

Rubric – Lange’s Iconic Photograph HAT

To answer this assessment, students must consider various aspects of the photograph's reliability and also think about other information that could help them evaluate the reliability of the image. In Question 1, students must explain that Lange may have been influenced by the Resettlement Administration's desire to increase support for its programs. In Question 2, students need to identify an aspect of the photo that suggests Lange's influence over its content. Finally, in Question 3, students must identify one more piece of information that would help them evaluate the reliability of this photograph and justify their choice.

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
Proficient	<p>QUESTION 1: Student identifies relevant background information and explains why it might call the reliability of the photo into question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: posed Sample Student Response: <i>Since the administration wanted support for its program, photographers could have just staged migrant people. This photo could have been posed and carefully planned out.</i> • Example: rally support Sample Student Response: <i>The background information may lead me to question the photograph’s reliability because it states that Dorothea Lange took these photos to rally support for the Resettlement Administration. Therefore, there is a bias for the Resettlement Administration, and this photo may have been staged so people would support this program.</i> <p>QUESTION 2: Student identifies a relevant aspect of the photograph and explains why it would call the reliability of the photo into question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example: posed and artificial Sample Student Response: <i>One feature of the photo that might lead me to question its reliability is the way her hand is posed on her face and the way her children are both hiding their faces. It looks posed and artificial. The photo doesn’t look like a candid, honest shot.</i>

QUESTION 3: Student identifies relevant information and explains how it would help to determine the reliability of the photograph.

- **Example: photography studio**

Sample Student Response:

Precisely where did she take the photo (in a home setting, a photography studio, a field, etc.)?

This would help me determine the reliability of the photo because *the photo could have been taken in a photography studio, easily suggesting that the photo was taken with a certain purpose. The fact that Lange focused on the family and excluded a background makes it challenging to decipher.*

- **Example: staged**

Sample Student Response:

I would want to know if Lange staged this picture or if this is really how she saw the mother and her children.

This would help me determine the reliability of the photo because *if Lange set this picture up by telling the mother and children to look this way, then this picture would be much less reliable. It would be hard to know if their emotions are real. Are these people really troubled or were they asked to act for the camera?*

Emergent

QUESTION 1: Student identifies background information that might call the reliability of the photo into question but does not provide a complete explanation.

- **Example: biased**

Sample Student Response:

The background information above might lead me to question the photograph's reliability because the photograph might be biased in favor of Franklin Roosevelt's agencies. This might not be the whole story/facts about the Dust Bowl.

- **Example: FDR**

Sample Student Response:

I might question the photographer's reliability because in the background information they say, "this agency hired photographer Dorothea Lange to take pictures that would build support for its programs." That makes me think that maybe FDR only wants to seem like he is trying to help.

QUESTION 2: Student identifies a relevant aspect of the photograph but does not explain why it would call the reliability of the photo into question.

- **Example: pose**

Sample Student Response:

In the photo, Florence Thompson seems to pose for the camera facing her. If the picture is taken at a moment when no one is knowing, then the photo wouldn't turn out to be so fine and perfect.

- **Example: children**

Sample Student Response:

One reliability that I question is that the photograph is only showing two kids and a baby. There is no proof of her having seven children.

QUESTION 3: Student identifies relevant information but does not adequately explain how it would help to determine the reliability of the photograph.

- **Example: story behind the picture**

Sample Student Response:

How did Dorothea Lange meet this woman? What was the story behind this picture?

This would help me determine the reliability of the photo because *it would tell me how she met this person and if this photograph was staged.*

- **Example: background**

Sample Student Response:

I would ask Dorothea Lange to take the picture with the background included.

This would help me determine the reliability of the photo because *with the background, it'll give a better look at where she is and those other sad families to prove that the place was really from the Dust Bowl and people are really suffering a lot.*

Basic

QUESTION 1: Student does not identify background information that might call the reliability of the photo into question.

- **Example: pictures of stuff**

Sample Student Response:

It doesn't show enough background information of Dorothea Lange. Anyone can take pictures of stuff. We don't know if she took any photography class or stuff like that.

- **Example: why photographs were needed**

Sample Student Response:

I question why photographs were needed as during the time of the Great Depression many were suffering as it was already well known, but the background tells of only one farmworker.

QUESTION 2: Student does not identify a relevant aspect of the photograph.

- **Example: dusty**

Sample Student Response:

One feature of the photo that leads me to question the reliability is why are they so dusty when they are in California. It should be cleaner than before. I think the program purposely made them look really poor and dirty so the program can get more support from the reader.

- **Example: emotion**

Sample Student Response:

Florence Thompson shows no emotion in the photograph. She should have been happy about moving away from the Dust Bowl.

QUESTION 3: Student does not identify relevant information.

- **Example: Great Plains**

Sample Student Response:

I would like to know where in Nipomo, California, this was taken.

This would help me determine the reliability of the photo because the location of the Dust Bowl was in the Great Plains, far from California.

- **Example: assumptions**

Sample Student Response:

Does she know the situation of the Dust Bowl firsthand?

This would help me determine the reliability of the photo because if she didn't know the situation firsthand, she might have just made assumptions of what it was really like.