



## RATIONALE

Mobile phones and social media platforms have facilitated the use of digital photography as a way for children to respond to books they have been reading. Digital photography helps children who lack confidence in expressing themselves through spoken or written forms and gives them control over the images they choose to capture, edit or share.

## ADVICE FOR MEDIATORS

Like the graphic strips, photographs can be used to extend or change an existing storyline or they can be used to create new stories that relate aspects of the children's lives.

Children love to use the lens of a camera to look at things closely or in a different light. They can use a series of images to tell a story and they can use some of the new filters to create characters that disguise or transform their identity.

Children love to take pictures of their surrounding circumstances which often fall into these four distinct narratives:

- people who are important to them
- places that matter in their life
- artefacts that matter in their lives
- things that they do in their lives, ordinary and extra-ordinary.

Taking photographs can link very closely with the advice on how to *look closely* because children can use the camera to compose shots that pay attention to non-verbal communication, composition, colour and angles.

## CHALLENGES WITH USING PHOTOGRAPHY

Taking photographs can present some challenges that would need to be carefully considered:

- access – do not use photojournals and photography unless all children have access to devices
- ethics – think carefully about photographs that show people and how they will be used and shared
- technical issues – children may encounter difficulties in using cameras since they will need to be charged and handled appropriately.

With appropriate guidance, children are very good at using cameras for a number of tasks and situations, and we encourage mediators to create positive attitudes around using these devices responsibly.

## TAKING NOTES OF THE CHILDREN'S RESPONSES

Using photojournals and photography opens up a new channel into the children's perspectives and environments. When words are hard to find to describe feelings, situations, locations, experiences, etc., photographs can capture and voice children's perspectives by visualizing their worlds.

