

Guide to Braille Texts



01. Connotation Procedures: Photogenia

Excerpt from the essay *The Photographic Message* by Roland Barthes, 1961, in which he maintains that techniques of lighting, exposure, and printing comprise the meaning of a photographic image.



02. Connotation Procedures: Aestheticism

Excerpt from *The Photographic Message* discussing the implications of employing certain artistic styles to make a photograph that is also an art object.



03. Connotation Procedures: Text & Image

Excerpt from *The Photographic Message* in which Barthes concludes about captions, “it is impossible...that the words duplicate the image; in the movement from one structure to the other, second signifiers are inevitably developed.”



04. Irises by Vincent van Gogh, 1889

Figurative description of van Gogh’s well known painting in *Art Beyond Sight: Handbook for Museums and Educators*, published by the non-profit organization Art Education for the Blind.

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05. Havana Woman in her Home



Description of an unpublished photograph by the artist: *A thin black woman, likely between 45 and 60, stands inside with her hand on a dresser of various items. The black and white image is framed from her middle to far above her head. The fluorescent light behind her glows, somehow reflecting on her face. She looks into the lens of the camera, gazing. Her dark hair is tucked into a headscarf; one curler shows. Her eyebrows are thin and arched and her mouth is closed gently. She wears a sleeveless house dress. There is a mirror over the dresser. She appears hardened or fragile or comfortable.*

06. Alabama Tenant Farmer Wife by Walker Evans, 1936



Description of Evans' well-known photograph of Allie Mae Burroughs: *A thin white woman, likely between 25 and 40, stands outside against a background of horizontal wooden siding. The black and white image is framed from her bust to just above her head. The light is even and diffused on her face. She looks into the lens of the camera, gazing. Her dark hair is pulled back tightly. Her ears stick out noticeably. Her nose is long and bulges at the tip and her thin lips are pursed tightly. She wears a V-neck collared garment with a pattern of stylized flower petals. She appears concerned or tired or resolute.*

07. Response to the sky at night



Prose written by the artist: *What can you really say in words about how the night sky looks that has not been said more eloquently with poetry, paint or pictures? Glowing white dots spaced out against tones of blue and black. If you can see, you have seen it before, in movies, in art, or in person. If you can't see, it is impossible to describe the size, distribution and relative brightness of all the stars in this area or how the colors of the sky shift the longer your eyes adjust to the darkness.*

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08. “I think it’s what you call seeing-beyond,” Jonas said.

Excerpt from pages 91-94 of the novel *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, 1993 (Random House 2002 edition), in which the protagonist lacks adequate language for describing the color red.



09. Red

Red