**PHOTO-ESSAY *The Photo-Essay is a semiotic analysis of two photographs, discussing how the images represent childhood, and with reference to relevant academic texts.***

On the following pages are some ideas to help you select a theme, and a choice of two different approaches for your Photo-Essay (templates). The templates are suggestions to help you structure and balance the 1000 words you need to write. You can use this guide to help you: [1] think about how to analyse; [2] plan what you need to research; [3] consider how to write your answer; [4] manage your time. The sub-headings and questions in the templates are just to guide you and should NOT be used in the final essay.

**THEMES Not quite sure what the ‘themes’ are? Here are some pointers; questions and thoughts to get you started and help you make a choice.**

1. **Indoor spaces:** Children play in spaces indoors. These can be specifically designed for certain types of play, or they could be spaces used for other things but adopted for play by children. It’s worth thinking about the difference between such types of indoor play spaces.
2. **Consumerism:** This includes adverts or products designed and marketed to appeal directly to children, even those too young to have any funds of their own (such as pocket money). There are regulations around advertising and marketing to children – are these effective?
3. **Children’s clothes:** In terms of childhood and media, children’s clothes can be explored in terms of design (style, colour, slogans etc) and also in term of suitability (age, gender, sexualized clothing etc). What messages do clothes convey?
4. **Children using media:** In our discussions on the module, we explored our tendency to think of children using media as quite negative, as it seems to prevent them from socialising and exercising etc. Might there be more benefits for children using media? What’s the balance? Does it make a difference if the use of media is passive or active? What about levels of engagement? Does the context of the media-use matter (home / commercial / school etc)?
5. **Outdoor spaces:** Children play in spaces outdoors. These can be specifically designed for certain types of play, or they could be spaces used for other things but adopted for play by children. It’s worth thinking about differences between such types of outdoor play spaces.
6. **Film for children:** Film that is directly marketed and aimed at children can capture their imaginations and provide entertainment (and sometimes education). Films can also convince children they ‘need’ items that relate to the film. Is it possible to get the balance right?
7. **Children’s toys:** By looking at the packaging of toys - and the toys themselves - it’s possible to ‘read’ the messages that the designers and marketers are sending about childhood. The toys tell children what is considered suitable for them and the packaging shows them how they ‘should’ be playing.

**Photo-Essay Template 1 – Analysing one photograph at a time**

1. **Select ONE theme** *Indoor Spaces / Consumerism / Children’s Clothes / Children Using Media / Outdoor Spaces / Film for children / Children’s Toys*
2. **Introduction (about 100 words):** Say why you are interested in the theme you have chosen. Perhaps some contemporary debates about childhood and media and this theme have caught your attention during the module or maybe the theme links to other modules or personal interests.
3. **Analysing Photograph I (about 350 words): Remember the elements we used when reviewing images for the portfolio gallery task?** Use these to guide you. Use the title we have provided on the powerpoint, to refer to the photograph in your essay eg the softplay image

* What is the mood or atmosphere of the image?
* If there are figures, you could comment on their posture, gaze and expression.
* What sort of symbolism of childhood can you see? Look at the features of the photograph, thinking about all parts of the image. How do these denote childhood?
* Consider the meaning of the image. Is there a message about childhood in the image? What would the photographer like us to think about childhood? What connotations do the features of the artwork have?

1. Don’t only describe the images; show why these interpretations matter; show you have thought things though and analysed the images. It will help to make links to the recommended **literature** (see Photo-Essay Powerpoint).
2. Think about your own interpretation of the images and how that is influenced by your background, experiences and opinions. Is your interpretation likely to be similar to others’ views? Why might it be different?
3. It would be a good thing to be able to demonstrate how the images link to relevant childhood and media **debates**. Perhaps some use of newspaper articles or references to mainstream television documentaries (such as on the BBC) might help support any contention that the issue has relevance in contemporary society.
4. **Analysing Photograph II (about 350 words):** Follow steps 3-6 for the second photograph.
5. You might find that the recommended literature from the ‘Images of Childhood’ session (and Powerpoint) could help you to expand on some key points you are making about the photographs. Both ***Higonnet* and *Holland*** have very thorough discussions of all types of images of children, if you want to expand these ideas further.
6. **Conclusion (about 200 words):** Without introducing new material, or being overly repetitive, find a way to draw together the key points you want the reader to really remember. Refer to the title and check carefully that you have shown how the images represent childhood.
7. Provide a **bibliography** of all the references in alphabeticalorder and following the Harvard Roehampton style.
8. Be sure to give yourself ample **time to proof read your work**, checking for clear English, correctly written with good grammar, punctuation and structure. Include the images in your submission.
9. Be sure that youknow how and when to **submit your work** (Turnitin by 14:00 on Thurs May 21st). Ensure that you are either confident you can meet the submission date, or you already arranged an extension or deferral.

**Photo-Essay Template 2 - Analysing both photographs simultaneously**

1. **Select ONE theme** *Indoor Spaces / Consumerism / Children’s Clothes / Children Using Media / Outdoor Spaces / Film for children / Children’s Toys*
2. **Introduction (about 100 words):** Say what interests you about your chosen theme. Refer to contemporary debates about childhood and media that have caught your attention.
3. **Analysing the Photographs (about 700 words):** As you discuss the photographs, **draw comparisons** and show what is similar and different within the two images. Remember the elements we used when reviewing images for the portfolio gallery task?Use these to guide you. Use the title we have provided on the Powerpoint to refer to the photograph in your essay (e.g. ‘Softplay’)

* What is the mood or atmosphere of the image?
* If there are figures, you could comment on their posture, gaze and expression.
* What sort of symbolism of childhood can you see? Look at the features of the photograph, thinking about all parts of the image. How do these features denote childhood?
* Consider the meaning of the image. Is there a message about childhood in the image? What would the photographer like us to think about childhood? What connotations do the features of the artwork have?

1. Don’t only describe the images; show why these interpretations matter; show you have thought things though and analysed the images. It will help to make links to the recommended **literature** (see Photo-Essay Powerpoint).
2. Think about your own interpretation of the images and how that is influenced by your background, experiences and opinions. Is your interpretation likely to be similar to others’ views? Why might it be different?
3. It would be a good thing to be able to demonstrate how the images link to relevant childhood and media **debates**. Perhaps some use of newspaper articles or references to mainstream television documentaries (such as on the BBC) might help support any contention that the issue has relevance in contemporary society.
4. You might find that the recommended literature from the ‘Images of Childhood’ session (and Powerpoint) could help you to expand on some key points you are making about the photographs. Both ***Higonnet* and *Holland*** have very thorough discussions of all types of images of children, if you want to expand these ideas further.
5. **Conclusion (about 200 words):** Without introducing new material, or being overly repetitive, find a way to draw together the key points you want the reader to really remember. Refer to the title and check carefully that you have shown how the images represent childhood.
6. Provide a **bibliography** of all the references in alphabeticalorder and following the Harvard Roehampton style.
7. Be sure to give yourself ample **time to proof read your work**, checking for clear English, correctly written with good grammar, punctuation and structure. Include the images in your submission.
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