

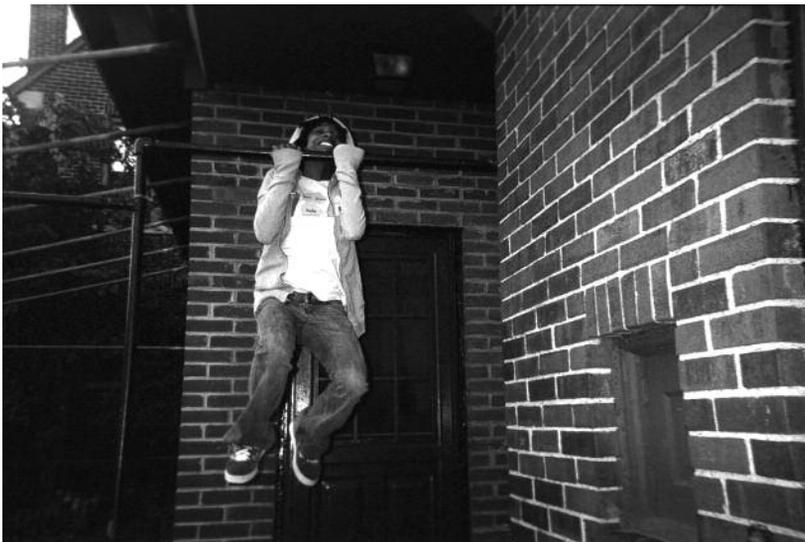
Using Student Photographs as Writing Prompts

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The two photographs featured here were taken by students in the “Picturing Poetry” program, and can be used to introduce students to the idea of combining words and images. These and other students photos are available for classroom use from CEPA Gallery at www.cepagallery.org.



“Listen.” Photograph by Isaac Torres.



“Energy.” Photograph by Morgan McDaniel.

Before asking your students to begin writing, give them some time to observe the photograph. Encourage them to view it as a living thing. Ask them to step inside the artwork and walk around inside this space. You can use the following questions or come up with your own to help your students explore the photograph and develop a relationship with it. Have them take notes. Make sure they know that there is no right or wrong answer. The students can use their notes later for wordplay and experimentation.

Questions for Isaac Torres' photograph from the Picturing Poetry unit with the theme "Listen"

- What is a whisper?
- Can you find a poem in the word whisper?
- What would a whisper poem sound like?
- What letters would you include in a whisper poem?
- What does it feel like to be whispered to?
- What would you like to whisper? To whom?
- When you see someone whispering how does it make you feel?
- How does a whisper work?
- Can you think of a simile for whisper? What is a whisper like?
- Why do people whisper?
- When do people whisper?
- Do objects whisper?
- Finish this statement using your imagination. A whisper is a...?
- Where do whispers go?
- What is the shape of a whisper?



- What does a whisper feel like in your mouth?
- What color is a whisper?
- What does a whisper feel like to a hand?
- What does a whisper feel like to an ear?
- What is beautiful in this picture?

Questions for Morgan McDaniel's photograph from the Picturing Poetry unit with the theme "Energy"

- What is energy?
- Can you find a poem in this photograph?
- When you look at this photo what do you notice?
- What is happening in this photograph?
- What does energy look like? What is it shaped like?
- What does it make you feel?
- What do you think about when you look at this photo?
- What words energize you?
- What is it like to have no energy?
- What is the source of human energy?
- What information can you gather from your five senses?



- What lines or patterns do you notice in this picture?
- Can you incorporate them into your poem?
- What words do you need to build an energy poem?
- When you look at this photograph where do you feel the energy is strongest? Weakest?