



HOW TO GET YOUR YEARBOOK STAFF TO TAKE MORE PHOTOS

If you find your staff in need of more images at deadline time, these ideas will help make sure you have plenty of photos at your fingertips.

In recent years, there's been a major change in the look of many yearbooks. Gone are the days when designers were taught to place seven photos on the spread.

Instead, lessons in proportion and photo packaging encourage designers to show more faces and more action on their pages. It's not unusual for a single spread to feature 12-15 smaller shots.

Digital photography makes it easy to take lots of photos without incurring additional expense, but sometimes the students need inspiration to get the variety needed.

Long-time adviser Diana Parson shares four easy assignments that she used to keep the photo coffers full in the Cor Duchesne newsroom at Duchesne High School in St. Charles, MO. Easy adaptation will have your designers working to include as many great photos as possible rather than wishing they had more shots that were "good enough."

We always need good photos, the more, the better! We keep several file boxes in our closet and have a photo file editor to keep them straight. But we also need to fill the boxes. Here are some tips that I use to ensure having lots of great photos on hand.

1. At the beginning of the year, I send the kids out on a photo scavenger hunt. They receive a list of subjects to "shoot" and get two class periods to go out and about. (I clear this with my administration and the kids get special passes.) They also must use some after school and free time to get pictures. Here are some examples of what they look for: a freshman in the hall, a teacher working with a student, someone in line in the cafeteria, action on the soccer field, a club meeting, good looking car and its owner on the parking lot, and so forth.

Each student gets a list of 20 pictures. I allow a total of about three weeks to accomplish the shoot. The students put stickers on the back with their name (for the photo credit), and the who, what, when, where and why. They also include quotes/comments from students in the pictures, or from students also involved with the action, but not in the photo.

We have a show and tell the day they are turned in (snacks optional!), and the students vote for the student choice award in each category. Then I grade them, award an overall prize, and some miscellaneous prizes. We make a big deal of it, taking pictures, and announcing it in our parent newsletter. This gives us a huge start on our photo collection for the year that covers all fall sports, clubs and activities, volunteer aspects, all grade levels, staff and faculty, outside of school fun and so forth. With 20 staffers this year, that netted us 400 photos!

2. We repeat this again in the middle of the year with a specialized theme photo shoot. For example, this year the students looked for 3-5 pictures that interpreted the phrase: "The

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Heart of Duchesne.” They wrote the captions and also a short article that went with the photo collection. (I used this as the semester exam, and it went over quite well!) We intend to create a special section of the yearbook to incorporate some of these photo essays.

3. In a similar project, but a different year, students shot pictures of little-noticed things around the school and researched the story behind them. That process provided some interesting spreads. When the book came out, we saw people walking around with the open book, looking for these items. Examples of what they found included a sign over a door, inside a hall closet, the skylight in the hall, the shipping box with the brand name of the popular french fries served in the cafeteria, and more.

4. The last photo tip is that I require each section of the staff to submit 20 photos a month. Usually these are used in their own sections, but at times they may snap some photos that could be used on other pages.

All these ways are great to collect a wide variety of photos. With the information on the back and quotes/comments, staffers can browse through the photo boxes, find a great picture, and have all the vital info needed to write a caption. Overall, it makes life easier.

Contributed by:

Diana Parson, Former Adviser

Duchesne High School, MO

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