

Handout: Photography 101

WHAT ARE THE PARTS OF A CAMERA?

There are many important parts of a camera that are vital to taking a picture.

- **On-Off Button:** *For digital cameras, don't forget to turn your camera ON to take photos, and OFF to save your battery when you're done!*
- **Viewfinder:** *The viewfinder is the little glass square on the back of the camera that you look through to see what you are taking a picture of. New digital cameras sometimes also have a digital display.*
- **Shutter release button:** *This is the button you press when you want to take a picture.*
- **Flash:** *The flash is the quick burst of bright light you use when it's too dark to get a good shot. On a disposable camera, the flash will turn on after the button under it has been pushed (or slid over, depending on the camera). On digital cameras the flash may be removable or pop up from inside the camera.*
- **Lens:** *Your camera's lens is the glass circle or square in the center of the camera that really captures your photograph. Try not to touch the lens as it can smudge your pictures, and be sure not to cover the lens with a finger or anything else when taking your shot.*

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER WHEN TAKING A PICTURE?

- **Posture and holding your camera:** *Use two hands to hold the camera, with your arms in and steady and with your legs shoulder-width apart to provide stability. You want the camera to be as still as possible when you take your shot!*
- **Lighting:** *It is a good idea to take a picture with a flash if there is not a lot of natural light or if the picture is being taken indoors. Try to avoid taking pictures where the light is sharp and causes deep shadows on your subject. Shoot pictures with the sun behind you rather than with the sun behind your subject. Otherwise, whatever you are taking a picture of may appear too dark and shadowy.*
- **Composition:** *Composition involves all the choices you make when deciding how to take your picture. How your photo is composed can completely change its look and meaning. Here are some important things to remember when composing a picture:*
 - ▶ **Framing**—*Objects in the environment (like a doorway or trees) can be included around the edges of a photo to bring attention to your subject.*
 - ▶ **Lines**—*Look for lines in the environment such as fences, street lines, or the horizon. Lines can help lead the viewer's eye to the main focus of your picture.*
 - ▶ **Perspective**—*Viewing a subject from different angles (from above or below, from the side, or head-on, close up or far away) can reveal or highlight different things. Experiment with perspective until your subjects look how you want them to look.*
 - ▶ **Mood**—*Lighting, colors, and the photograph's subject and background can all come together to create a picture's mood – from tense and gloomy to bright, happy, and hopeful.*
 - ▶ **Balance**—*Symmetry and asymmetry can be used to change the way the image is viewed and show contrast or similarity in your picture.*