**Vantage Point, Viewpoint, & Perspective in Photography**

**Vantage point:** noun. a position or place that affords a wide or advantageous perspective; viewpoint: to survey a valley from the **vantage point** of a high hill.

**Viewpoint:** a way of looking at or thinking about something (Definition from Merriam-Webster) in photography it’s where you point the camera to take your photography.

### Perspective: the technique or process of representing on a plane or curved surface the spatial relation of objects as they might appear to the eye. For the photographer, perspective is a summation of the relationship between objects in a photograph.

### Angle: The term camera angle means slightly different things to different people but it always refers to the way a shot is composed. Some people use it to include all camera shot types, others use it to specifically mean the angle between the camera and the subject.

We live in a three-dimensional world and we are designed to have **stereoscopic (or 3D) vision**, with which we can determine the relative distance of the various objects in our view. The photograph is a two-dimensional representation of that three-dimensional world and, therefore, our stereovision does not see the photograph in the same way we see what is before us. When we look at a photograph, we determine spatial relationships by analyzing the objects in the frame.

All photographs contain one or more subjects. (With an abstract photograph, the abstraction may be the subject.) As a photographer, when you see a subject or scene that you wish to photograph, you point the camera in that general direction, compose, and release the shutter. A great many of us are standing when we do this, and we raise the camera to our eye and take the photograph.

Today’s cameras can do almost everything automatically. The one thing they cannot do is tell you where to stand and where to point the lens and when to take the photograph. These are the sole responsibilities of the photographer, and it is the photographer who determines the viewpoint and perspective of the image he or she chooses to create.

Not all photographs need to be taken from our eye level (or from the top of a fully-extended tripod)—nor should they. Changing your viewpoint is not only a great way to enhance a composition; it might make your photograph stand out from all of the other eye-level views made of a similar subject.

What happens when you change your viewpoint? The background and foreground change with it.

**Today’s Assignment:**

Try unique ways to take a shot: (Bugs eye view, Birds Eye View, Face to Face, High angle, Low angle). This can be from lying down on your back to climbing a tree or nearby staircase. Shooting from low down or high up gives a completely different perspective compared to a front and center shot. Trial and error are two great learning companions for any photographer, so use them. Another angle you can try is tilting the camera. This works well with good angle changes. A slight change makes the photo look like the photographer was a little tipsy, so make sure the viewer will know that the angle is part of the composition. Also fill the frame….

You can have the perfect location, a great viewpoint, and a unique angle, but if the subject is too far away the image can look a little average, so get in closer. Fill the frame with more of your subject. Always ask the question whether the composition is tight enough. If it isn’t, move your feet or change the lens. Exclude unnecessary elements or clutter to get the best out of the composition.

Turn in 5 of your best shots.

**Tuesday:** Create a good “ghost” image on Pixlr…. Bonus if you can take a shot of tomb stones or a spooky Halloween backdrop!