

# BRIGHT IDEAS



## HOW TO USE DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY IN YOUR CLASSROOM!

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### *Important Tips:*

*Be sure to set the camera resolution to at least 800 X 1200. This is the minimum necessary for a good 4 X 6 print.*

*Use a good software editing program. [Corel Paint Shop Pro XI](#) is one of the best for social studies teachers since it allows students to turn modern pictures into daguerreotypes, sepia tones, and other old photo techniques. (Always check for Academic Pricing before buying software. Educators and students are often given large discounts.)*

*Have a flash memory card reader available. Newer computers usually have these pre-installed but you can buy inexpensive usb readers at virtually any electronics or photography store or find them on the Internet.*

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Digital photography is a relatively new addition to the classroom but this exciting invention has opened new opportunities for innovative projects and assignments for students. Teachers can use this highly motivational technology in their lessons and to improve their classroom instruction. Moreover, students can learn how to effectively communicate through a visual medium as well as experiment with different techniques, lighting arrangements, and composition. Digital photographs are easily incorporated into presentation programs such as PowerPoint and can likewise be used in reports and projects.



- / Make a slide show of your classes to show parents during back-to-school night. They love seeing what is actually going on in your classroom rather than being told just about administrative policies and procedures.
- / Have your students create photo essays on a particular topic. Old *Life* magazines provide outstanding examples of this genre and illustrate how to convey a story visually. (E.G. “One Week in Mr. Smith’s History Class,” “Our Field Trip to Gettysburg,” “Studying for the AP Test,” etc.) Also, check out [Time Magazine Photo Essays](#) for online examples.

- / Have the students research and analyze a few of America’s great photographers and photo-journalists. See if they can duplicate some of their innovative

techniques. Ask them how photography has been used as an instrument of social change, particularly during the Progressive and Depression eras.

- [Berenice Abbott](#)<sup>1</sup> WPA Project
- [Ansel Adams](#)<sup>2</sup> nature and landscapes
- [Matthew Brady](#)<sup>3</sup> and his Civil War photographs
- [Lewis Hine](#)<sup>4</sup> and child labor
- [Jacob Riss](#)<sup>5</sup> study on poverty in New York. [\*How the Other Half Lives: Studies Among the Tenements of New York\*](#) (Hypertext version from Yale University)

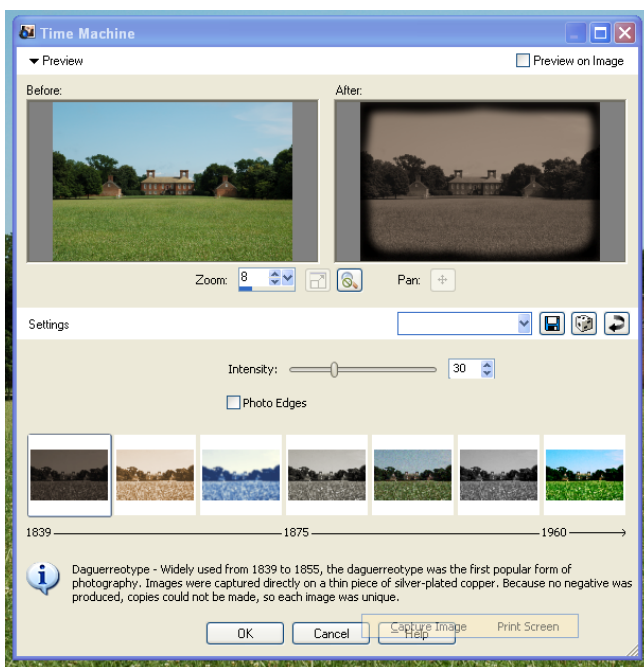


Photo 1: Corel Paint Shop Pro's "Time Machine" feature allows students to transform photographs easily into historic pictures.



Photo 2: A modern photograph of Stratford Hall plantation transformed into a daguerreotype using Corel's Time Machine function.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nypl.org/research/chss/spe/art/photo/abbottex/abbott.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/ansel/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/cwphtml/cwbrady.html>.

<sup>4</sup> "Children at Work, 1908-1912," EyeWitness to History, [www.eyewitnesstohistory.com](http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com) (2000).

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.yale.edu/amstud/inforev/riis/title.html>

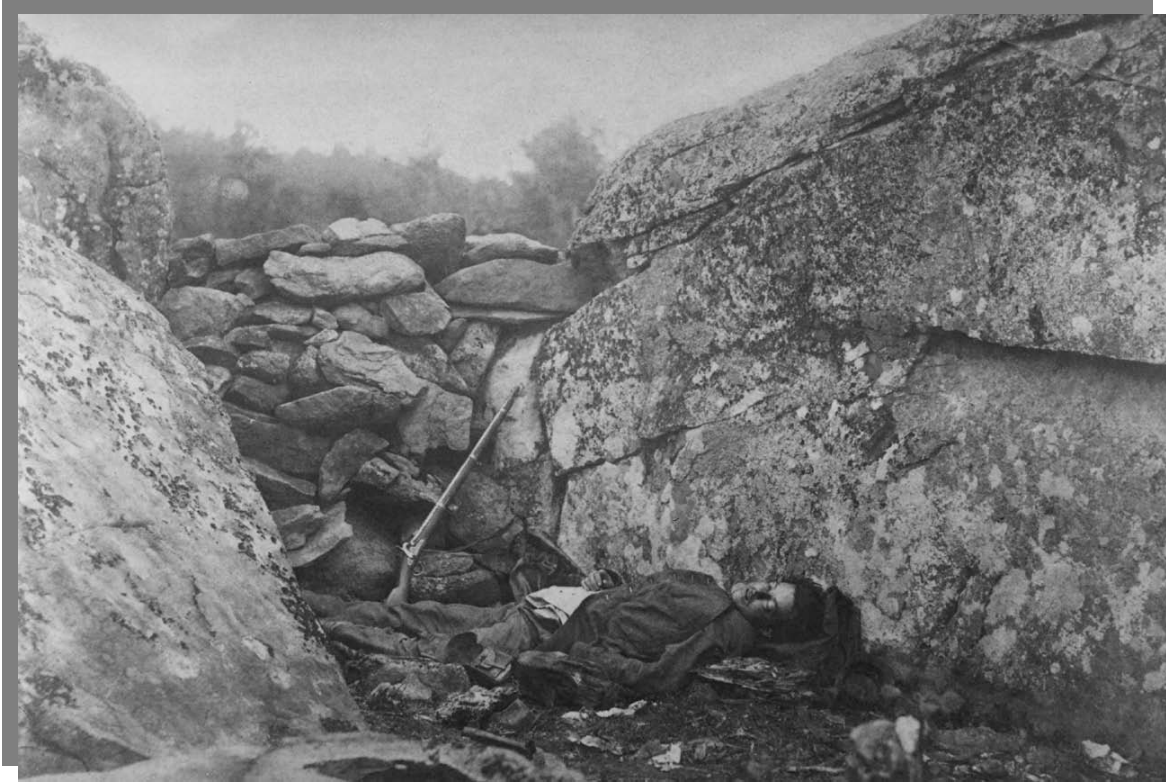


Photo 3: Matthew Brady's famous Civil War photography of a sniper killed at Devil's Den during the Battle of Gettysburg. (National Archives)

- / Certain photographs were so influential that they have become part of the iconic history of the United States. Many have actually CHANGED the course history. Have the students look for images that have become part of America's cultural memory. They should certainly look at the work of [Joe Rosenthal](#) (1911-2006) who took the famous picture of the Marine flag-raising on Mount Suribachi during the battle of Iwo Jima and that of [Eddie Adams](#) (1933-2004), whose photograph of General Nguyen Ngoc Loan during the Tet Offensive became emblematic of that war.
  
- / Have the students design and produce a magazine cover with an appropriate title for a major news magazine. Covers from *Life* and *Time* have become classics in their own right.