

Lesson 6 You Got No Idea!®

Aim:

How can we use images (or newspaper headlines) to inspire original works of writing?

Do Now:

Prewriting: (preferably in journals!)

Describe something that you can see from your desk.

1. Students respond to the Do-Now, writing for three to five minutes.
2. Have a few students share their responses.
3. Use your notes as a segue into the activity, asking them to pay the same kind of attention to detail as they describe the photographs/headlines you are about to unveil. For the first part of the exercise, they should stick to description without worrying about form — emphasize that they should not write poems or stories, simply describe what they see and how it makes them feel. If you are using headlines, ask students to picture the scene to which the headline alludes, and then describe what they see in their minds. Again, they should stick to impressions and emotional responses, not attempt to create a finished poem/story/essay.
4. Unveil the photos/headlines. If possible, encourage students to get out of their seats with their journals/paper to take notes on what they see.
5. Ask students to share their descriptions. Be sure to get at least one description for each photo/headline. Discuss some of the details each writer used in his/her description.
6. Write the following genres on the board — poetry, fiction (short story), personal essay/memoir, drama. Discuss each genre and make sure that students understand each; you may wish to use excerpts from models to illustrate each genre. (For samples, see the lesson, “Who’s Who?”)
7. Ask students to pick one genre in which to further develop their pieces. They should use the ideas generated in their descriptions to get going; some students may wish to open their pieces with the descriptions or with favorite phrases from the descriptions.
8. Ask students to share their beginning pieces. Try to hear at least one example of each genre.

Extensions

- Students continue working on their pieces, completing a rough draft, offering it for peer review and then completing a final draft. Celebrate final pieces with a reading and/or student publication.
- Ask students to bring in photos or headlines of their own; repeat this activity using “seeds” brought in by peers.
- Students can select a genre for further study in independent projects, in groups or as a class. They can study published works, responding in critical analysis or in more creative written works.

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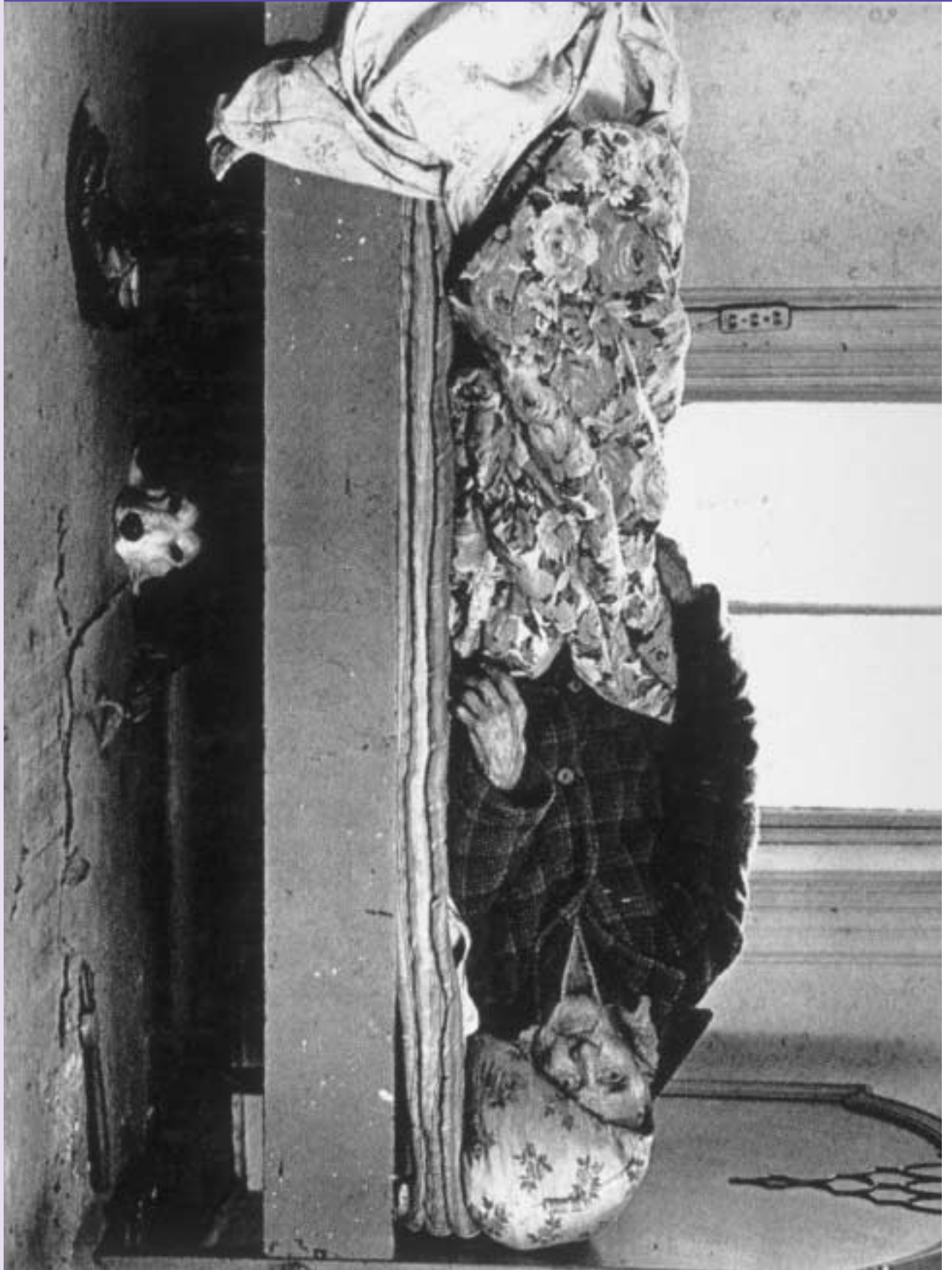
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THE NEW YORK TIMES **METRO**

CITY

Man Charged With Murder After Firing on Crowd

By JASON BLAIR

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TELEVISION REVIEW

*As He Slowly Goes Blind,
A Detective Gains Insight*

You Got No Idea!®

NEW YORK POST WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1999

TRAGIC BRIDE

**ANGUISH IN
WASH. HTS.**

A +

**Fake
teacher
makes
grade
with
students**

*Woman,
Dancing in Street,
Is Struck and
Killed by Car*
