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Using Photovoice methodology for community growth: A Workshop for Al-Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage Centre

Miller, Nicole M. (2024) Using Photovoice methodology for community growth: A Workshop for Al-Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage Centre. In: Using Photovoice methodology for community growth: A Workshop for Al- Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage Centre, 25-June 2024, at Al-Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage Centre. London,UK.. (Unpublished)

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Using Photovoice methodology for community growth:\*

*A Workshop for Al- Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage  
Centre*

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\*The term photovoice is being used in reference to the academic theory, and not in reference to the UK organization 'PhotoVoice' (photovoice.org), which specializes in designing and delivering participatory photography projects, and holds the trademark to the word."

Citation: Miller, N. M. (2024). *Using Photovoice methodology for community growth: A Workshop for Al- Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage Centre*. Workshop at Al- Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage Centre. London, UK. (June 25, 2024)

# Session outline

- Introductions and icebreakers
- Photo literacy
- Photo Dialogues
- Picture captioning
- Implications for training others

By the end of the training, you will have developed

- Skills in techniques of photo literacy, how text and image work together to create a narrative
- How to build consensus over using the photographs
- Group communication skills

Training is adapted using the following resources



# Introduction

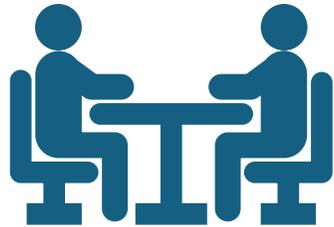
## Ice breakers

Go around the room and state

- Name
- Role (community member, teacher, therapist etc)
- Something unique about you



# Group agreement



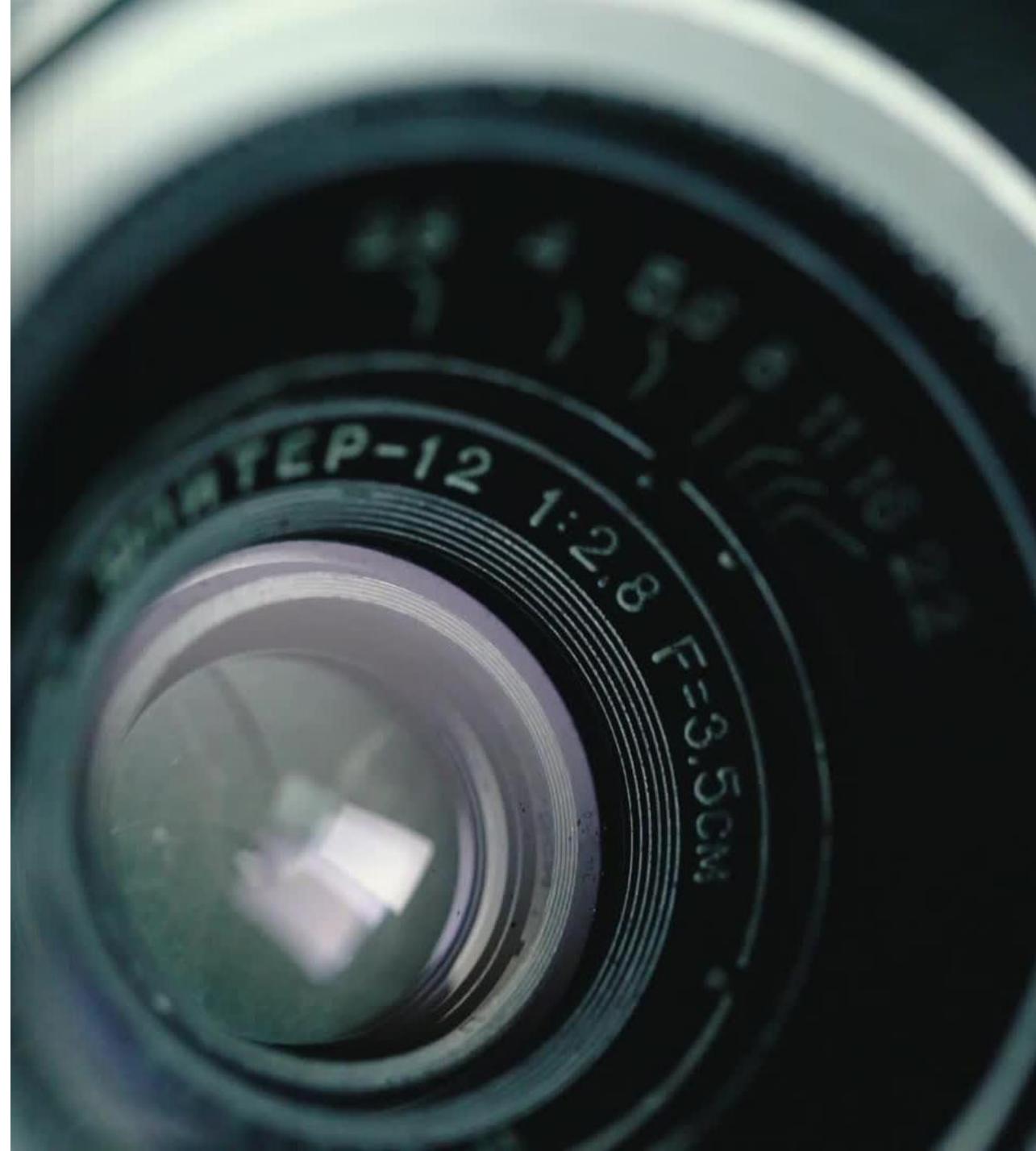
Please take some time to think what might be some good principles/ ground rules to guide our sessions?



Keep in mind we will be discussing pictures and what we think and feel about them as a group

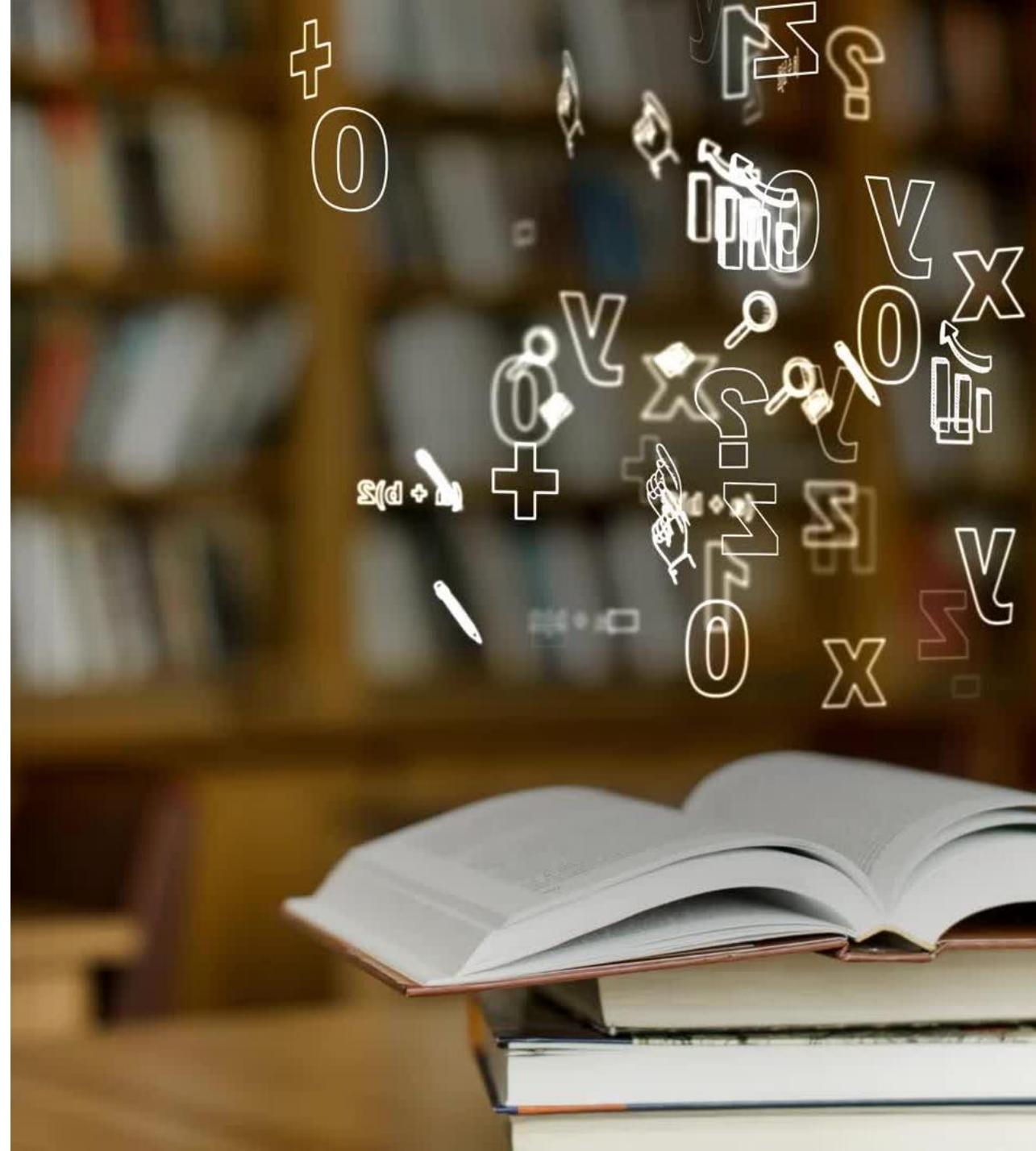
# PhotoVoice

- Photovoice is a form of participatory photography
- Photovoice allows people to showcase their voice using photographs
- It allows people to express and document their views to communicate with policy makers and the community.



# Visual Literacy

- Reading the visual world
- Decode or read pictures
- Encoding or create pictures to communicate an idea, feeling, emotion.



# Visual literacy: Language



## Frame

- Subject
- Focus
- Close up
- Foreground
- Movement

## Composition

- Background
- Shape
- Colour
- Texture
- Light
- Shadow
- Perspective or Angle: High, low, short

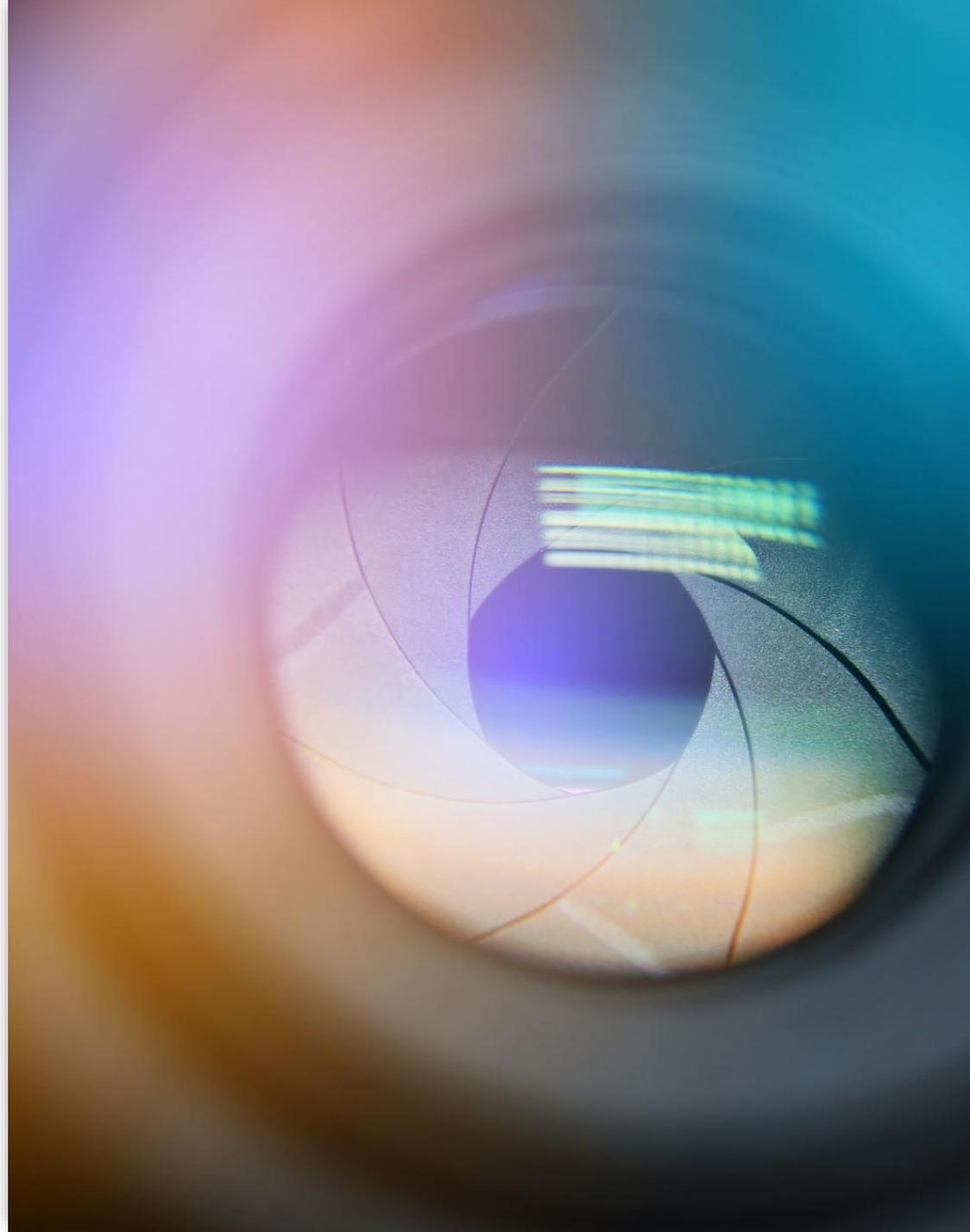
# Frame

Frame: boundary or edges of what you see in the viewfinder or on the screen of your camera.

## Subject

- The focus of the picture
- Usually, you notice the subject of a picture first and then look at the composition.

Focus: how sharp and clear the subject appears in a photograph.







# Frame

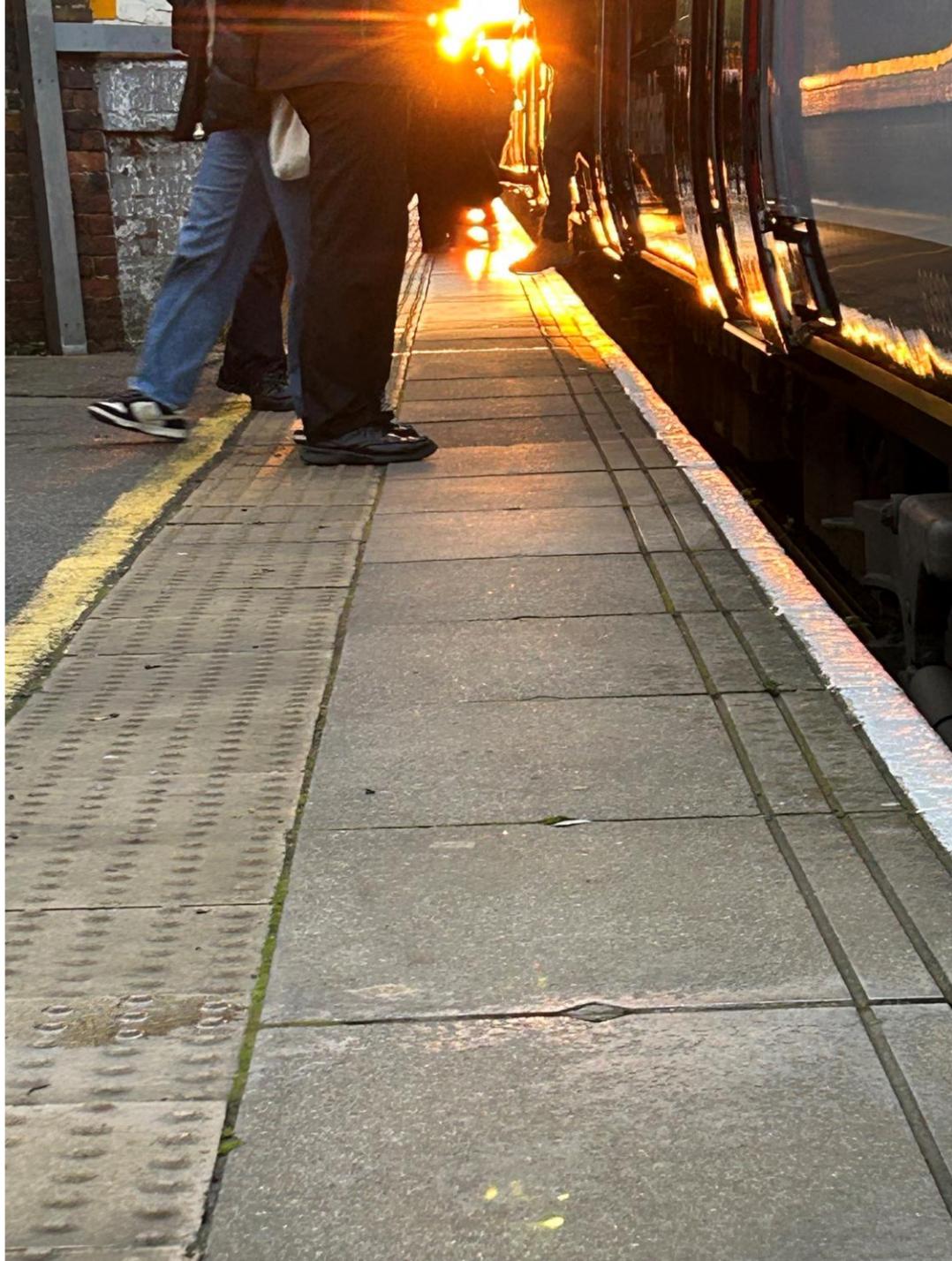
**Close up:** Picture taken from a very short distance to highlight details of a subject. It's used to show small details

**Foreground:** the part of the scene that is closest to the camera and appears at the bottom of the image. It can help frame the image

**Movement:** Action or motion captured within a photograph.

- It can be shown through the blur of a moving subject, such as a person running or a car speeding by
- Capturing the progression of an event over time.





# Photograph composition

## **Composition**

- Arrangement of objects in the photograph and how they interact.

## **Background**

- Is behind or around the main subject of the photograph
- Can add contrast and depth to the image





# Shape

- Shapes can help define the objects in your picture.
- It can help create balance and structure.
- What do you notice about the shapes of center mountain and how it relates to other mountains?
- Relates to being the subject?





# Color & Texture

## Color

- Use colors to bring life to the picture. It can set the mood of the picture, make things stand out and helps to tell more of the story
  - Warm colors might make you feel warm and cheerful
  - Cooler colors more relaxed or relaxed and calm

## Texture

- Contrasting between two elements . Soft vs Hard, and the use of light



# Light and Shadows

## Light

- It refers to the natural or artificial illumination of the subject or scene
- Good lighting can make a photo bright, clear, and visually appealing, Poor lighting can make it dark, blurry, or uninteresting.

## Shadows

- Shadow is the dark area where light is blocked by an object.
- Highlight the textures and shapes of objects
- Create interesting patterns and contrasts, which can make your photos dramatic and visually appealing.





# Perspective & Angles

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## Perspective

- The way objects appear in a photo based on the position and distance of the camera relative to the subject.
- It affects how depth, size, and spatial relationships are perceived in the image.

## Angles

- Different positions from which you can take a photo.
- The angle you choose can change how the subject looks and how the photo feels.

**Short Angles:** Close up shots from a short distance

**High Angle:** The camera is raised above the subject and is tilted down at the subject.

**Low angles:** The camera closer to the ground and points up towards the subject.









# Process

Thoughts about visual literacy?

- We can all look at the same picture and see different things
- Some parts of the picture grabs our attention more than others
- This makes both picture viewing and picture taking unique
- Visual literacy terms helps us create the common language



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## Conveying the message

- Photograph reality: Happening here and now
- Photograph symbols: Take pictures that represent an idea concept or theme
- Scene: Arrange a scene

A **symbol** is something that represents something else  
Thoughts, feelings, emotions

What is in the photo may not actually convey the meaning of the photo

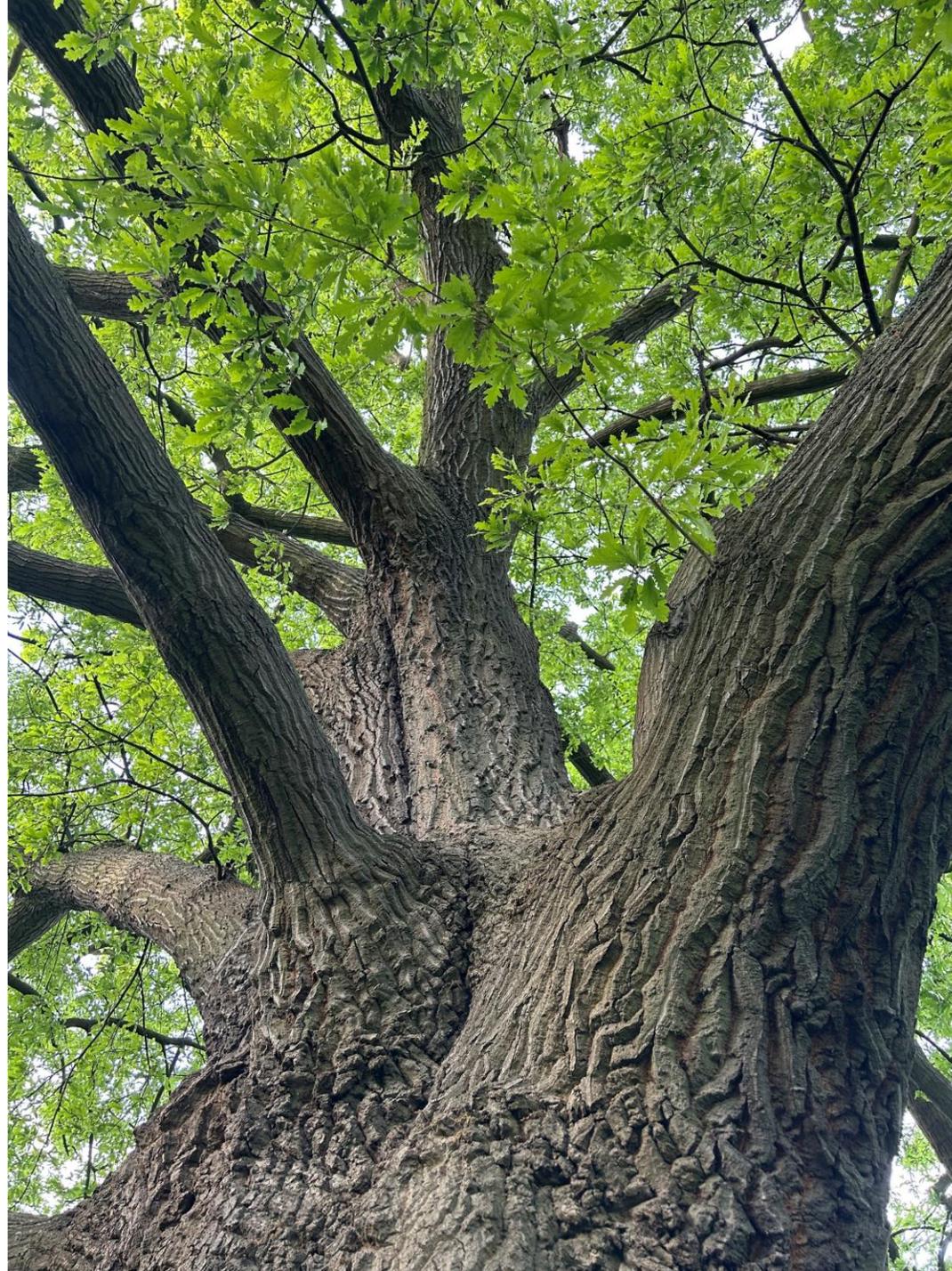


Reality

What do you see?

This picture speaks  
for itself.

What is happening or  
has happened



Arranged  
Scene

Arrange  
reality to  
tell a story



# Summary

Pictures can be taken to represent

- Reality something happening now
- Symbolic and refer to emotion's thoughts and feelings
- Arranged to tell a story



Break

# Photo Dialogues



# Group work: Photo Dialogues

I will show you a series of pictures and you will practice what you have learned about visual literacy in a group

Discuss with your group members the following

- What do you see?
- Describe how the picture was constructed.
  - What is the subject? (What is this photo about?)
  - How is the lighting/color used?
  - What angles do you see? How are the angles used?
- What message is the photo trying to convey?
- What does this picture make you think? How does it make you feel?





## the do's and don'ts of visual literacy

- Do encourage exploration
- Do encourage the relationship between the image content and composition
- Don't support expert photography



# Using the Digital camera phone

Open the camera on your phone

See if you can identify the following:

- Focus
- Flash

Some phones have

- Shutter/ exposure options
- Effects
- Different ratios





# Preparing to take pictures

## The Four F's

- Frame: Thinking about what you want to include in your photo
- Focus: Be sure to pick what you will focus on
- Follow through: Allow the camera time to take the picture
- Flash/Light: Thinking about the light surrounding the picture

Think about the other framing and composition elements

- Colour, texture, light, shadow,

## Message

- Reality, Symbols or Scene

# Taking pictures and ethics

Include only:

- Photographs of spaces, locations and objects that represent experiences
- Exclude pictures of minors, illegal behaviours and direct photographs of their photographer's face ( no selfies!) and other people's faces directly.
- Side and behind views of people's faces/body are fine but only with their consent!
- If you are in a busy place, then try to minimise focusing on others directly.



# Practice

For the next 30 minutes or so will ask for you to do the following

Take a picture conveying each of three messages:

- Reality
- Symbols
- Scene

This can be a pictures in the building, nearby park and or canal area.

You can take as many pictures as you want but you will only submit three in total one for each message

After the pictures are taken we will come back and discuss the experience and then you will be shown how to upload the pictures on Padlet.



# Picture taking & Check in

- What was your experience like?
- Is there any pros or cons?
- Anything you need more help with understanding?



Picture Captioning

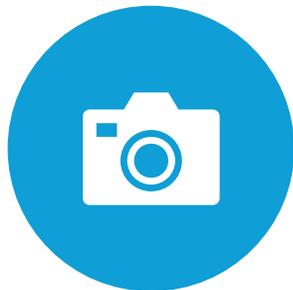
# Pictures and Text



Text can be used to further explain the image



They can reveal or surprise us with new information



Text can display information about the photographer



Text should discuss something unique and does not repeat the image itself but adds something to it

# Brainstorming with text

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## Options

### **Word Associations**

Look at the picture and write down words that come to your head

### **Free writing**

Write for two minutes without stopping or reading and review what you like or don't like

## Options

### **Questions**

When

Were

Who

What

How why

# Caption the picture on Padlet

- Pick the picture you want to show.
- Place your Name
- Caption the picture: After your brainstorm you can write maybe two to three sentences that describes your picture.
- Upload the picture on Padlet and type the words you wrote

Or

- Upload the picture and then type of the words first vs write them down

# Uploading the pictures to Padlet

The image shows a Padlet board on the left and its sharing interface on the right. The board is titled "Training: Picture Captioning" and features a post from "Photovoice" with a photo of a succulent and the caption "Test". A plus sign at the bottom of the board is labeled "Add pictures here". The sharing interface includes a "Publish" button labeled "Submit photos", a "Subject" field, a media selection area with icons for file, link, camera, gallery, and "+12", and a text area labeled "Write something incredible...". A callout "Write captions here" points to the text area, and another "Upload here" callout points to the media selection area.

Padlet

Photovoice • 1m

## Training: Picture Captioning

Share your ideas and comment on others!

Photovoice 5d



Test

+ Add comment

Upload here

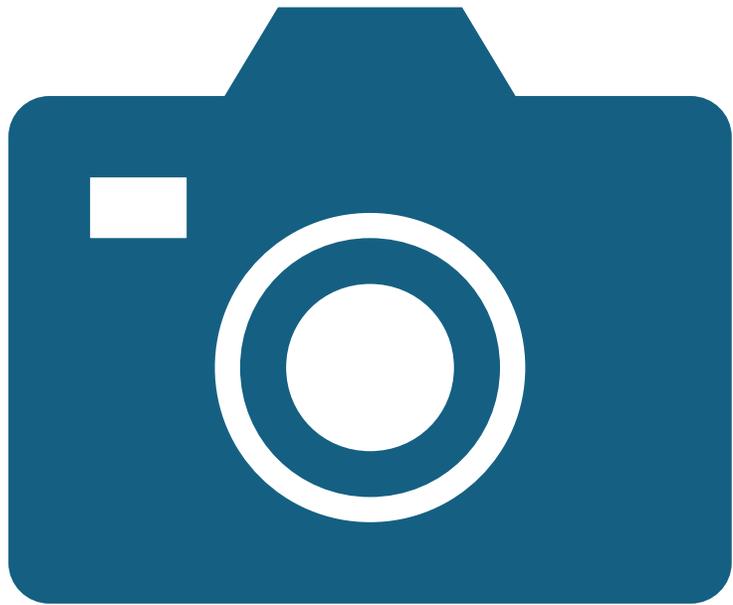
Submit photos

Subject

Write something incredible...

Write captions here

White



Picture review

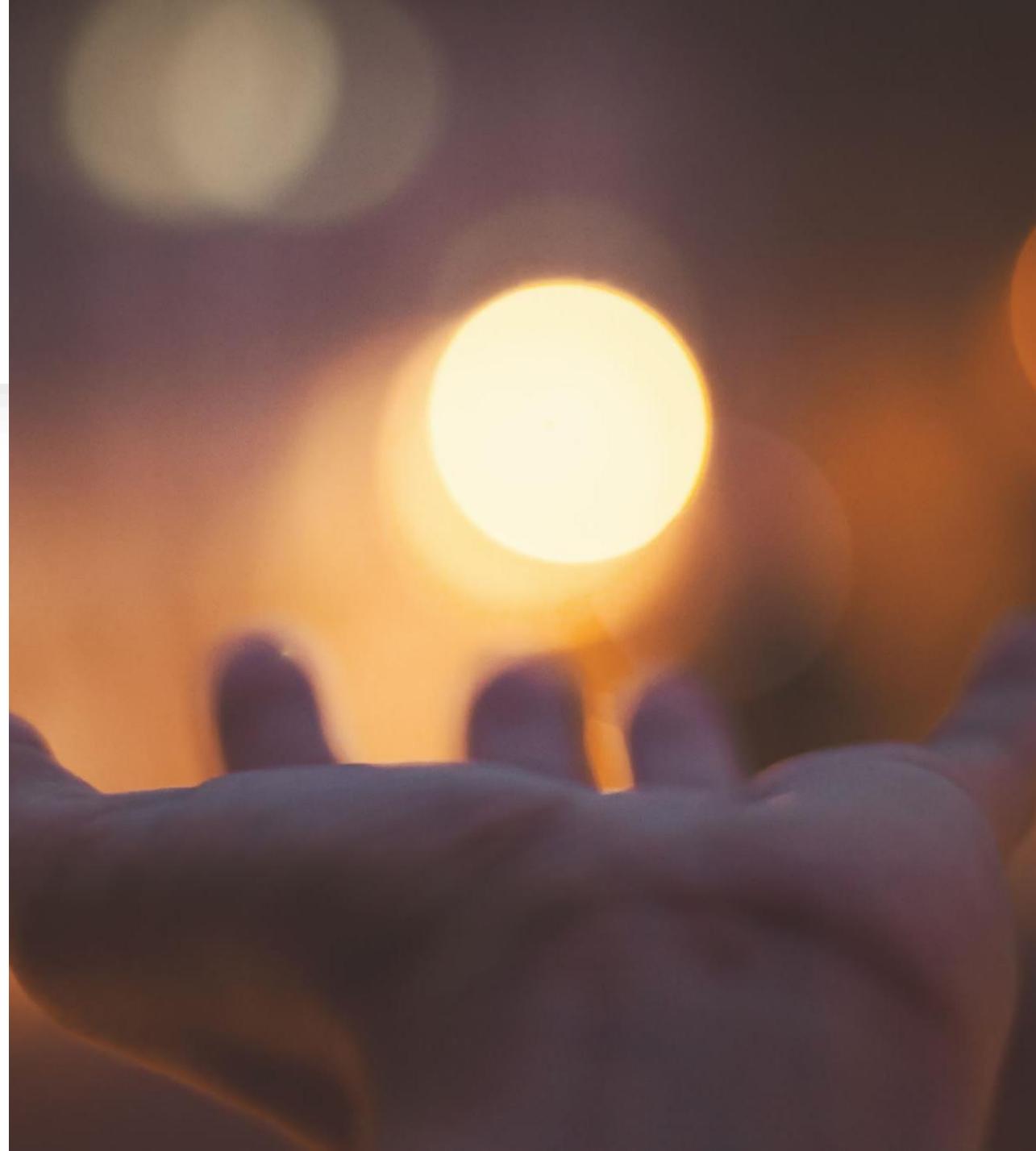
# Reviewing the pictures One to one

- Can you tell us about the photographs?
- What was your experience like with taking part in this exercise?



# Exploring the pictures with the group

- What do you see in this picture?
  - Describe how this picture was constructed
  - Think of the tips for taking pictures, such as frame, angles, light, close up, far away etc?
- What does this picture communicate?
- Are there any thoughts or feelings that come to mind when you see this picture?
- Thoughts about the caption





## Reviewing pictures and Check in

- What was your experience like?
- Is there any pros or cons?
- How might you adapt this process to your community members?



Implications for  
training:  
Developing the  
Voice of the  
project

# Training for participants

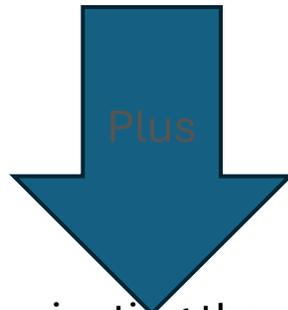
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Session 1

Session on Photo Literacy

Practice taking pictures

Captioning



Identifying and communicating the message

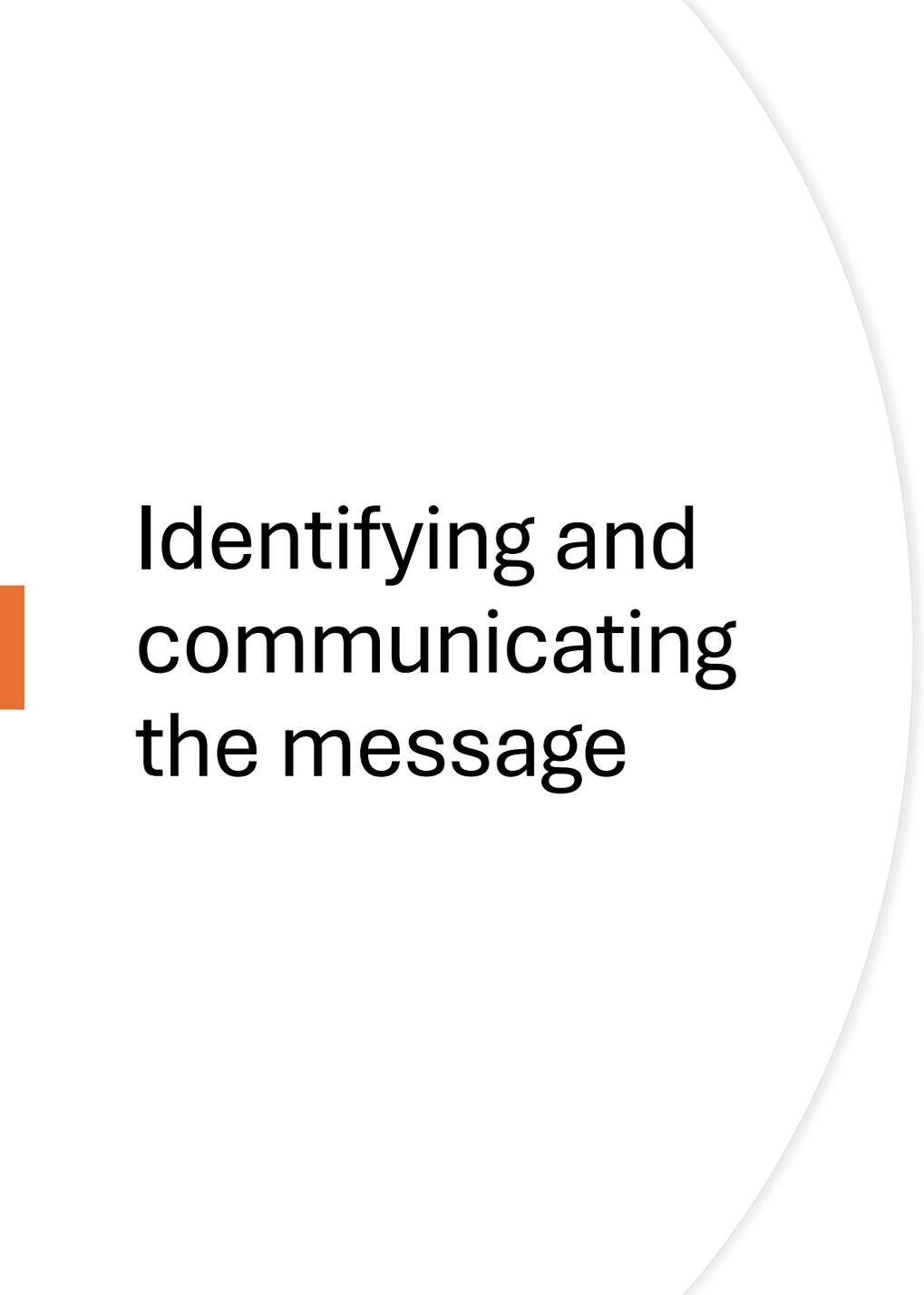
Identifying the question to guide photographs

# Identifying and communicating the message

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## Framing the message

- Explore what the message will be
- Who are the targets
- The format
- Review pictures again using the SHOWeD

A decorative orange vertical bar is on the left side of the slide. A large white circle with a thin grey border is positioned on the left, partially overlapping the orange bar and extending towards the center of the slide.

# Identifying and communicating the message

A public exhibition of participants' **work to raise awareness about the community?**

- What do you want to raise awareness about?
- How do you want to display the life in your community?

# Communication the message

## **What images will help with?**

- The changes you want to see
- The message you want to convey

## **Who is the Target of the images?**

- Who?
- Where Local council, larger areas or gov't bodies?
- How? Format of the images.



# Format of the message

- Poster
- Slide show
- Stationary or travelling exhibition
- Small display at a meeting
- Booklets
- Series of photos

# Preliminary work for session 2

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- After the message is identified ask the participants to take pictures that convey this message
- Participants take 25-30 pictures and pick their top 5
- Participants upload their 5 pictures along with captions



# Session 2

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## **During Session 2**

### **Group format discussing the pictures together as a group**

- Remind people of ground rules and right to leave if they would like
- This exercise is just them getting used to discussing pictures, viewing what others think of the pictures and creating a group identity
- Focus group interviews will be recorded at this time
- Time: 60 to 90 minutes

# Questions for participant

- Can you tell us about the photographs?
  - Photography literacy words
  - Message
  - Thoughts and feelings
  - Captions
- What was your experience like with taking part in this exercise?

# Group Questions: SHOWeD\* technique

The SHOWeD technique allows both to elicit responses about photographs and helps to move towards action

- What do you See in this picture?
- What is really Happening here?
- How does this Relate to Our lives?
- Why does the problem, concern, strengths Exist?
- What can we Do about it?

These questions can be adapted to fit your message/goal

\*Catalani et al., 2010;Hergenrather et al., 2009; Wang & Burris, 1999

# Other Group Questions

- What do you see?
  - How does it make you feel?
  - Why does this opportunity or problem exist?
  - How can you use this picture to inform others
  - What can you do to change the situation
- 
- These questions can be adapted to fit your message/goal

# Consensus building

- Range from voting on pictures as a group and removing others
  - Revise captions in groups of twos so people feel a part of the process
- Having each person pick one picture they want to be shown

# Post consensus building

- Review the format of the message
- Be flexible
- Remember group agreements
- Format and create the final message
- Certificate of appreciation for their participation



# Possible Photovoice training design

## Session 1

Photo literacy

Photo Dialogues

Picture captioning

Identify the message

Community members  
given their research task

Participants take 25-30  
pictures and pick their  
top 5



## Session 2

Participants upload  
their 5 pictures along  
with captions

Review the picture in a  
group setting

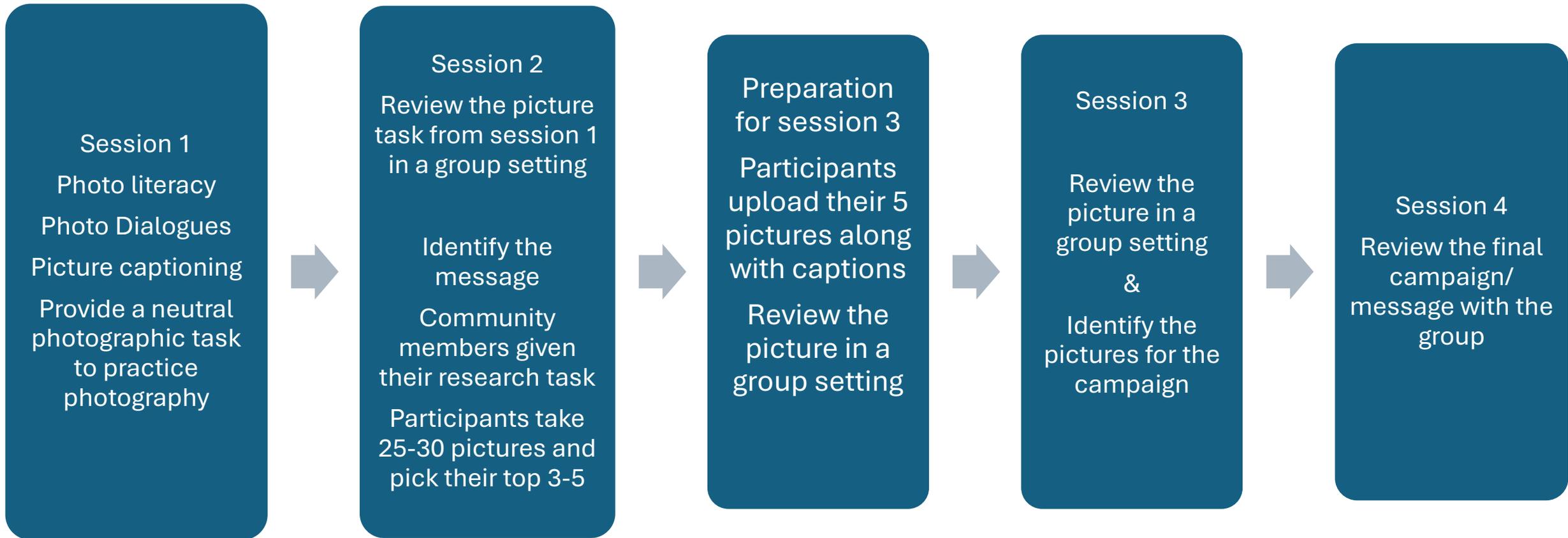
Identify the pictures for  
the campaign



## Session 3

Review the final  
campaign/ message  
with the group

## Possible Photovoice training design



# Ethical concerns

Include only:

- Photographs of spaces, locations and objects that represent experiences
- Exclude pictures of minors, illegal behaviours and direct photographs of their photographer's face ( no selfies!) and other people's faces directly.
- Side and behind views of people's faces/body are fine but only with their consent!
- If you are in a busy place, then try to minimise focusing on others directly.



Questions? Thoughts?  
Concerns

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# Workshop process

- What worked well with the workshop?
- What could be improved?
- How confident does the group feel with :
  - Photo Literacy
  - Photo Dialogues
  - Photo captioning
  - Reviewing photographs with individuals and group
- Option to spend time practicing and taking more time to review the process before moving on the community?



Thank you for participating in the workshop!

*Questions email Nicole Miller at*  
[Nicole.miller@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:Nicole.miller@uwl.ac.uk)

Please use the following citation when reusing or adapting the materials from this workshop:

Miller, N. M. (2024). *Using Photovoice methodology for community growth: A Workshop for Al- Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage Centre*. Workshop at Al- Manaar- The Muslim-Cultural Heritage Centre. London, UK. (June 25, 2024)