

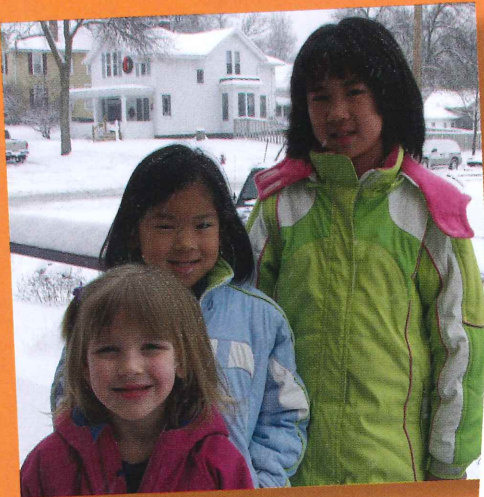
Exposed to the Light!

Light meters and metering systems can tell you what you need to know to control and vary the quality, quantity, and the direction of the light entering your camera. Combine that data with interesting viewpoints to create dynamic images.

Project Area 2

Lighting

A group was photographed against a bright sky using the camera's average metering system. The camera sensed lots of light and exposed for the bright background, leaving the subjects shaded.



Photos by Jeff Vogtschaller, 4-H Photo Volunteer

The camera's meter was used to take a reading on the subject's jackets. Now the subjects are properly exposed, but the bright background is overexposed.



Photo Shoot

1. Take photos using the light meter in bright light. Compare results when you meter for different parts of a photo.
2. Overexpose some photos to get detail in dark areas.
3. Underexpose some photos to hide background, emphasize spot color, or create an image of warmth.

Learner Outcomes

Photography Skill: Using light meter readings to determine brightness levels

Life Skill: Making decisions—Applies rules to the situation

Educational Standard: NA-VA.K-4.1—Understanding and Applying Media, Techniques, and Processes

Success Indicator: Controls exposure using the light meter readings

TIPS

Most metering systems "average" the light in a scene. For better results, learn how to "spot" meter. Read the manual for your camera or hand-held meter.

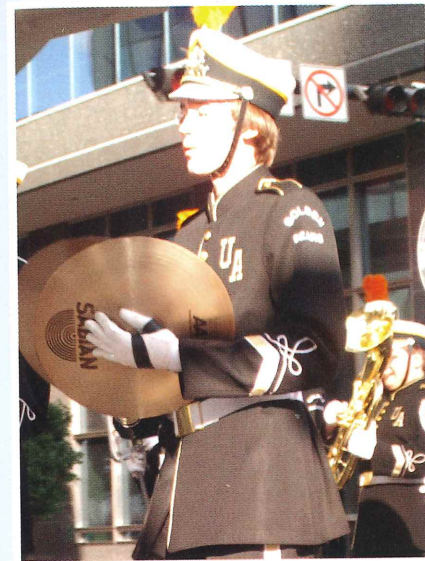


Photo by Jeanne Gogolski

The black uniform caused the light meter to overexpose the face and hat on this band member.



Photo by Jeanne Gogolski

By metering for the hats, the photographer enhanced the orange plumes and brightened the photo!

A scene can be overexposed, underexposed, or exposed properly. The meter in your camera measures the light coming in. It helps you calculate—automatically or manually—the right settings for your shutter speed and aperture. You can also use a hand-held light meter to accomplish this.

Like a computer, your light meter is a tool. It isn't capable of making educated decisions. That's up to you.

For example, if you are photographing a scene that is backlit, the camera doesn't know that you may want the object in front of all that light to be properly exposed. It's up to you to adjust for this.

It is possible to "fool" your camera meter into making the right exposures. One way is to purposely over- or underexpose a scene by choosing a different aperture or shutter speed. On some cameras, you can set an exposure compensation dial. Use one-stop increments and see how your photos change.

The more you understand exposure and how the meter in your camera works, the better you can control lighting. Read your manual carefully and experiment with exposure control.

More Challenges

- How does spot metering help when you're taking pictures of faces? Find people with different skin tones and see which exposures get the best results.
- Create "Exposure Art." Evoke feelings of heat or danger by imposing a flame or the image of the sun on a city scene that is overexposed. Or superimpose eerie glowing objects on an underexposed scene.

4-H Photo Kids **Fast Facts**
www.4-HPhotography.org
 More About Metering Systems