



Jefferson County Photography Club

Photography Critique Guide

Technical Quality

☒ Is the photo sharp?

- Is the focus correct?
- Are the details crisp, or is there motion blur or camera shake?
- If soft focus is intentional, does it enhance the image?

☒ Is the exposure balanced?

- Are highlights and shadows well-managed?
- Is the tonal range effective, or does the image feel too flat?

☒ Is the depth of field appropriate?

- Does the background enhance or distract from the subject?
- Is the depth of field choice intentional and effective?

☒ Is the color accurate and well-balanced?

- Are the colors natural, or do they feel overly processed?
- Does the white balance suit the mood?

☒ Is the image free of distractions?

- Are there unwanted elements (clutter, power lines, objects at the edges)?
- Would cropping or cloning improve the image?

Composition & Subject

☒ Does the photo have a clear subject?

- Can the viewer immediately identify the focal point?
- Is the subject engaging?

☒ What composition rule is used?

- Rule of Thirds
- Leading Lines
- Framing
- Symmetry & Patterns
- Golden Ratio
- Negative Space
- Diagonal Composition
- Other

☒ If no composition rule was used, is there a justified reason for breaking it?

- Does the unconventional composition create a unique effect?
- Does it challenge expectations in a meaningful way?

☒ Is the perspective interesting?

- Was the shot taken from an unexpected angle?
- Could a different viewpoint improve the image?

Impact & Creativity

☒ Is the photo creative?

- Does it offer a fresh perspective?
- Does it break conventions in a meaningful way?

☒ Does the photo evoke emotion?

- What feeling does it convey (joy, sadness, awe, mystery)?
- Does it tell a story or invite curiosity?

☒ Does the photo have a strong mood or atmosphere?

- Does lighting, color, and subject contribute to a distinct mood?

☒ Would the image hold a viewer's attention?

- Does it make people want to look at it longer or return to it?
- Would it stand out among similar photos?

Story & Context

☒ Does the photo tell a story?

- Is there a narrative or implied meaning?
- Could it be part of a larger series?

☒ Does the background support the subject?

- Does it add depth and context, or is it distracting?
- Would a different background improve the image?

☒ Would the image be more effective with different framing or cropping?

- Is there too much empty space, or does it feel cramped?
- Would a panoramic, square, or unconventional crop strengthen it?

Post-Processing & Presentation

☒ Does the editing enhance or overpower the image?

- Are adjustments (contrast, saturation, sharpening) subtle and effective?
- Do filters or effects improve or distract?

☒ Is there a strong balance between realism and artistic expression?

- If heavily edited, does it still feel authentic?
- Are selective color edits or HDR effects beneficial or excessive?

☒ Would the image benefit from black & white processing?

- Does color contribute meaningfully, or would monochrome enhance the mood?

☒ Is the image presented professionally?

- Are there dust spots, artifacts, or inconsistencies?
- Is it sized and formatted correctly for print, web, or social media?

Final Thoughts

☒ Does the photo achieve its intended purpose?

- If artistic, does it succeed in being thought-provoking?
- If commercial/documentary, does it communicate effectively?

☒ Would the photo be stronger with any adjustments?

- Composition changes?
- Editing refinements?
- A different focal point?