

Unit 9: Photography Techniques Evaluation

During Unit 9, I have learned and experimented with many different types of Photography Techniques. These include the following:

- Multiple portrait
- Joiners
- Moving Images
- Mobile Photography
- Photograms

The most interesting technique was Joiners. The reason is that I would have never thought to make a picture like a Joiner as it doesn't look like a professional picture but when you start to look at it closely, you realise the details and how unique it looks. It catches your eye because it is interesting and abnormal in a positive way.

I also learnt how to use all the functions on a DSLR camera. I have previously used a DSLR camera but didn't know how to use all the functions to get the best picture, for example: changing the exposure and focusing manually which results in a professional photograph. I have also learnt new features on Adobe Lightroom that I can use to make an image look better. As I am used a DLSR camera, It gave me high resolution image. This is because a DSLR camera has a high mega mega pixel sensor and on the Canon 550D I was using, It has a 16 megapixel sensor. The advantage of having more pixels in a photograph is that when it comes to editing, the software can pick up on all the pixels which makes the image look more sharper even after editing. Editing is easier when a photograph has more pixels as the editing software can adjust each pixel and have a high quality finish.

For the Promoting Tallis project, I had to pick a subject area to work with to take picture that can be used on the school website or on print to showcase the subject area. So for this project, I decided to pick Product Design, the reason being that it is my favorite subject and has a lot of action which would give me more opportunities to take better photographs. After picking the subject, I had to contact one of the teachers who worked in the department and so I contacted Mr Morgan by email and asked him if I could take pictures of the department and explained my brief to him. I then had to make a contract on which Mr Morgan can write any specifications that he wants the photograph to have. Then Mr Morgan and myself had to sign the contract agreeing that I would take the pictures and have them edited and finalised by the deadline which is the 14th February 2014. Mr Morgan had set two specifications which was 'Black and White' and 'Shallow depth of field'. Having this type of contact is important as it means that once the contract has been signed, you have to stick to the plan and no changes can be made by one side without the other side knowing. In other words, having a contact means that Mr Morgan can not suddenly add a specification in a then say at the end of the project that I did not stick to the contract and not pay me.

At the start, I decided to carry out some primary research by looking at the Product Design page on the school website. From looking at the page, I realised that there were no photographs at all and minimal text. This made the page dull and boring which would mean anybody looking to do product design at our school will not really look in depth due to the lack of photographs. Having photographs on this page would showcase the rooms and equipment which would make the viewers more interested meaning there is more chance of them reading through and finding out about Product Design. I also carried out some secondary research which was asking the webmaster of the Thomas Tallis School website to send me screenshots of the number of views on each page. From this research I discovered the homepage had the most views but this was due to the fact that the homepage is the first page to pop up. I discovered that the Product Design page had low views and compared to the other pages which contained photographs.

Another type of research was quantitative research. I decided to ask the Webmaster (Mr Nicholls) for the statistics from the school website. The webmaster had the weebly app on his phone which showed him all the views on each page during a certain time span. I requested screen captures of the views so that I could analyse the information which the webmaster emailed me. Using the information from the screen capture, I found out that the page with the least or no images had the least views. This is probably because the viewers find pages more interesting when they have images on them.

I also researched one of the specifications which was 'Shallow depth of field'. From the research I discovered that a 'Shallow depth of field' is when an object (usually close to the camera) is in focus and the background is out of focus. I learnt that I would have to focus the camera manually to get the best focus as I can change according to what object or person I need in focus. I didn't research into 'Black and White'. The reason being that I already knew what this technique is (changing the colour of the photograph into black and white only) and that I would be able to apply this technique during the editing stage to get the best picture quality and the best shades of black and white.

Using my research, I decided that I would be using a DSLR camera as they produce high quality images which is necessary for images that would be used on websites and for editing. As the school had a Canon 550D, I decided I would use the Canon 550D but half way during the shoot, a Canon 650D was available which allowed me to take photographs at different angles while being able to see what I am taking due to the flip out touch screen. This meant that I was able to take photographs at more interesting angles and keep the camera steady. I also had to book out the wide angle lens which I wanted to use so that I can take the whole class in one picture showing everyone working. I then had to arrange the dates and times I would be going to take pictures with my client and make sure that he had a class during those times which unfortunately the client didn't. This meant that on one Friday, I would be allowed to stay and take photographs all day which meant that I was able to take enough photographs.

As I needed many photographs so that I can go through them during the editing stage and pick

out the good ones, I didn't really check the photographs I took during the day when most of them had floors. The main issues that I discovered during the editing stage was blur in the photos and exposure. The blurred photographs I couldn't fix but the exposure, I managed to fix during the editing stage as the Canon had taken high quality photos allowing Adobe Lightroom (editing software) to work with many pixels so that a photograph can be adjusted and corrected without ruining the photo.

During the course of this project, I learnt how to use all the useful functions on a DSLR camera and this project gave me an opportunity to test out different angles and techniques of photography. The most challenging part of the project was editing as I needed to pick out the best photos and edit them according to what was in each picture and looking into them individually which meant it took a long time. The part of the project I enjoyed the most was taking the photographs as I interacted with the pupils and did a lot of experimenting.