

Ideas for using digital cameras in an elementary classroom

Jeff Shaw • NICE Workshop • December 2007

Here are a few ideas for using photographs in school that I have used. There are so many other possibilities...it just takes a little imagination and creativity. (You can also try googling “digital cameras in classroom” for ideas, or look at the “Adobe Kids” website.

Photo album: Document events, field trips, aspects of classroom life. Have students write stories to go with the pictures. (see example at right)

Illustrate concepts: Have students look for examples around school that illustrate a concept, such as circles, simple machines, or parallel lines, and take photos of them.

Alphabet book: Have students take pictures of objects around school that begin with each letter of the alphabet. This could be extended to any phonics examples, such as blends, long vowels, or spelling patterns.

Getting to know students: I take a “mugshot” of each new student on our “Move Up” (meet your new teacher) Day in June (right). That helps me learn names and prepare a bulletin board display with their pictures at the beginning of the new school year. There are many creative possibilities for using student photos throughout the school year.

Make a calendar: Have students make calendar pages for each month of the year, and add a large photo of the child at the top to make a nice gift for parents.



Show changes over time: Take pictures at regular intervals to show growth or changes. Plants, trees in Fall, or building sites make good subjects.

Enhance a project: Use photos (and a little help from Photoshop Elements) to make a study of pioneers come alive for students by turning them into “real” pioneers (left).