

# Outdoor Photography Challenge

Benzie Central High School & Academy After School



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*Almost everyone has access to a camera these days. That wasn't the case before cell phones and tablets came along. Taking photos is a wonderful pastime. Some people know how to take a decent selfie shot, but rarely try other types of photographs. I want to challenge you to attempt each of the photographic techniques listed below. Let me know how it goes! Are you able to improve your shots with a little thought? I've seen some cell phone photos taken by students that rival professional photographers shots! Send me your best shots at [kevin.kinnan@ecoseeds.org](mailto:kevin.kinnan@ecoseeds.org).*

1. Use the **“Rule of Thirds.”** Look through your camera’s view, the “frame,” and imagine a tic-tac-toe board there. Most people tend to place the subject of their photo right in the center every time. Try placing the subject one third from the top or bottom, and/or one third left or right. Does placement of the subject in the frame of the camera make a difference?
2. Try taking photos with the **sun’s light** coming from different angles. Shoot a photo with the Sun at your back. Then the Sun at your right or left. Then try shooting in the direction of the Sun (but not directly at the Sun unless it’s at Sunrise or Sunset when the Sun’s rays are not as harmful). Compare your shots. Does the direction of the Sun’s rays in relation to your body & camera make a difference?
3. Pay attention to what’s in the **foreground** of your photo, and what’s in the **background**. Try photographing subjects up close with a blurred background. The try photographing something farther away and blur the foreground. Which effect do you like best?
4. Set up the foreground of a photo with some key point of interest, such as a human figure, a tree, a boat, some flowers, rocks, or anything else that is comparatively near to you. Setting up a shot like this creates depth to your photograph, and gives your image more of a **third dimension effect**. Are you able to make a photograph look like 3-D in this way?
5. There are times for **flash**, but **natural lighting** is nice too. Try using a flash and then natural lighting for the same shot. Sometimes it depends on the situation, but at times both will work. Which effect do you like best?
6. Try photographing people when they aren’t **posing**. Too often people are asked to pose for a photo, so instead try capturing them while they are doing something. This technique can create some interesting shots. Are you able to capture the moment?
7. Try getting **closer** to the subject at times. How close can your camera go? Focus on details of everyday objects, people, plants or animals from only a few inches or feet away. Are you able to photograph patterns or textures that might go unnoticed from farther away?
8. Change the **angle** of the camera. Point up at a tall subject to take a low angle shot, or point the camera down to capture a high angle. Laying down on the ground close to a tree and photo the view straight up is an interesting perspective. Stand on top of a ladder or deck pointing straight down at something or someone is cool too. Which do you like the best?

