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Alternative View Points and the Lamp of Creativity

By Sue Kendrick

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by: **Sue Kendrick**

Pictures they say are worth a thousand words, but many writers know that they are worth much more than that!

Without decent photographs or other artwork to accompany an article many features published in todays magazines and newspapers would never see the light of day, so it makes sense to try and supply illustrations along with your submissions.

Last month's article gave some tips and advice on how to improve your camera wielding technique so click here if you missed it.

This month we're going to look at how photographs can spark off ideas for features and other writing opportunities which means taking the slightly unusual step of writing the article around the picture rather than finding photographs to illustrate the article.

So let's begin with the hanged man. Who on earth is that and what does he have to do with writing or photography? Not much really, but he makes a nice analogy. The hanged man from the Tarot card deck for those not familiar with this form of divination, is the only card in the major arcana which is the right way up when it shows the hanged man upside down!

Although he is bound and beset by problems and troubles he has taken the bold step of considering the world and his options from an alternative view point which is what exchanging our computers and pens for a camera can do for us.

A good method of doing this is to set yourself a couple of themes. What these themes are depend on you and your interests, but let's suppose you chose "chimneys" and "dogs".

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Both of these are common enough to ensure plenty of subject matter and you should be able to find enough examples whether you are a town or country dweller. Don't forget to take plenty of film with you, (or spare batteries and flash cards for digital cameras), and most importantly! A pen and notebook!

A couple of hours wandering the streets gazing skywards at smoke blackened chimney stacks or staring fixedly at the local canine Romeo plighting his troth to Lady Muck's prize Saluki might earn you a few odd looks from the neighbours, but with a bit of luck and determination on your part could also add a few pennies to the coffers as well.

The trick is to take plenty of snaps, a doddle if you've got a digital camera as you'll only be printing off the shots you want to keep. If not, well you can often get cheap film from your local dealer's bargain box. The developing costs you'll have to take on the chin, unless there's a special offer running.

The next stage is to examine what you've got. This is a bit like a deep sea fisherman trawling for cod.

Your net is not very discriminating and you'll find a lot of sprats and mackerels amongst your "catch". You may not actually have any photographs worthy of publication, but you will almost certainly have ideas and if this means that you will have to go out again armed with your camera to shoot appropriate illustrations, then so be it!

Let's assume you do have a fair amount of reasonable photographs. What sort of article could you write around these subjects? Well of course this will depend very much on what is actually in the photographs, but let's go back to our neighbourhood Romeo. A few ideas you could pursue are the problems of stray dogs and irresponsible dog owners, owners that resemble their dogs, (or other pets), where to responsibly exercise the town dog, dogs at work, get the idea?

The chimney photographs may suggest a feature on ornate chimney pots, Victorian potters, (many were often made locally), the local chimney sweep, the history of a particular house or row and the characters associated with them, Santa and problem chimney stacks, (or lack of them!).

The photographs themselves will spark ideas, but you don't have to stop at newspaper or magazine features. Good animal, nature and landscape shots may also find a market with greeting card manufacturers and if you can write the sentiments to accompany them so much the better.

In fact, once you build up a collection of quality photographs your options increase all the time, not only in providing illustrations for your own articles, but as stand alone sales to newspapers which for the new comer, is one of the easiest markets to break into.

Our canine Romeo for instance could just make an editor's day as an alternative and humorous slant on Valentine's day. Now there's an idea! How about a feature on love in the animal kingdom? Just the thing for next year's Valentine's day!

Finally, a word of caution. Do be careful when taking photographs. Many people consider it a breach of privacy having their photographs taken without asking and may not relish being splashed across the

front page of the local rag.

You need to be even more cautious when photographing children. They of course make excellent subjects but sadly your motives can easily be misconstrued. If you want to cover a local sports day, school fair or play always obtain permission from the school first.

When you arrive at the event, make a point of letting the head teacher know that you are there. Sending copies of snaps to the school and the children concerned will help to establish trust and credibility.

So, going back to the hanged man, all you need to make sales is an alternative view point. Thankfully you don't have to suspend yourself upside down from a tree, just reach for the light box and light the lamp of creativity!

Poetry for Profit contains a lot of information on the greeting card market which is an ideal place to target words and pictures while READ ALL ABOUT IT! The WriteLink to Newspaper Writing has a detailed chapter on taking photographs for the local and regional press.

Sue Kendrick is a freelance writer and graphic designer living in the English Midlands.

She has written many special interest articles for magazines and contributed extensively to her regional newspaper.

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Sue also writes fiction and has won several prizes for her short stories.

The Different Shades Of Lamp Shades

By Stefan Rockhaus

The charm of a room comes with its lights. Lightning plays a major role in the ambiance of a room. Colors and types of lights represent different moods, like if there is a dim light in the room then it symbolizes a romantic mood, and so on. For creating the mood, lampshades are the best option. They can convert a simple light into mind-blowing effects.

The best lamp shade is the one which can easily get involved with the ambiance of the room. To give a new appearance to your room, you do not have to change any big accessory like a sofa or table. Just

by simply adding a new lampshade, you can give your room an absolutely new look.

Always consider lampshades when you are planning to re-decorate your room. Lamps are available in different styles, colors and designs. Just a single lamp shade is enough to give a beautiful effect to the room. There are varieties of lampshades available in the market from which you can choose the best one to suit your room.

Today lamp shades are not only used for mere lighting, but as an accessory also. Try to show some creativity with lampshades by having a good collection of them.

Lampshades can be put on any type of lamp, whether it is a table lamp or a standing lamp. The lampshade should be attractive. A lamp shade is some inches wider than the base of the lamp.

Here are some tips, which you will need to remember while purchasing any lamp shade. These tips are as follows:

To have a perfect lampshade, you need to take notice of its base. Wooden lamps are always classic and outstanding. These can be combined with suitable shades. You can also select natural colors for lampshades. Simple colors can spell magic over the minds of people. White and cream colored lampshades are most popular these days. Lamp shades made up of paper, silk and mango leaves can also be the alternatives of other shades. These shades reflect your artistic feelings.

Now there is one more category, and that is glass lampshades. Glass lamp shades offer very fine shading. They are available in a variety of colors to choose from. You can select these lampshades to match your room's interior. The glow of glass lamp shades gives the room a perfect look. You can choose from a huge range of colors and designs, according to your taste for interiors.

So, it is crystal clear that lampshades play a very important role in decorating the room and creating the perfect mood to spend your evening with your loved ones.

Stefan Rockhaus is a contributing author for

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