

# THE MEMPHIS BROOKS MUSEUM OF ART

Ciara Fisk

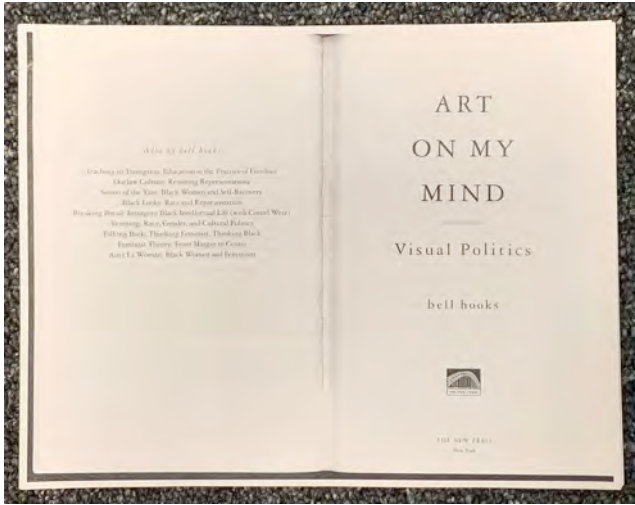
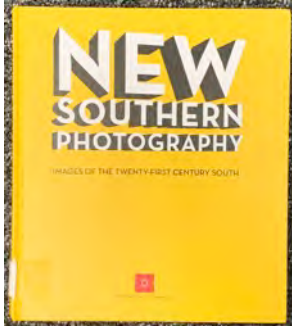
Curatorial / Education Intern

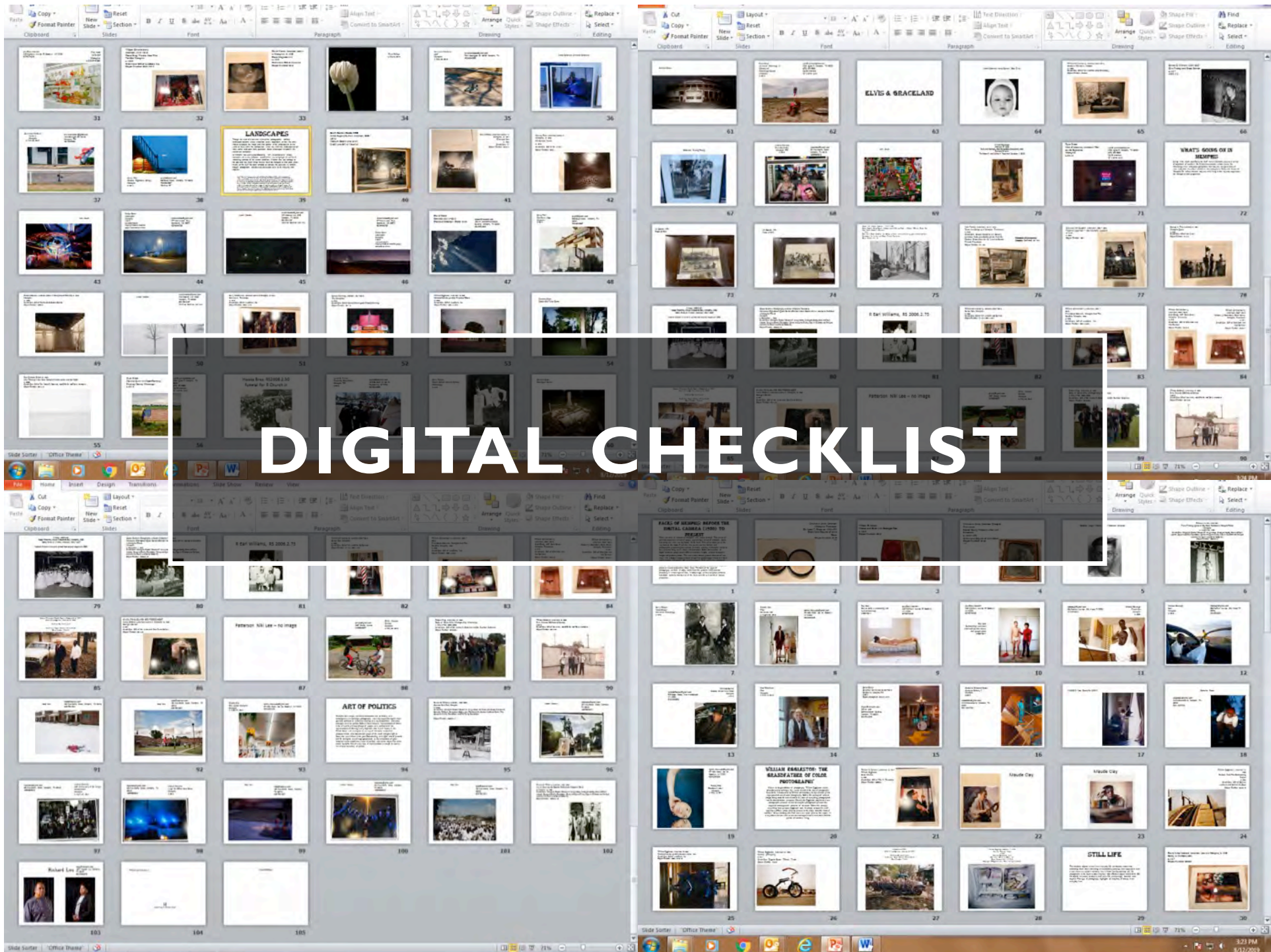
## CURATORIAL AND EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

As an intern in the curatorial and education departments at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, my tasks included:

- Collaborating on themes within the exhibition
- Conducting research on the exhibition as it relates to art history
- Creating a list of Education and Interpretive programming to support the exhibition such as outside speakers, visiting artists, school field trip activities, and an interactive gallery
- Collaborating on a final checklist for exhibited objects.
- Writing object labels and wall text
- Creating a gallery guide for the exhibition

# RESEARCH MATERIAL





# DIGITAL CHECKLIST

# CURATING THE EXHIBITION LAYOUT

- Once the digital checklist was finalized, the slides were printed out and rearranged physically to visualize the exhibition layout.

Tommy Kha  
Headless in 2017  
Memphis  
c. May 16, 2017



Wilson Eggleston, American, b. 1919  
Dusted, Trashed Waste  
© 1998  
Medium: Dusted, trashed waste  
Exhib. Linn. 400 of American Art  
Object Number: 2000.1.124  
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## WILLIAM EGGLESTON: THE GRANDFATHER OF COLOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Known as the grandfather of photography, William Eggleston used a groundbreaking technique that would transform the idea of photography hence forth. Introduced to by William Christenbery, his dye transfer prints repurposed the use of color photography. Before this concept of colored images being made for and viewed as art, most of everything photographed was for documentation purposes. Not only did Eggleston popularize a new photographic process, he also developed a photographic practice that captured inconsequential moments of the south. Before this concept, everything had a purpose. Eggleston took his photos to boast his craft: applying a difficult, photo coloring process to the simply beautiful shots of southern life surrounding him. This was a new vision given to this region. In a way, others can see what we see now and experience an even more realistic portion of southern living.

## MEMORIALS

As Memphis has such a groundbreaking, rich, yet controversial history, memorials are a very important aspect of this city to highlight as well as an interesting concept of the human condition. Whether they pay homage to the past and how much things have or have not changed or what parts of our history on the bluff has been tempted to conceal, the past and it's remains through photographs and physical graveyards serve as an intriguing time capsule. This section encompasses images of graveyards that have been maintained with respect and dedication and some others neglected with the lack of such care. Ryan Steed's photos from his series *In Memory of*: exemplify this concept of memorabilia attached to those who have passed. There is something therapeutic for us humans to revisit and upkeep a loved one's final resting place or even give it a more established marker. Coriana Close's images of forgotten cemeteries in Memphis expose the undemanding rank of importance of older graveyards established during the segregated south. These examples are some that serve as the embodiment of this concept of respect for the dead and why we chose to give regard or favor to some and not the others.

# WALL TEXT

# OBJECT LABEL

Writing object labels was more challenging than it seemed. Ideally, object labels must be no more than 90 words to keep the reader's attention. The first sentence must be captivating, the middle should be informative, and the ending should make it relevant or answer the question "so what?"



**William Eggleston, American, b. 1939**

**Untitled**

**Memphis, TN**

**c. 1971**

**Medium: Dye transfer print**

**Credit Line: Eugenia Buxton Whitnel Funds**

**Object Number: 76.6.2**

**Copyright: © Eggleston Artist Trust. All rights reserved.**

Subject matter isn't the only important aspect of a photograph. Eggleston's dye-transfer prints repurposed the use of color photography. Before this concept of colored images being made for and viewed as art, most of everything photographed was for documentation purposes. Not only did Eggleston popularize a new photographic process, he also developed a new style that captured inconsequential moments of the South. As one of his most iconic images, this tricycle is photographed at such an angle that makes it look huge and very important. Nonetheless, it embodies Eggleston's vision for the simplicity of beauty within the South.

# GALLERY GUIDE

**Follow the Leader!**  
Are you familiar with the game Follow the Leader? This game is similar to it, except for this version of the game you have to imitate one of your favorite photos by a photographer! Here are some suggestions from the exhibition:



*If you want to imitate William Eggleston just one of your favorite objects and take the picture from a different angle, you wouldn't normally look at it from...*



*Snap a photo of your sibling at breakfast!*



*Pose someone on the couch in your living room and try to recreate Elvis' persona!*



*Get a close up shot like shot of a plant outside your house or at the park!*

**FUN FACTS:**  
This is one of the oldest attacks of Memphis taken in 1911 by the Father Time Company. Try taking a series of snapshots on your iPhone!



## PHOTOGRAPHY IN MEMPHIS



Photography in Memphis is an exhibition focusing on photos of Memphis and its neighboring regions of the South by Memphis photographers to celebrate this city's bicentennial. Grouped together by themes, these photos vary from contemporary local artists and working photographers of the past. Explore the past and present through these images as they remind us of what makes us the same, what divides us, or how both can be possible in a single photograph.

I created a gallery guide that includes a timeline of important events during the evolution of photographic processes that were relevant to the exhibition. The guide was required to highlight images in the exhibition with prompts and references to them.

The layout is as follows:

- Front page – Title with brief description of the exhibition
- Inside left page – photography timeline
- Inside right page – Prompts relating to the exhibition, definitions, fun facts, and a description of how cameras work
- Back page – post visit activity inspired by works in the exhibition

**1825-1839** // Louis-Jacques M. Niepce and Nicéphore Niépce invented a new photographic process which exposed a silver-coated copper plate in the camera obscura and developed with mercury. With the invention of daguerrotypes people were now able to capture images rather than just projecting them. These images are now able to become permanent in time.



*The world's first still picture was created right here in North America and it was daguerrotypes. Take a look at the Daguerrotype and see the collection of people at the top of the 19th Century.*

**1873** // Peter Mawdsley invented gelatin silver printing paper. Ernest Withers, an African American photojournalist from Memphis used this printing process for his documentation of the segregated South.



**1877-1935** // The earliest photographic process using color was invented although it was very slow and difficult. Color photography was mainly used for advertising until William Eggleston from Memphis began using this process as an artistic practice in the 1960s.



*Both of these photos were shot in color by hand!*



**1888** // George Eastman popularized the use of roll film (Kodak Company). **CHECK OUT THE FILM STRIP LIGHT TABLE!**

**1948** // Edwin Land invented the Polaroid camera.

**1986** // Fuji invented the first disposable camera.

### DID YOU KNOW?

- Mozi, a Chinese Philosopher, was the first person to experiment with a camera obscura between 470 and 290 BCE (an original version of the camera was used today!)
- The cell phone camera wasn't invented until 2000!

### WHAT IS A CAMERA OBLSCURA AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

A camera obscura is a natural device that is basically a darkened box with a pinhole (now we have cameras with lens) for projecting the image of an external object onto a screen inside. Light bounces off of the object, through the opening of the camera (the lens) and into the dark chamber where the image is flipped and projected.



- Notice which photos are in black and white and which photos are in color. Why do you think some of these photos are in black and white? If a photo is in black and white or in color does it change the way you feel about it or view it?
- Can you see any similarities in these photos such as recurring themes, events, or objects (what are they)? Do you think the more contemporary artists were influenced by any of the older (black and white) ones?

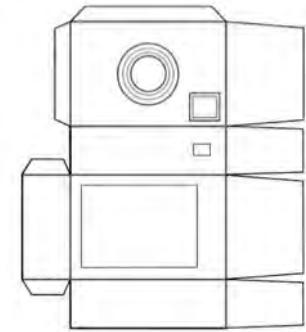
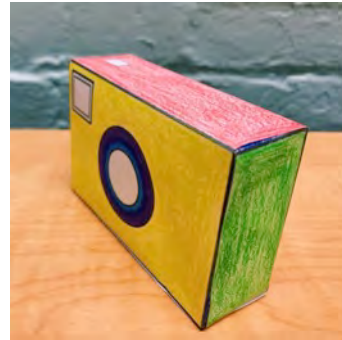
### Etymology Terms

- Photography - the art or process of producing images with the use of light on a sensitive surface such as film or an optical sensor.
- Daguerrotypes - a photograph taken by an early photographic process using an iodine-sensitized silvered plate and mercury vapor.
- Film photography - also known as analog photography is a photo process that exposes the "film" inside the camera with light (exposure) to produce a picture (not digital).
- Exposure - how light or dark an image is depending on the amount of light exposure.
- Camera Obscura - a darkened box with a convex lens or aperture for projecting the image of an external object onto a screen inside. It is important historically in the development of photography.

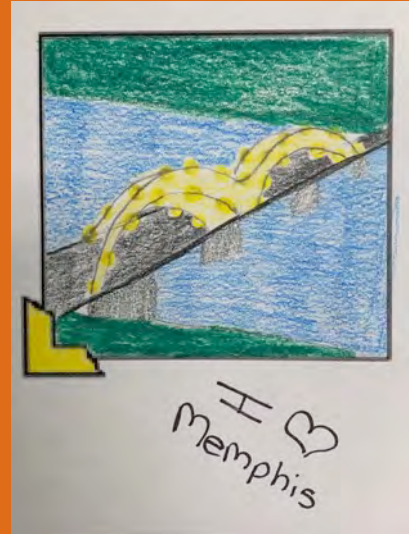
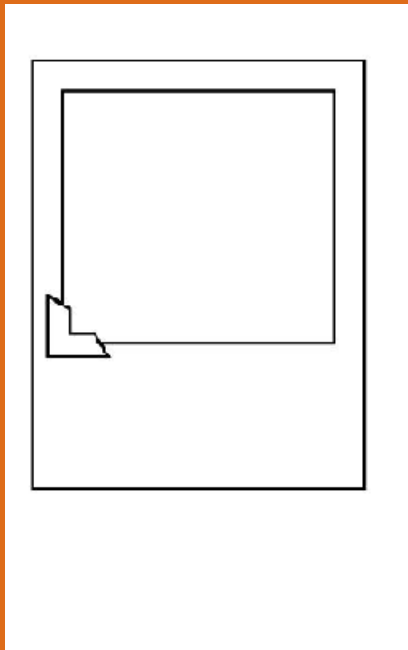


## INTERACTIVE GALLERY ACTIVITIES

This digital camera template is assigned to go into the interactive gallery space with colored pencils to offer a fun, easy going activity for both adults and children. Scissors will be available and attached to designated cutting stations with a cord or string.



# INTERACTIVE GALLERY ACTIVITIES CONT.



Polaroid templates will be available for guests instead of a comment book. Guests will be asked to draw / write what they like about Memphis or draw their favorite image from the exhibition.

Film strip negatives will be available for guest to interact with and observe on a light table.

# LESSON PLAN

**DIY Camera Obscura**

**Grade Level:** 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>

**Time Frame:** 1-45 minute class

**Goals/Generalization of skills:** To familiarize students on how cameras work and what happens when light bounces off objects to your eyes.

**Art Media Focus:** repurposed materials

**Learning Objectives:**

1. The students will construct not only an artistic piece but a rudimentary, functional, camera obscura.
2. The students will learn more about the photography process in a basic sense and learn about how light travels from the object and to our eyes.

**National Art Standards:**

VA.CS.1.3c Repurpose objects to make something new.

VA.CI.2.2a Make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.

VA.OZ.1.1a Explore uses of materials and tools to create works of art or design.

**History:**

Mosi, a Chinese philosopher is known as the first person to a camera obscura during the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE. From then on, more philosophers and scientists observed and experimented with the idea of "light writing" which is what the Greek root words *phos* (light) and *grapho*(writing) mean. This is how we got the word *photography*. The camera obscura is the basic functionality of camera we use today: light bounces off an object, traveling in a straight line and through the pin hole of the camera. There it reaches our eyes and appears upside down. Now we have cameras with sensors or screens inside that record the images we see and then capture, a process that wasn't capable to do unless exposed on a light sensitive film paper.

**Vocabulary:**

1. Camera Obscura: a darkened box with a convex lens or aperture for projecting the image of an external object onto a screen inside. It is important historically in the development of photography.
2. Photography: the art or practice of taking and processing photographs

**What inquiry prompts would you use to address:**

- **Art History Prompts:** Why do you think this discovery was important to people in ancient times?
- **Contemporary Prompts:** Why do you think photography is important today? What would you do without photos of yourself and/or family, or images for the news?

**Materials/Resources:**

- Paper towel rolls
- Wax paper
- Tape
- Black duct tape
- Aluminum foil
- Scissors
- Markers
- Colored paper
- Glue
- Various decor items (sequins, puff balls, etc. to decorate the outside of the camera obscura)
- Lightbulbs (8)
- Extension cords (3)
- Power strips (2)
- Socket adapters (8)

**Anticipatory Set:**

When my students enter the classroom give them a brief overview on what the day's activity is and a brief history of the camera obscura.

**How to make a Camera Obscura**

**Student Product:**

The finished product will be a hand crafted, hand decorated camera obscura.

**Modifications/Extensions for special needs, gifted, etc.**

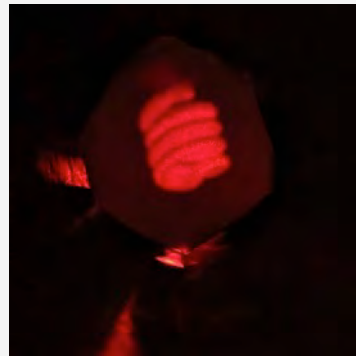
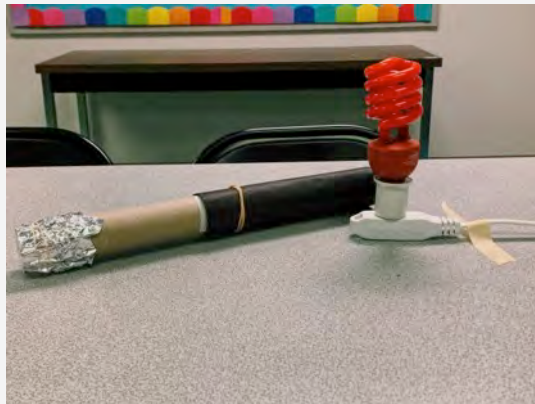
Students with special needs can focus more on piecing the two main chambers of the camera obscura. Since cutting the roll is a little challenging especially for younger students there can be a supply of pre-cut rolls. This will help with time management especially if a lot of students struggle and one teacher can't individually help each student in the classroom in 45 minutes.

**Extensions for students who finish early:**

Students who finish early will be allowed to decorate their camera obscura and/or set up a mini still life or pose their friends so they can observe them through the camera obscura and view them upside down. For students who do not finish decorating their camera obscura in time, they can be prompted to experiment at home (maybe index card sized handouts with a mini diagram on how a camera obscura works and a prompt listed).

**Assessment/Evaluation:**

1. The learner will be able to utilize repurposed materials.
2. The learner will use the knowledge of ancient philosopher discoveries about how light travels and how it reacts when it reaches our eyes.
3. The learner will be able to discuss the origins of the camera and how it works.



This lesson plan for school tours is designed to go along with the theme of the exhibition. It teaches kids about the science behind how a camera obscura works. The image in the middle is what the children will see once they build their camera obscura and look at the sample object provided. The image projected through the camera obscura is flipped upside down.