Advanced American History

Photography of the People

Examine two photographs of Dorothea Lange. Chose two of the other photographers listed and examine two photos from each. Answer the questions below for each photograph.

Photographers: Walker Evans, Marion Post Wolcott, Alfred Eisenstaedt, Eddie Adams, Peter Stackpole, Otto Hagel

In your opinion,

a. What are the people in the photograph looking at?

b. What are the expressions on their faces?

c. What are they thinking?

d. At what time of day might the photograph have been taken?

e. Where was the photograph taken?

f. What do you think they are doing?

a. Describe the colors, lines, shapes, texture, and space you see in the image.

b. What do you notice first in this picture? Where is your eye led?

c. How many faces do you see?

d. What are the people wearing? How are they posed?

e. Where are their hands resting?

f. Are you looking up or down at the people in the image?

g. When was this picture made?

Based on what you know about the 1930s,

a. Who are the people in the photograph?

b. What message do you think the photographer was trying to convey?

c. What is the situation of the people depicted? Point out some visual elements in the photograph that tell you about their situation.

d. If possible, how would you help the people in this photograph?

e. Might a photograph of this nature be made today? Why or why not?

f. What alternative title would you give this photograph?

Why were these photographs taken?

- Why were artists given jobs by the government as part of the New Deal?

- These images, and many like them, were published in the 1930s in newspapers and magazines. What kind of effect do you think they had on the public?