

Self-Guided Activities

DOROTHEA LANGE



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SELF-GUIDED ACTIVITIES FOR GRADES 3–5

Dorothea Lange's photographs show her concern for other people. She pictured people in many different kinds of situations. Many of her photographs remind us of some difficult times in American history. Use these activities to help you look more closely at her pictures and to discover for yourself what she was trying to say with her camera.

This guide is designed to be used at the Getty Museum, in conjunction with the exhibition *About Life: The Photographs of Dorothea Lange*.



The J. Paul Getty Museum
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Go to Gallery W105

Activity 1: Hard Times in the City and the Country

In the 1930s, when Dorothea Lange took many of the photographs in this gallery (room), the United States was going through a hard time. This period was so hard it was called the Great Depression. Many different things went wrong at the same time. The value of money dropped and banks closed. People in the cities lost their jobs and their savings. In the country, there was no rain for the crops, and farms failed. Everywhere, people were out of work and hungry.

Find two photographs showing hard times in the city and write the titles here:

Title 1.

Title 2.

Find two photographs showing hard times in the country and write the titles here:

Title 1.

Title 2.

Go to Gallery W105

Activity 2: Make Your Own Exhibition

Walk all the way around the gallery (room), looking at each photograph one time. Imagine you are going to create your own exhibition of Lange's photography. Pick three photographs that you think go together. Write their titles below:

Title 1:

Describe this photograph. What do you see?

Title 2:

Describe this photograph. What do you see?

Title 3:

Describe this photograph. What do you see?

What do the photographs have in common?

What is the title of your exhibition?

Go to Gallery W105

Activity 2: Make Your Own Exhibition (continued)

1. Sketch the three photographs in the boxes below.







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Go to Gallery W106

Activity 3: Noticing Shapes and Patterns

Lange's photographs tell us about people and places, but she also shows the lines, shapes, and patterns that she saw in the world.

Examples:

		
 Line	 Shape	 Pattern
<i>Highway to the West/U.S. 54 in Southern New Mexico</i>	<i>Pot-Bellied Stove, Southwestern Utah</i>	<i>Bessie, Daughter of Zion, Toquerville, Utah</i>

Find more pictures in which you notice strong lines, shapes, or patterns. Write their titles in the spaces on the next page and draw the photograph in the matching box.

Line	Shape	Pattern
Title:	Title:	Title:
Line	Shape	Pattern
Title:	Title:	Title:

Go to Gallery W105 or W106

Activity 4: Exploring One Photograph

Look around the gallery (room) and pick one photograph that you like. Write the title below and answer the following questions:

Title:

2. What is going on in this picture?

3. Who is in this picture? If there are no people, skip to number 5.

4. If there is more than one person, how do you think they are related?
How can you tell?

5. Look at each person's expression. How do you think each person feels?

6. Circle all the adjectives that you think apply to what you see in the photograph:

Happy

Worried

Lonely

Tired

Proud

Busy

Angry

Sad

Loving

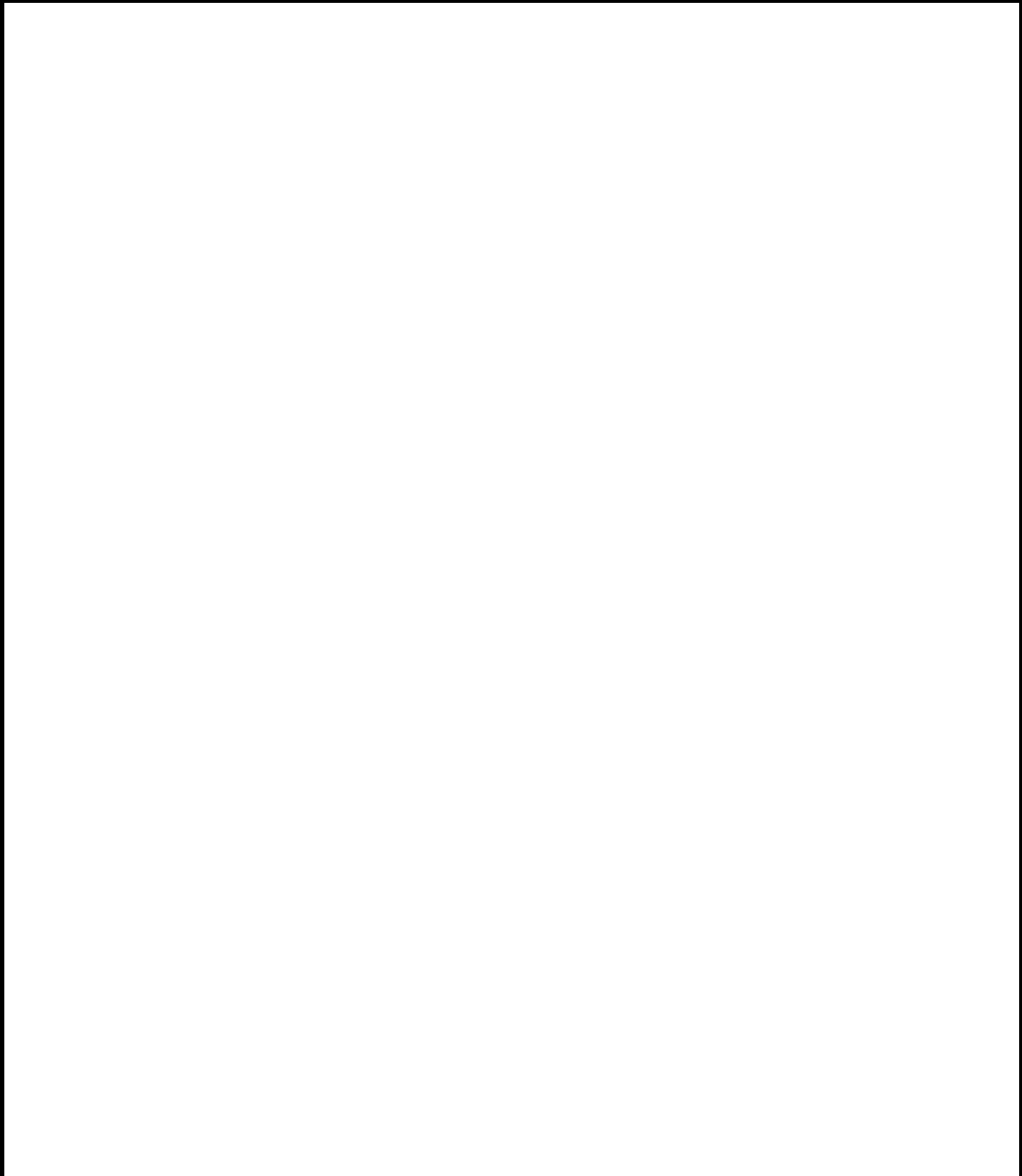
Protective

Add any other words that you think describe the photograph:

Go to Gallery W105 or W106

Activity 4: Exploring One Photograph (continued)

In the space provided here, make a drawing of the photograph.



Go to Gallery W105 or W106

Activity 5: Thinking about People

Find a photograph of a person who looks interesting to you, or who you are curious about. Write the title of the photograph below.

Title:

Describe the person.

In the space below, write what you think the person would be saying to himself or herself.

If you could ask this person a question, what would that question be? What would the person say?

Question:

Answer:

After You Leave the Museum

Activity 6: Thinking Back on Dorothea Lange

What are three things you learned today about Dorothea Lange or her photography?

1.

2.

3.

If you had the chance to take home one Dorothea Lange photograph, which one would it be? Why?

Title: _____

Reason for your preference: _____
