

Sample Informative Speech

Purpose: To inform.

Specific Purpose: to teach the audience how to take G.R.E.A.T portrait photographs.

How to take G.R.E.A.T. Portrait Photographs

I. Introduction

- A. Most of us have at least one unforgettable photograph that we cherish of ourselves.
 - 1. Mine is a series of baby photographs taken when I was 6 months old.
 - 2. Capturing these precious moments is a gift to the individual and it does not have to depend on pure luck.
- B. I have been a freelance portrait photographer for five years.
 - 1. Many ask me how I take such great, memorable photographs.
 - 2. Knowing the common mistakes people make, there are a few easy tricks I like to share that can improve anyone's portraits.
- C. Today I will reveal some simple ways to improve the quality of your pictures in 5 easy steps using the acronym G.R.E.A.T.
 - 1. G stands for Get Close
 - 2. R stands for Remember the Rule of Thirds
 - 3. E stands for Eliminate Distractions
 - 4. A stands for Ambient Light
 - 5. T stands for Take More Pictures

II. Body

- A. The "G" is GREAT is **Getting Closer**.
 - 1. A common mistake is to photograph such a large area that the viewer is unclear as to what your subject is.
 - 2. Fill the picture frame with the subject you are photographing.
 - 3. Know your camera's limits so the photograph will not be out of focus.
- B. **Remember the Rule of Thirds** when composing your photograph.
 - 1. Guidance I picked up from the 7th edition of *Photography*, by Barbara London, is to divide the frame into thirds both vertically and horizontally (358).
 - 2. Visually your subject should fall on the intersections ("golden spots") of these lines or along the lines themselves (London 358).
 - 3. Bob Kirst, author of *The Spirit of Place*, summed up this concept well, "Keep your center of interest out of the center of your frame!" (17)

C. **Eliminate Distractions** around your subject.

1. Take a moment to study the area around your subject, avoiding the infamous poles coming out of heads or cars driving out of their ears.
2. Simply adjust your angle or background to lessen the visual distractions.

D. **Ambient light** is better than the flash.

1. One of the most important parts of your photograph is the lighting, and if not done correctly the flash can ruin it!
2. Step outside and use the available natural diffused light.
 - a. Along with the flash, direct sunlight is harsh on faces.
 - b. Instead, use open shade under a tree, which offers the best lighting.

E. Lastly, **Take More Pictures**.

1. You will get better and learn from each photograph you take.
2. It also increases your odds of getting that one magic moment.
3. Professional photographers take many photos on a single subject, while amateurs will take only a few or even only one on a subject.

III. Conclusion

- A. Here is an example of a photograph by Richard Day in the *Birds and Blooms* issue of May 2003 that has all five of the elements of a G.R.E.A.T. photograph (43).
1. The photographer had to **Get Close** to the bird.
 2. The bird is composed on the upper right golden spot, holding true with the **Rule of Thirds**.
 3. The background is a very simple green, **Eliminating all Distractions**.
 4. The photographer has used the available soft **Ambient Light** and no flash.
 5. I can bet money that the photographer **Took Many** shots to get this one perfect image.
- B. These 5 elements, remembered by using the acronym G.R.E.A.T., should help you to improve your portraits, enabling you to create memories for decades to come.

Works Cited

Day, Richard. "Ready for a walk?" *Birds and Blooms*. April/May 2003: 20-21.

Kirst, Bob. *Spirit of Place: The Art of the Traveling Photographer*. New York: Amphoto Books, 2000.

London, Barbara and John Upton. *Photography*. 7th ed. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc., 2002