

# Photo Illustration

Shortcode	Description
Central focus: Strong	The photo illustration here has a strong central focus. The reader is clearly directed where to look, what is important and what is secondarily important. This kind of central focus makes a reader's eye jump to the image when placed on the page. You are giving the reader an immediate avenue onto the page, and therefore, and more likely path to the written story. Nice work.
Central focus: Weak	The central focus of this photo is unclear as composed here. Consider the tools that a photographer can use to signal what is most important: 1) getting physically close to the subject with your camera, 2) using a telephoto lens, 3) using a shallow depth of field, 4) using leading lines or framing to highlight the subject, 5) placing the subject at the center or the frame or in rule of thirds, 6) using bright or dramatic light on the central focus. While you may have used some of the techniques above, consider which other techniques might have also helped.
Composition: Excellent	The composition of this photo illustration is great: the organization of elements in the frame is clean and inventive. The image shows attention to avoiding congested backgrounds and portraying a clean central focus for the image. It all comes together here: camera angle, distance to subject and lens choice. Excellent composition.
Composition: Mediocre	Solid composition is shown here in this photo illustration. However, it would be nice to have a more inventive and adventurous composition. Consider all of the compositional possibilities: rule of thirds, framing, leading lines, foreground vs. background, repetition or an original angle. While not all of those might have helped in this particular situation, the image could use more attention to composition.
Composition: Weak	The composition of this photo illustration needs more attention. Photographers make an infinite number of decisions in each frame (especially photo illustrations): what to include, what to omit, how high to stand, where to stand side to side, etc. With each of those decisions the photographer sends a message about what is important in the scene. This image could have been more deliberate about how to arrange the objects within the frame.
Deceptive: Appears candid	Photo illustrations should generally live by this principle: be sure that the image is manipulated in a way that makes the image obviously fake to any reasonable reader. This photo illustration might be mis-read by viewers thinking that this was an actual moment captured by candid photography. The effect of this is two-fold: first, readers will be deceived, which is never a photojournalist's goal. And second, the viewer will be less likely to trust images by that photographer (or publication) again. Be careful in this way.
Lighting: Strong	In addition to "composition", the consideration of "lighting" can make a great photo illustration. This image shows why that is true. The lighting here shows understanding for how direction and intensity of light contribute attractive and storytelling illustrations. The image also shows use of camera settings and digital imaging to capture the light.
Lighting: Weak	Consider how lighting weakens the image here. Rather than showcasing the most vital elements of the situation, the image's lighting complicates the viewer's work here. When choosing an angle, ask yourself, "What angle, what time of day and what situation will provide the best light?" And if attractive light is not available, consider how you could use flash or other lighting to supplement the existing light.
Posing: Solid	Orchestrating an elegant photo illustration can involve lots of posing and coordination of your "models." You have done well here of using your models to communicate your message. Posing can communicate emotion through faces, gestures and posture. Nice work in this area, which is often overlooked by photographers of photo illustrations.
Posing: Weak	Remember how effective photographs can be at communicating the emotion of a subject, even when staged in a photo illustration. Consider how this photo could have used all of the tools of human emotion (faces, gestures and posture) to drive home the situation and connect the situation to the story. More attention here would have helped.
Technical: Solid	Photo illustrations like this demand advanced Photoshop skills, and this image is solid in that respect. But there are some techniques that could use either more patience or a different execution to be fully realized. If the viewer of this image is to be attracted to the image, they need to respect the illusion that is being created. A bit more work with that would help here.
Technical: Strong	Photo illustrations often hinge on a strong use of Photoshop or other digital manipulation. The technical use of software and camera settings here shows advanced skills and makes the effect on the reader even more dramatic. Good work on being patient with the digital processing and learning the skills that make an illustration like this work.
Technical: Weak	More work is needed here to make the illusion of this photo illustration seamless. What are the parts of the image that could have used more Photoshop attention? We don't want the actual photo illustration to be deceptive. However, we do want the world within the photo illustration look crafted with attention to detail.
Topic: Confusing	Photo illustrations are challenging because they ask you to invent a world with props, lighting, characters and even typography. Sometimes those symbols and props don't come across clearly to the reader. This is a situation where I am not reading the image in a way that connects me to the story. And that connection, after all, is the goal of the photo illustration.
Topic: Engaging	The photo illustration here sets the scene for a storytelling moment that will attract the reader. It is hard -- if not impossible -- to tell a story with a beginning, middle and end in one frame. However, you have created a situation here that has a human connection that draws the reader in.
Topic: Solid Connection	This photo illustration references a story or set of issues well here. Good job of choosing elements of the photo that would communicate with the audience. However, there is room for improvement here in choosing subtler symbols of the story, or treating the photo illustration in a more unexpected way. Solid work here however.
Topic: Strong Connection	The people, objects and setting of the photo illustration tell an interesting story. Telling a story, after all, is the primary function of a photo illustration: to take the reader's visual interest in the photo illustration and connect it to the written story. Well done.

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Topic: Weak Connection	The connection between the visuals and the topic seem a stretch here. Consider what symbols you could have chosen to signal to the reader what the story is about. That is the fundamental function of a photo illustration: to attract reader interest to a story that is hard to illustrate. So, be sure to "test" your photo illustration concept on others before submitting to make sure they "read" it the way that you intend.
Typography: Strong	While typography is not required for a photo illustration, this version communicates with typography in strong ways. To have skills as both a photographer and as a type artist while in high school is a rare combination. Kudos to you for learning both at an early age. The typography here matches the mood of the photo and the topic of the story well. Nice choices and good type styling.
Typography: Weak	Some photo illustrations can function without typography. However, when photo illustrations use type, it should be just as intentional and thoroughly conceived as the photography used in the illustration. More work could be done here to perhaps match the mood of the photo illustration, coordinate with the topic of the story or have more contemporary type styling. Watch the approaches used by page designers when designing feature headlines in publications: those techniques can often be useful for photo illustrations.