

How to Write a Critique

Critique # Title, Photographer

1. **Description** “*What do you observe looking at this photograph?*”

Look carefully and describe only what is actually visible. This is not what you feel, or what your opinions are, this section is only for facts. List colors that are dominant; describe any shapes or objects, including people, in *factual* detail. Is the lighting direct or indirect and what direction is it coming from? What type of photography (ex. portrait, landscape, action)? Do not draw conclusions, *be objective!*

2. **Analysis** “*What visual clues help the viewer understand the picture’s meaning?*”

Describe the **elements of art, principles of design**, and how they are used in the image. For example, the artist can use *lines* to guide your eyes towards the main subject. *Color* can be used to evoke/show emotion. The contrast of light and dark *values* can show the feel of *texture*? What kind of *balance* is used? Is there *unity* in similar shapes, and is *movement* or *rhythm* obvious or implied?

What **composition guidelines** have been used such as *rule of thirds, simplicity, framing, balance, lines, and s-curves*?

3. **Interpretation** “*What message is the photographer trying to convey?*”

Is this about social or political issues, or just informational? Is the image just for aesthetic beauty (artistic and interesting to look at)? What emotions do you feel when looking at the image? Remember, this is your opinion and does not need to be objective.

4. **Evaluation** “*Why do you like (or not like) this photograph?*”

Did the image grab your attention? Was it an image you will remember? Or, do you think it was not an effective image and you just did not like it? Explain your answers in more detail.