialism that those movies are what was really is.

**Uses transitional clause to signal shift from one time frame to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events**

Before seeing this photograph, I was like other people who thought war was a bunch of GI Joe’s, dressed in camouflage, being brave. But after seeing this photo, I realized that war was just pain and misery. It made me wake up to the real world and learn that everyone is affected by war, both those who are killed and injured and those who kill and injure them. Both sides of people are innocent. By looking into Colonel Paul Tibbets’ watered eyes, I was awakened to what happened and what can happen in war. He helped define the word “victim.” In war, those who are bombed, hurt and killed are victims, but those who are instructed to perform terrible acts in war are victims too. War affects everyone. Everyone is innocent. Everyone is a victim.

I wish that people could see this photograph before making opinions on war today. I wish that Colonel Paul Tibbets’ lonely picture was surrounded by crowds at the Met. I wish that he had the opportunity to teach more people from his huge mistake rather than us learning by another being made.

For this reflective narrative from an eighth-grade language arts class, the student was asked to write an essay on a moment in her life when she realized something new. This essay is not a story in the fictional sense, but it does use narrative techniques. The writer chose to write about seeing a photograph at a museum and the understanding of the world gleaned from that experience.

In the reflection, the writer uses a structure in which she first describes the experience of seeing the photograph and then reflects on the meaning of the photograph in an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. She uses precise words and phrases and sensory language to tell about the experience itself and reflective details to develop the response to the photograph.

The reflection concludes with the narrator’s ideas about what she wishes people could learn from the photograph and the story it tells.

**Conclusion follows from events of the experience.** Writer **reflects further** on what this photograph has meant to her.

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