

VOCABULARY & STRUCTURE: PICTURE DESCRIPTION

1. PHOTOS

STEP 1: FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Basic terms

a (press/ professional/ amateur/ keen) phoTOGrapher; to take a PHoto(graph) I *fə'təgrɑ:f* I / picture/ snap(shot); to snap someone/ something; a CAMera I *kæmərə* I; in FOCus I *fəʊ-* I I *une image nette* I Vs out of FOCus I *floue* I; a photoGRAPHic print I *un tirage/ une épreuve* I; to deVELOP a NEGative;

Types of picture

a portrait I-*trɪt* I; a landscape I *paysage* I; a street-scene; an inTERior I *Intɪəriə* I; the CAPtion I *kæp-* I I *légende* I

Possible origin

It (probably) comes from / It's the kind of photo you find in a newspaper/ a magazine/ a family ALbum.

It could have been/ It must have been taken out of I *extrait de* I a deTECTive/ spy/ sci-fi I *saɪ faɪ* I / horror film/ movie. It looks like or It appears to be a still I *arret sur image* I from 'Citizen Kane'.

I guess or I(should)imagine or I(should)think this picture was taken SOMEwhere in Britain/ SOMETIME in winter because there is/are...

The picture dates back to I *remonte à* I / appears to date back to the sixties, as INdicated by/ JUDging I *dʒʌdʒ-* I by the CHARacters' clothes/ the cars / the setting I *décor, cadre* I etc.

General impact

The striking I I thing I *ce qui frappe* I about this picture is.. What stands out most I *ce qui ressort le plus* I in this picture is.. This picture is very/ rather or quite INteresting/ unusual/ significant in that (..N+V); It's a very/ rather happy/ sad/ depressing/ exciting/ dull or boring picture. It's quite a(n) unreMARKable I *quelconque* I / ordinary picture. It's a typical scene from

everyday-life/ factory-life/ office-life. It's the kind of photo you/ people take when...;

STEP 2: MORE DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Main Subject

The picture shows..; What is shown in the picture is..; There is an old woman sitting..; There are several/ a number of people I*persons I standing/ walking/ running etc.; I/ you/ one can see..;

The main subject of the picture is..;

Location in the picture-frame

In the FOREground I au premier plan I there is/ are Vs In the BACKground I à l'arrière plan I; in the DISTance; in the middle/ centre of the picture..; at the top/ bottom of the picture..; on the LEFT-HAND side/ RIGHT-HAND side.; In the (TOP/BOTtom) LEFT-HAND/ RIGHT-HAND CORner of the picture we can see.. I dans le coin (supérieur/ inférieur) gauche/ droit on voit I; HALF-WAY UP, on the left/ right (hand-side)there is/are..;

Positioning of people/objects

in the middle of (a field/a group of people); between two policemen..; On either side of him I *de part et d'autre* I there is a policeman; On the left/ right, as we look at it, there is..; to I *vers* I/ on the left/ right of the group..; Near/ Close to/ Next to/ In front of or Facing or Opposite/ Behind, PARTially I *partiellement* I- hidden, there is..; above Vs below=/= over Vs under; facing the camera; looking directly at/straight at the camera; looking away from the camera; looking (to the) left/right; looking UPwards/DOWNwards I *vers le haut/ vers le bas* I;

Identifying someone

The man/ woman/ person standing/ looking/ holding/ wearing.. is...

The girl with a doll I *poupée* I in her hand is..;/ has (got)...

I can see a/ There is a lady I *dame* I in a long coat. She seems to be enjoying herself.

No, not THAT lady, the one playing with a dog.

The lady in a long coat playing with a small dog seems to be enjoying herself.

Physical description

General

tall Vs short; big Vs small; huge I *hju:dʒ* I Vs tiny I *taɪnɪ* I *minuscule* I;

a well-built/ powerfully-built/ broad-shouldered I *large d'épaules* I / tough-looking man; stocky I *trapu* I;

of Average I *æv(ə)rɪdʒ* I height/ weight/ build;

a slightly-built/ weak-looking man;

(slightly/ rather) overweight/ fat/ plump/ podgy I *podʒɪ* II *rondelet* I;

slim I *mince* I / athletic-looking; to have a nice figure (F)

underweight/ thin I *maigre* I / skinny I *décharnu* I;

beautiful/ pretty (F); good-looking/ attractive (M/F); handsome (M) I *hænsəm* I;

ugly/ UNatTRACTive (M/F); (rather) plain I *sans beauté* I (F);

healthy-looking/ fit-looking I *en forme* I Vs unhealthy-looking/ unfit/ sickly-looking I *mal en point* I;

well-fed Vs under-fed or UNderNOURished I *ʌndə'nʌrɪʃd* I / starving;

Age

a (newborn) baby; a toddler I *un petit qui commence juste à marcher* I; a child; a TEENager;

a boy/ girl; a young/ middle-aged/ an elderly I *agé* I / old I *vieux* I man/ woman;

in his/ her early/ mid-/ late twenties/ thirties/ forties, etc.; a young-looking/youthful-looking 50;

She doesn't look her age.

Face

to have a long, thin/ round, chubby I *tʃʌbɪ* I I *joufflu* I / square, ANGular face;

Eyes

big, round eyes Vs small, narrow eyes; eyes that are wide-apart Vs close together;

pale-blue/ light-blue eyes; hazel eyes I *noisette* I; dark brown/ black eyes; green(y)-blue eyes;

sparkling/ bright/ exPRESSive/ happy eyes Vs dull/ INexPRESSive/ sad eyes; (see character ADJs)

Hair

to be dark-haired I *brun* I Vs to be fair-haired I *blond* I; a brunette (F); a blonde (F); to have blonde hair (M/F) I * hairs (on one's arms/ legs, etc.)I; a red-head/ to be red-haired I *roux* I; to have long hair/ medium-length/ shoulder-length/ short hair; to be balding I *bɔ:ldɪŋ* I I *atteint de calvitie naissante* I; to be bald I *chauve* I;

to have straight/ wavy I *wɛvɪ* I I *cheveux ondulés* I/ curly I *kɜ:lɪ* I I *bouclés* I hair;

She had beautiful, long, blonde, wavy hair (Note order of ADJs)

to have/ to wear a beard I *brɛd* I/ a moustACHE I *mɔ:stɑ:ʃ* I/ sideburns I *des pattes* I;

Complexion

to be fair-skinned or pale-skinned Vs to be dark-skinned/ olive-skinned; to be black/ white/ Asian; to be (SUN)tanned I *bronzé* I; to be SUNburned I *bronzé/ hâlé/ avoir un coup de soleil (selon contexte)* I; to be WEATHERbeaten I *halé* I; to have wrinkles I *rɪŋkɪz* I I *avoir des rides* I/ a wrinkled face;

to have freckles I *frɛkɪz* I I *taches de rousseur* I/ a mole I *mɔ:ʊt* I I *un grain de beauté* I/ a birth-mark I *tache de vin* I/ a dimple I *dɪmpɪ* I I *fossette* I/ spots/ acne I *æknɪ* I/ a spotty face;

Nose

to have a long/ short/ pointed/ snub I *snɒb* I I *retroussé* I nose; a straight nose Vs a hooked/ Roman nose I *nez aquilin* I;

Clothing (general)

to be well-dressed Vs to be badly-dressed; to look smart I *chic* I or ELEGant Vs to look shabby or scruffy I *miteux* I ;

to look wealthy or rich or PROSPerous or 'well-to-do' Vs to look poor or 'down-at-heel';

To be wearing a suit that 'has seen better days';

to look clean/ neat I *soigné* I Vs to look dirty/ untidy I *négligé* I;

FASHionable I *à la mode* I Vs unfashionable clothes; formal clothes Vs informal or casual

I *kæʒuət* I clothes. to wear evening dress I *tendue de soirée* I (an evening dress or long dress or

ball-gown for ladies and a dinner jacket I *smoking* I and bow-tie I *bɔ:ɪ* I I *noeud papillon* I for

gentlemen); a suit I *s(j)u:t* I/ an OUTFit I *costume/ ensemble* I; to be wearing/ to be in fancy dress

or a fancy dress costume; to be dressed up as ..I *être déguisé en..* I; to be bare or (stark) naked
In *nu* I or to have (absolutely) nothing on I *être (totalement) nu* I

Expressions and impressions (emotions & personality)

to be laughing Vs to be crying; to be smiling Vs to be frowning I *frayer*-I (at someone/ something)
I *froncer les sourcils, regarder d'un air sévère* I

to look happy/ pleased/ deLIGHTed I *ravi* I/ aMUsed Vs to look sad/ UNHAPpy/ DISApPOINted
I *disappointi* I I *déçu* I/ hurt I *offensé, blessé* I/ reSENTful I *rizent*-I *amer* I/ worried
I *worried* I I *soucieux, inquiet* I/ dePRESSed I *deprimé* I I *déprimé* I/ DESperate I *désespéré* I
I *désespéré* I;

to look dissatisfied/ anNOYed I *ennuyé* I or IRritated (by/with)/ fed-up (with..) I *en avoir assez* I/
angry I *en colère* I/ cross I *irrité* I/ furious I *furieux* I;

to look (perfectly) satisfied or conTENted I *satisfait* I;

to look kind I *gentil* I Vs to look cruel I *crucel* I/ fierce I *féroce* I/ strict I *sévère* I;

to look friendly I *sympa* I Vs to look unfriendly/ mean/ maLICIous I *malin* I I *méchant* I;

To look SYMPaTHETic I *compatissant* I;

to look relaxed/ calm Vs to look tense or nervous or ill at ease; to look self-confident I *sûr de soi* I
Vs to look APpreHENsive I *crainitif* I/ scared I *effrayé* I/ HELPless I *déseparé* I; to be
lacking in SELF-CONFidence;

an EXtrovert I *extroverti* I Vs an INtrovert, INtroVERTed;

to look ARrogant/ proud I *arrogant* I I *fier* / *orgueilleux* I Vs to look shy I *timide* I;

to be or look (natural and) UNpreTENTious I *simple* I;

to look deTERmined I *déterminé* I (to do something) Vs to look hesitant (about something)/
reSIGNed (to something);

an admiring I *admiratif*-I look Vs a contemptuous or scornful I *méprisant* I look;

to be resPECTful of someone or to look up to someone Vs to desPISE I *mépriser* I someone
I *mépriser, haïr* I or to look down on someone;

to look imPRESSed (by something) Vs to look UNimPRESSed/ UNINterested (in or by
something)/ UNconCERNed (by something) or INDIFFerent (to something);

to look enthusiASTic/ exCited/ interested (in or by ...) Vs to look UNenthusiASTic (about..)/ bored

I bɔ:d I (by or with something);

to look INteresting Vs to look uninteresting or dull I dʌt I I *terne* I or ordinary or 'run of the mill'
I *quelconque* I;

to be polite (to someone) Vs to be impolite or rude I *impoli, insolent, grossier* I;

to look or be honest/ TRUSTworthy I *fiable* I Vs to look or be dishonest/ UNTRUSTworthy/
susPICious I *louche, suspect* ou *soupçonneux* I/ tricky or dodgy I dɒdʒɪ I I *louche, douteux* I;

to look or be inTELLigent/ bright/ clever I *intelligent, astucieux, rusé* I/ sharp or cunning I *rusé* I
Vs UNinTELLigent/ dull-witted I dʌt wɪtɪd I I *lent d'esprit* I/ stupid/ simple I *ingénu* I I **simple*
I/ simple-minded I *simplet* I/ naïve or UNsusPECTing I *qui ne se doute de rien* I;

to look or be foolish or silly or idiOtic;

to be hard-working/ dyNAMic I dɑ:næmɪk I/ lively I laɪvli I Vs to be lazy/ APaTHETic
I æpəθetɪk I;

to be absent-minded I *distrain* I or forGETful;

to look busy I bɪzi I I *occupé* I I * *occupied* I;

to be cautious I kɔ:ʃəs I I *prudent* I Vs to be RECKless I *insouciant, téméraire* I or to take
unnecessary risks;

to be brave I breɪv I I *courageux* I Vs to be cowardly I kəʊ(w)ədli I or a coward;

Describing present actions and speculating about past and future actions

The boy in the foreground/ background is ...ing ..

The woman (who is) sitting on the bench is ...ing... and ...ing...

The man walking out of the factory has probably just finished work and is going home.

I (should) imagine that the children have been fighting/ quarrelling or arguing I *se disputer* I
because they look angry, and one of them has a black eye I *oeil au beurre noir* I/ a nose-bleed
I *le nez qui saigne* I/ scratches I *égratignures* I all over his face.

The reason why the children are acting/ behaving the way they are is (probably/ perhaps) because:

-- they have (just) had a fight/ they have been fighting/ they have been attacked (by)..

-- they are trying to settle an ARgument I *régler un différend* I.

-- they are upset, angry (about something/ the fact that something has happened).

-- they are going to/ are about to start fighting again.

-- they want to/ intend to do something.

You can tell or see (that) they have been fighting because...;

They seem to have been fighting/ have been attacked.

It looks as if/ I get the impression that ...;

What's probably going to happen next is that they'll start/ they're going to start fighting again.

Judging by their expressions/ the fact that ..(N +V), I think/ I imagine they'll settle their differences.

STEP 3: INTERPRETATION

Photographer's Purpose and Treatment

The phoTOGrapher's inTENTion in (taking) this picture was to show...;

The phoTOGrapher probably/ unDOUBTedly wished to conVEY/ exPRESS a feeling of threat
I threat I menace I by using up-lighting I éclairage par en bas I and stark contrasts I des contrastes forts I.

The sense of inJUSTice is sucCESSfully conveyed/ sugGESTed by the CAMera-angle I l'angle de prise de vue I chosen (by the phoTOGrapher).

A low-angle shot I contre-plongée I has been used to suggest strength or power.

This kind of high-angle shot I plongée I has been used deLIBerately to suggest/ to HIGHLIGHT
I mettre en lumière I/ to EMphasise the weakness or vulneraBILity/ dePENDence of the central CHAracter.

The framing I frei- I I cadrage I of the picture is (rather) unusual, and forces you to FOCUS
(your attention) on...(N);

The COMpoSition/ The strong diagonal lines draw(s) your eye to...(N);

The use of the long-shot I plan d'ensemble I gives the impression of the smallness of Man in Nature.

The close-up gives full force to the exPRESSiveness of the face.

No doubt, the fact that the car is out of focus is inTENTional, as it gives a great sense of speed.
a full-shot I plan moyen I; to PHOtograph someone whole I en entier I;

Personal observations and opinions

This picture raises/ highlights the problem of...(N);

It's a very/ It's quite a TOPical I d'actualité I picture and I think it reFERS to/ allUDES to
Iəlu:dz I I faire allusion à I the situation in../ the problem of...;

Frankly, the subject or topic is no longer of any great interest or conCERN to most people.

At the time the picture was taken, people were (not) very concerned/ worried about...(N), but
NOWadays or these days ...;

The picture shows how people used to/ didn't use to ...(V+N) in those days/ in the sixties/ fifties,
etc;

This photo reMINDS me of/ makes me think of my own CHILDhood, when ..(N +V);

When I look at this picture, I can't help thinking of or reMEMbering the (N) when/ who/ which/
where , etc...;

This is (exactly) the kind or the sort of situation/ place/ person/ problem/ ATmosPHERE I love/
enjoy/ hate/ can't stand I Je trouve insupportable I/ fear;

I think if I were in this situAtion/ poSition, I would probably...(V)...;

If I were in his/ her place or 'shoes'/ preDICament I'd...(V);

In my opinion or view,...;

As I see it,...;

As far as I'm conCERNed...;

The way I look at it or see it is this: people who ...(V) ... should(n't)...(V)...;

I can't say I approve of... (N or N +ING)...;

The picture gives me a (wonderful) sense of/ feeling of tranQUILLity or calm I I.

Overall, it's a rather/ very/ an exTREMElY Irksɔ:ri:mli I (ADJ) picture.

KEY

- X/ Y : X and Y are alternative forms, not synonyms.
- X or Y : X and Y are synonyms.
- CAPitals : CAP is the stressed syllable.
- _____ : Useful expressions and structures are underlined.
- I I : Square brackets indicate pronunciation or French equivalents (in italics).
- () : Round brackets are used for optional items or giving further information.
- *
- ... or etc : Mean and so on.
- ' ' : More idiomatic words and phrases are shown by apostrophes.
- N : Noun or noun phrase.
- V : Verb or verb phrase.
- ING : Gerunds, participles or verb-forms ending in -ing.
- ADJ : Adjective.
- M/F : Applies to male or female.

PHONEMIC SCRIPT

Consonants: IpI as in Peter; IbI as in beater; ItI as in tear; IdI as in dear; IkI as in come;
IɣI as in gum; IfI as in feel; IvI as in veal; IθI as in Thursday; IðI as in these;
IsI as in Sue's; IzI as in Zoos; IʃI as in ship; IʒI as in television; ItʒI as in choose;
IdʒI as in Jews; IrI as in really; ItʀI as in true; IdʀI as in drew; IhI as in hotel;
ImI as in money; InI as in night; InʒI as in singing; IlI as in lovely; ItI as in called;
IwI as in wars; IjI as in yellow;

Vowels & Diphthongs: IʊI as in feet; ItI as in fit; IeI as in wet; IæI as in ash;
IʌI as in much; IɑI as in fast; IoI as in stop; IɔI as in fork; IʊI as in look; IuI as in boots;
IɜI as in first; IəI as in accomodation; IeiI as in take; IaiI as in write; IɔɪI as in voice;
IəʊI as in coat; IaʊI as in out; IɪəI as in cheer; IeəI as in chair; Ivəl as in plural;
IaɪəI as in hire; IəʊəI as in hours;