If you are accompanying pupils to the World Press Photo 14 exhibition, the ‘My Album’ workbook will help them get more out of the exhibition. It’s up to you if you want to discuss the answers with them afterwards. All the questions have been designed so that discussions will arise spontaneously as your pupils are studying the photographs. By answering the questions, the pupils will learn what news is, what photojournalism is, and what freedom of the press means. They will also learn how to appreciate photography better.

The lesson consists of general questions and detailed questions. The detailed questions are intended for older pupils who work quickly or those with more time. You are the best judge of whether your pupils can handle the detailed questions, but tell them beforehand if they have to answer them or not.

To help you with any discussions you have before and/or after the exhibition, and to answer any questions during the exhibition itself, here is some more information about press photography, news, the winning photograph and the World Press Photo organisation.
News tells us about an event or situation that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- **It's different from the normal situation**
- **Little or nothing is known about it yet**
- **It's important for a large group of readers or viewers**
- **To the reader or viewer, it feels as though it happened somewhere close by**
- **It's about a contemporary theme**
- **It has a big impact**
- **It evokes emotions and excitement in the reader/viewer**
- **It concerns well-known people**

In the lesson for the pupils, the definition of news has been simplified. This is what it says in the lesson:

Press photos are not like the photos you see in advertising or art. Press photos show us news. Everyone has their own ideas about what news is exactly, but two things are important.

- **News is something that hardly anyone knows about yet**, and that has just happened. For example, that a storm has just devastated a block of houses, or that a bomb has exploded.
- **News is something that has a huge impact for a lot of people**.

For example, that major flooding has occurred in a densely populated area.

Or that Uganda has introduced a new law to make homosexuality illegal.

It's difficult to give a brief description of 'news'. What one person considers to be news may not be at all important for another person. The hottest news item in Buenos Aires may not be news at all in Beijing. Because so much is happening all the time around the world, it's impossible for the media to broadcast or publish everything. This is why editorial teams and press agencies use the above guidelines to help them make a quick selection of the news.

For example, an item is more likely to be labelled as news if the event is exciting or totally new, or if it concerns important or famous people. Sometimes these guidelines for news are extremely specific. A fire might only be considered news by some media if it has caused at least a million dollars' worth of damage, and a traffic accident is news if people have been killed or more than a certain number of people have been injured.

The reader – and therefore the medium – is also a significant factor when deciding what news is. The readers of the Financial Times for example will be more than averagely interested in economics, and will therefore consider events in the financial sector and in industry to be more important than events in other fields. But a website about the wellbeing of animals will lead with the collapse of the roof of a chicken farm.

Press photographs are photographs that have been taken by photojournalists, and that comply with the journalistic codes. Photographers merely record what they see, and are not allowed to manipulate or influence what is happening in front of the camera. A press photo must always portray the truth. And the photographer is not allowed to edit the photo once it has been taken, or if they do, then only slightly. The rule is: the essence of the content of the photo must not be changed by manipulating it (digitally or otherwise) after it has been taken. So you are not allowed to add or remove any elements. But the boundary between what is acceptable and what is not acceptable can be very thin. For example, adjusting the contrast of a photo or modifying the colours slightly is generally accepted, but making the background so dark that you cannot see it anymore is considered to be going too far by many people.

Press photography is different from art and advertising photography because it shows reality. There are some exceptions to that rule, like portraiture. In a portrait, photographers are allowed to interfere with the situation and to show the person or persons being portrayed in the way they wish to.

A press photo shows the viewer the state of the world, making the viewer part of the event itself. The main driving force for many press photographers who work in extremely difficult circumstances, like war zones or areas in the world where famine or natural disasters occur, is to show the world what is happening. Because maybe there's a chance that the world can help.

A press photo always shows news or focuses attention on an important social theme in a new way, like the series on domestic violence. If it's not about a recent or remarkable event, then it's often about a subject or story that very few people know about. The series on the mentally disabled in Africa and the one about the bleak small town of Norilsk in the north of Russia are good examples of this.

There are also images that give background information to the news. Such as the 'Gaza Blackout' series. The photos show Gaza in a haze of darkness during a power failure as a result of a lack of fuel. The photos form an illustration accompanying the daily news coverage of political tension in and around the occupied territories, and the shortages the Palestinians have to deal with.
He or she might be the only person who can show what is happening and the viewer or reader has to be able to trust that the journalist is being objective and is informing them fully. This means that a photojournalist must always remain critical. Is the regime trying to hide information? Is the government leader really as healthy as he looks or has he just left his hospital bed for the photo to be taken? Have the angry demonstrators been paid by the regime? Have the victims of demolished buildings been deliberately removed from the streets? Many wars are also fought via the media. The world’s outrage can help to get extra support on your side. It’s simple to organise a demonstration just for the news station cameras. It’s the job of a good press photographer to show this aspect too, to provide a context.

The ethical code of behaviour for journalists is laid down in the Code of Bordeaux, drawn up by The International Federation of Journalists in 1954. These are four of the nine principles:

1. Respect for truth and for the right of the public to truth is the first duty of the journalist.
2. The journalist shall observe professional secrecy regarding the source of information obtained in confidence.
3. The journalist shall be aware of the danger of discrimination being furthered by the media, and shall do the utmost to avoid facilitating such (…).
4. The journalist shall regard as grave professional offences the following: plagiarism, slander, libel, calumny, unfounded accusations, acceptance of a bribe in any form (…).

Of course press photos are also always subjective. Often a photo will tell you something about the photographer’s view on the world. Is the outstretched helping hand in the photo or not? Is the photo of the old man taken from above, making him look insignificant, or from below, making him look physically powerful? A good example to explain subjectivity is the photo of the young Iranian men who were hanged shortly after the photo was taken. You would probably say that only the most dangerous criminals deserve the death penalty. But these young men don’t look dangerous at all, more pitiful. The fact that they look pathetic is also the photographer’s choice – he must also have taken photographs when the man’s head wasn’t resting on the executioner’s shoulder, and where they did look more like criminals. But the photographer chose to take this image as well and send it out into the world.

The image of the head resting on the shoulder evokes emotions, and gets the viewer thinking. Do these men really deserve to die? Should the death penalty exist? When a newspaper’s image editor chooses this photograph for publication from a series of photos in which the men look less pitiable, it is a subjective choice. An editor therefore influences how the viewer judges the execution.

Freedom of the press means that journalists and press photographers can report on important events without being obstructed in any way, without being taken prisoner or being murdered. Freedom of the press is laid down in article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: ‘Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.’

It often happens that a regime or an organisation does not want journalists or press photographers to come to their country to record what is happening. In some countries, press photographers have to register when they enter the country. This way, the government can monitor the issues the photographers are exploring. Sometimes, press photographers are deported, on other occasions they are put in prison or kidnapped. Reporters without Borders (www.rsf.org) maintains a list of how many journalists die on the job every year. Last year as many as 76 were killed, including 11 in Syria and 8 in India.
World Press Photo is an independent non-profit organisation that was founded in the Netherlands in 1955. Its most important goal is to support and promote the work of professional press photographers on an international scale. Over the years, World Press Photo has grown to become an independent platform for photojournalism and the free exchange of information.

In order to achieve its specified goals, every year World Press Photo organizes the biggest, most prestigious photography competition in the world for press photographers. This year, 5,754 photographers from 132 different countries submitted 98,671 photographs. They were judged by an independent international jury consisting of acknowledged professionals in the field of press photography. The jury awarded prizes to 53 photographers from 25 countries in 9 categories. The prize-winning photos are included in this travelling exhibition, which is visited every year by some 3 million people.

Next to organising the extensive exhibition programme, World Press Photo also closely follows the developments in the field of photojournalism. Educational projects play a key role in the activities of the organisation. In countries where training opportunities in the field of (photo) journalism are limited, seminars and workshops are held that are accessible for photographers, photo agencies and image curators. World Press Photo also organises the annual Joop Swart Masterclass, aimed at talented photographers at the start of their careers. They receive practical instructions and professional advice from prominent professional photojournalists. In recent years, in addition to the photography competition, World Press Photo has been organizing a competition for multimedia productions in which different journalistic disciplines have been combined.

The World Press Photo website, www.worldpressphoto.org, contains all the winning stories in their entirety, including captions, technical information about the photos, information about the photographers, and interviews with some of the winners and jury members. It also contains prize-winning multimedia productions and of course more information about the organisation and the events that are organized.

For the free download of this lesson, go to www.worldpressphoto.org/schoolvisits

The photograph shows African immigrants on the coast of Djibouti holding their mobile phones high in the air in an attempt to pick up the cheaper signal from neighbouring Somalia. The telephone is their only way to communicate with family now that they’re on their way to a new life. Djibouti is a through route for migrants from countries including Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea hoping to find a better existence in Europe and the Middle East. The photo was taken by the American photographer John Stanmeyer, originally commissioned for a story in National Geographic.

Jury member Jillian Edelstein had this to say about the winning photo: “The photograph connects so many different stories. It opens the discussion about technology, globalisation, migration, poverty, despair, alienation, humanity. It is a carefully and subtly composed image. It has been done so poetically and full of meaning, touching on the big issues the world is struggling with.”

In this surreal time of human migration flows, in which hope and despair are so closely intertwined, we are looking for encouragement, a certain balance; we long for the safety of our home, we want to become re-connected with something that is durable and that comforts us. This photo of Somalis trying to pick up a signal is an image of us all, as we as the human race are standing at a crossroads – a crossroads where we have to ask ourselves what is really important, a turning point that demands our collective attention, in a global society where questions like migration, borders, war, poverty, technology and communication converge.