

Art Analysis & Discussion Questions

**Protocol**

1. *When you think about democracy and citizenship, what does it look like?*
2. *Does democracy look like this? Display high resolution image of John Trumbull's **Declaration of Independence**.*



3. *Is this picture familiar to anyone? Inform students that this image is on the back of the 2 dollar bill.*

4. *What is going on in this picture?*

5. *Are there any people who look familiar?*

6. *Do you think this image is capturing something important? Why or why not?*

**Students should conclude that this image represents the colonial assembly that has agreed on the Declaration of Independence.**

7. *How are the gentlemen dressed at this meeting? Is it a casual meeting?*

8. *Where is the light coming from in this painting?*

9. *What would the sunlight shining down on Jefferson and the document in his hand represent?*

10. *If this painting were small, like the size of a \$2 bill, would it still seem to represent something important?*

11. This painting is 12' by 18'. Here is what it looks like where it's located in the Capitol Building's rotunda in Washington, D.C. What would it feel like to stand under this picture and look up at it?



12. How does the size, the quality of the painter's work, and the subject contribute to the idea that this is an important event in American history?

13. Does an image of democracy have to have famous people doing things of tremendous significance, like deciding to start a revolution, to be considered important? Why or why not?

14. How about this image then. **Display Paul Shambroom's Markle, IN photograph.**



15. *What is going on in this photograph? How do you know?*
16. *Where are they located? Describe the setting.*
17. *How are these three gentlemen dressed? What does that tell you about how often these people meet?*
18. *Is there anyone not photographed in this picture that are probably there?*

**Students should conclude that it is probably some type of town meeting with members of the council looking out at an audience.**

19. *Based on these details, do you think that they are doing some “of tremendous significance” like the first picture?*
20. *Why would Paul Shambroom choose to take a picture of this then? Why would this artist choose to immortalize this moment?*
21. *Would this picture seem more significant if it was really big, like the Trumbull? This picture has been blown up to 33” by 66”.* **Draw the size of the picture on the board to give students an impression of the size.**
22. *What is Shambroom trying to do with your impression of the image by making it so large?*
23. *In what ways then are both the painting by Trumbull and this photograph by Shambroom good images of democracy?*
24. *Does the importance come from the people in the images or the actions which they undertake?*
25. *If you had to make a thesis statement about democracy using both images as evidence, what would it be? “Democracy is about \_\_\_\_\_”.*

**Students should conclude that both images show citizens doing the work of democracy. Democracy is about the actions people take to make their country or their community better by working together.**

***Your task as we learn about what democracy looks like is to come up with your own image of democracy. You should imagine that your image will also be printed in a large size, and would hang comfortably next to the Trumbull and the Shambroom.***

This curriculum was produced by Ozni Torres as a part of the Museum of Contemporary Photography’s American Photography and Literacy workshop series with funding from the Terra Foundation for American Art.