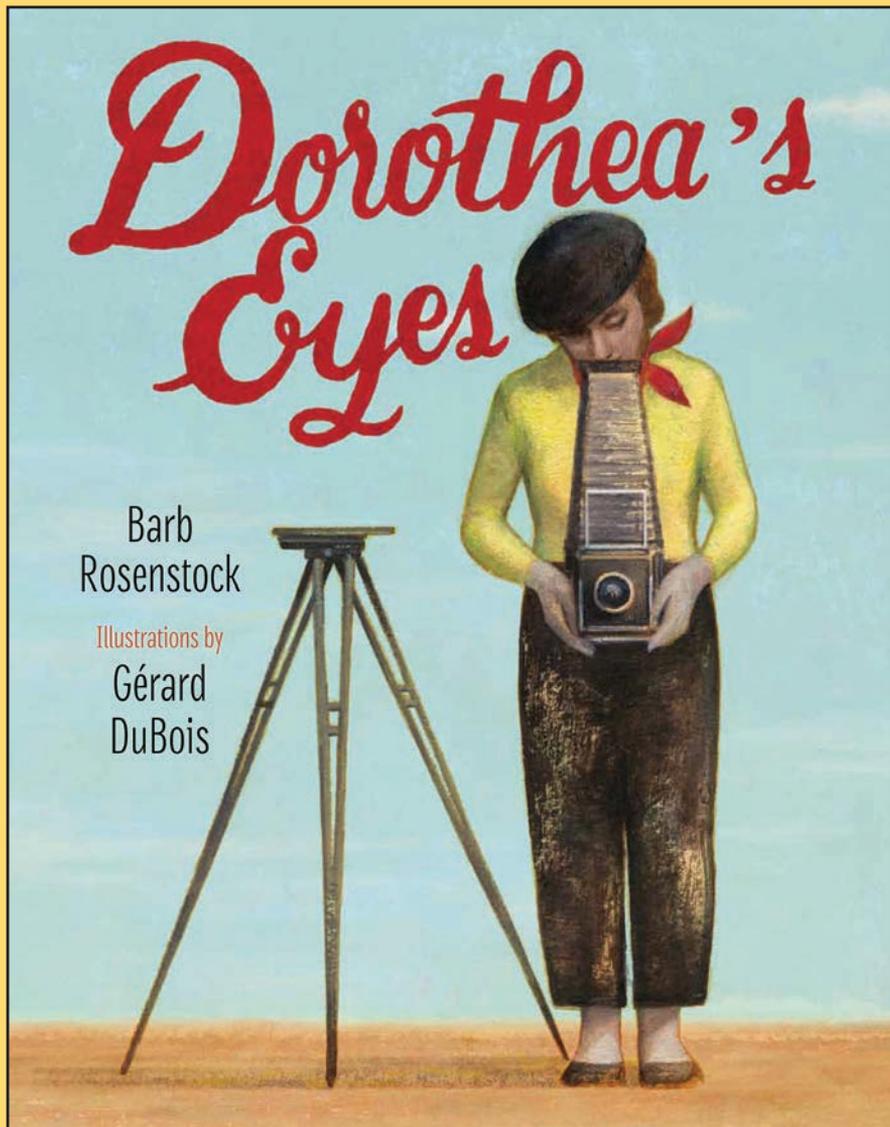


# Educator's Guide

## Dorothea's Eyes

Barb  
Rosenstock

Illustrations by  
Gérard  
DuBois



With Common Core  
State Standards for English Language  
Arts and Math; Next Generation  
Science Standards

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Highlights



Dorothea Lange is considered one of the greatest photographers of the 20th century. She is best-known for her photographs of farmers and migrant workers during the Great Depression, sharecroppers in the American South in the 1930s, and Japanese Americans housed in Relocation Centers during WWII. But far from merely photographing people and events, Lange also managed to capture people's emotions as they lived through the economic, physical, and racial challenges of those times—feelings ranging from sadness, frustration, and despair to determination, hope, and even joy.

Through words and acrylic paintings, Barb Rosenstock and Gérard DuBois tell the story of Lange's uncanny ability to capture what people were experiencing and feeling. The author's note, timeline, and reproduced photographs fill in some of the details of Lange's life and work.

### Notes for Educators

- Two kinds of activities are included in this guide: cross-disciplinary explorations and inquiries around a theme. Thinking across disciplines helps solidify student insights by linking new knowledge to prior knowledge in different content areas. Inquiries based on a theme help students make connections between incidents from their own lives and a particular historical situation. Students' own experience with the theme allows them to generate thoughtful questions about the historical events.
- Several types of inquiries can be offered so students have a choice based on their interests. Allowing them to generate the questions and decide how they will present their findings (e.g., written product, poster, slide presentation, drama, reader's theater, etc.) will make learning more meaningful and differentiated. **(SL 4.4, 4.5)**
- Text sets can be created using combinations of genres and formats (e.g., picture books, nonfiction, novels, graphic novels, and multilingual texts). Including non-book and multi-modal texts, such as newspaper clippings, photographs, poems, cost-of-living indexes, song lyrics, oral histories, advertisements, art work, video clips, and maps, supports better learning. While informational texts provide necessary factual background information, stories are better at conveying the emotions behind the events being studied. **(RL 4.6, 4.6; SL 4.2)**

- In order to support critical literacy and foster the growth of multicultural and global understanding, activities can be organized in a way that ensures students interact with multiple perspectives—those encountered in the texts and those that arise from working with each other. Allowing students to work in small groups enhances their ability to negotiate and collaboratively come to consensus, an important 21st century skill. **(RL 4.6; RI 4.6; SL 4.1)**
- The bibliography in this guide includes picture books and novels set in the 1930s. Using stories to study the time period of Lange photographs can be more engaging than simply examining historical facts and may lead to longer, more student-led discussions.

### Discipline-based Explorations

#### Language Arts

- Vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to students includes: *tenements, jalopy, lens, shutter, aperture, photographic negatives* **(RF 4.4C; L4 4; RL 4.4; RI 4.4)**
- The literary element of *point of view* is connected in the book to the concept of seeing through a camera lens. Using a Dorothea Lange photograph that contains multiple people, describe orally or in writing what is happening from the point of view of several of the people in the picture. Lange's photographs can be downloaded from the Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Online Catalog. To access them, go to <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsa/> and enter Dorothea Lange in the search box. Additional sources of photographs are listed on the resource page in the back of the picture book. **(RI 4.1, 4.3, 4.6; SL 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4; W 4.3, 4.9)**
- In a picture book, everything is important, including the words, illustrations, and book design. Go through the book and record all the words highlighted in red or printed in a larger font. Reflect on why those words are set apart. What do the words capture about Lange's artistic process? **(RL 4.4; SL 4.3, 4.4; W 4.2)**
- The use of symbols supports higher-order thinking. One of the symbols DuBois uses in the picture book is a heart, which is used to represent Lange's ability to photograph details of an event as well as the feelings of those involved. Using the timeline in the back of the book, have students draw symbols to document Lange's physical and emotional journey that led to the creation of the famous photographs reproduced in the book. **(RL 4.3, 4.4; L 5.5; SL 4.4)**

- Use additional texts as class read-alouds or in literature circles to help students gain a deeper understanding of the Great Depression and the dust storms along with the impact they had on people. For example:
  - Read *Out of the Dust* (Karen Hesse) and map the physical and emotional journey of Billie Jo. Encourage students to use symbols instead of illustrations to support higher-order thinking. **(RL 4.3; SL 4.4)**
  - Write the narrative to Matt Phelan’s wordless graphic novel, *The Storm in the Barn*, which takes place during the Great Depression (1929-1939). **(L4 1; W 4.3)**
- Choose several picture books or informational books from the bibliography and read them to determine the different challenges people faced in different parts of the country. Not everyone had to leave his or her home. How did those who stayed manage to survive? **(RL 4.3, 4.6; RI 4.3, 4.6, SL 4.3, 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Visual stories (i.e., movies and comic books) flourished during the Great Depression as people escaped their problems through stories. Explore the storylines in movies such as those starring Shirley Temple or the Marx Brothers. Compare them to the stories of Superman, a superhero invented during the Great Depression. What do these stories have in common? **(RL 4.2, 4.3, 4.5; SL 4.2, 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**

### Social Studies

- Author Barb Rosenstock presented Dorothea Lange’s story through the concept of a *lens* or *perspective*. Select an event from daily life that involves several people (e.g., being late for school because the family car broke down). Use a two to three circle Venn diagram to think about how different people might view the event. Students can do the same activity with national or global events. **(SL 4.3, 4.4; W 4.2)**
- Find out what programs and resources are available in your community for those who are unemployed or homeless. Ask a person from one of the organizations involved to come and talk to the students, answering student-prepared questions. **(SL 4.1)**
- Research the biographies of individuals who changed the way people thought because of their photographs. Some possibilities include Mathew Brady (American Civil War), Jacob Riis (life in tenements), Lewis Hine (child labor), Margaret Bourke-White (industry and architecture), Ansel Adams (American landscapes). What was unique about their photographs? **(RI 4.1, 4.3, 4.9; SL 4.4, 4.5, 4.6; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Because of Lange’s photograph *Migrant Mother*, federal aid began flow-

ing to migrant camps. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is the federal organization in the U.S. that helps people when disasters occur today. Look on their website and report on the types of aid FEMA gives people. **(RI 4.1, 4.2, 4.7; SL 4.4, 4.5, 4.6; W 4.2, 4.7)**

- The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was a federal organization that hired young men to build roads and buildings, plant trees, work on erosion and fire control, and develop camping and picnicking facilities. Explore a national park website or interview a ranger and try to find out if there are remaining structures that were constructed by the CCC. Another source of information is a historical society or an archival librarian. Have students present their findings. **(RI 4.1, 4.2, 4.7; SL 4.4, 4.5, 4.6; W 4.2, 4.7)**

### Science

#### Weather:

- Although Lange focused on taking photographs of people, she also photographed natural events like dust storms. Have students look at images and videos of more recent dust storms, such as *haboobs* in arid regions of the U.S. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vYnuzoH5oBA>). **(RI.4.7; NGSS 4-ESS2-1)**
- Compare the causes of the frequent dust storms of the 1930s with the circumstances that create today’s dust storms in the Southwestern U.S. Use a T-chart or Venn diagram to visually compare the different circumstances. Good sources of information include the nonfiction books in the bibliography (particularly those by Marrin, Sandler, and Brown) and data from the National Drought Mitigation Center. **(RI 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7; NGSS 4-ESS2-1)**

#### Light waves:

- In order to capture an image on film, early inventors of photography discovered that a mixture of silver salts was needed as a coating on copper or glass plates. Find a piece of polished silver and leave it exposed to air so students can see how silver changes as it undergoes a chemical reaction. Research the history of photography to learn about the various silver-based mixes photographers used as coatings and how they worked to produce an image. **(RI 4.1, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- An eye and a camera record images in similar ways. Create a diagram comparing the corresponding parts of the eye and camera (i.e., lens/lens, iris/diaphragm, pupil/aperture, eyelid/shutter, retina/

film, fovea/focal point, melanin pigment/black paint). Explain the way both eyes and cameras capture light waves and turn them into images.

**(NGSS 4-PS4-2; SL 4.4)**

#### Examples:

- The lens in the eye focuses the image on the back of the eye where it can be captured and sent to the brain. A camera does the same thing; the lens is used to focus the image on film (or sensor in a digital camera) where it can be captured and printed or viewed electronically.
- Photoreceptors (rods and cones) in the retina of the eye undergo a chemical reaction when exposed to light. In a film camera, a chemical reaction takes place when light hits the silver emulsion on the film. In a digital camera, electric currents are generated when light reaches the sensor. In each case, the extent of the reaction is determined by the amount of light present.

#### Health:

- Use the interactive timeline on The College of Physicians of Philadelphia website (<http://www.historyofvaccines.org/content/timelines/polio>) and research the history of polio. What are the causes and consequences of the disease? Who were Jonas Salk and Albert Sabin? How were their vaccines different? Which vaccine is used today? **(RI 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.7; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Read the biographies of people like Lange, who worked to overcome the paralysis that resulted from contracting polio (e.g., President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, gold-medal Olympian Wilma Rudolph, and Mexican artist Frida Kahlo). Document how each person worked to regain their mobility. **(RI 4.1, 4.2, 4.3; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**

#### Extreme photography:

- Do some research on cameras designed for extreme conditions such as low light or the presence of atmospheric challenges. How do photographers photograph objects at enormous distances (e.g., the stars using cameras in the Hubble telescope) or microscopic objects (e.g., blood cells or the hairs on the head of an insect). How do they take photographs in dangerous places (e.g., underwater on crewless submersibles, in the extreme cold of the Arctic, or in the extreme heat on the edge of a volcano)? Have students present their findings. **(RI 4.1, 4.2, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**

#### Math

- Dorothea Lange used a range of cameras, but many of her most famous photographs were taken with a large Graflex camera. Search on Google images for a visual history of the camera. Pick a variety of camera brands and create a chart that compares the sizes and weights of cameras in order to help fellow students understand some of the challenges Lange faced as she carried pieces of heavy equipment while dealing with a lifelong limp acquired from polio. **(RI 4.3, 4.7, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7; 4.MD.A.2, B.4)**
- Using data from the National Drought Mitigation Center (<http://drought.unl.edu/DroughtBasics.aspx>), graph the numbers of farmers who had to receive federal aid because of climate change in the 1930s. **(RI 4.3, 4.7; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7; 4.MD.A.2, B.4)**

#### Visual Arts

- Use a digital camera or cell phone camera to create and present a photo essay around a conceptual theme that invites discussion and multiple perspectives (e.g., friendship, group dynamics, fear, or peer-pressure). **(SL 4.4, 4.5, 4.6)**
- Lange said, “I had to get my camera to register the things about those people that were more important than how poor they were—their pride, their strength, their spirit” (King, 2009, p. 41). Look closely at the reproduced photographs in the back of the picture book. How did she compose the photographs so they captured both the poverty and the spirit of the people? Why focus on faces? **(RI 4.1; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Listen to a curator at the Library of Congress talk about Lange’s process of taking the famous photograph called *Migrant Mother*. Go to the History Channel website and search for *Migrant Mother* (<http://www.history.com/topics/great-depression/videos/migrant-mother-photo>). Another source for more of the story behind the photograph is Don Nardo’s book *Migrant Mother*. **(RI 4.1, 4.2, 4.8; SL 4.2, 4.3)**
- Explore and think about the ethics of photographing people. Lange garnered a lot of assistance for poor people through her photographs. Others have photographed people strictly for financial gain. Some maintain that photographers hounded Princess Diana to death. Explore and think about the ethics of taking and publishing photographs of people, particularly when unsolicited. **(RI 4.1, 4.6, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.1, 4.7)**

## Music

- Woodie Guthrie was a musician who experienced the dust storms and poverty that Lange photographed. Like Lange, Guthrie traveled across the U.S., writing songs about his observations. Read about his life and some of the lyrics he wrote. What words does he use to describe the disasters or the emotions of farmers? The official Woody Guthrie website has an illustrated biography and lyrics from all his songs (<http://www.woodyguthrie.org/>). Suggested songs include: *Hard Travelin'*, *Talking Dust Bowl Blues*, *Dust Storm Disaster*, and *This Land Is Your Land*. **(RI 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Use Lange's photographs to illustrate one of Guthrie's songs. **(SL 4.4)**
- Dorothea Lange worked hard, persevering through pain and a persistent limp to become one of the best photographers in the U.S. Read about several musical artists who have disabilities. What circumstances or characteristics do they have in common that helped them overcome their disabilities and become world-class musicians? **(RI 4.1, 4.3, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
  - Itzhak Perlman (violinist who had polio)
  - Jose Feliciano, Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder, The Blind Boys of Alabama (musicians who are blind)
  - Ludwig van Beethoven (composer who was deaf)
  - Django Reinhardt (banjo player who lost several fingers in a fire)
  - Kenny G (Gorelick) (saxophonist with asthma)
  - Bill Withers (R&B singer and songwriter who stuttered)

## Thematic Inquiries

### Communicating in Different "Languages"

- Dorothea Lange and other photojournalists told stories and communicated events and emotions through the language of photographs. Use some of the activities below to think about communicating a message in other languages.
- Brainstorm a list of all the different languages we read (e.g., printed words in different languages, body language, road signs, musical notes, mathematical symbols, Morse code, paintings, dance, emoticon, Txt Msg, and Twitter hashtags).
- Explore wordless books and the way they invite readers to tell the story of the pictures. Have several students use the same text and compare the narratives each comes up with. Look carefully at the

composition of the illustration and notice how the artist creates emotion, movement, and mood. **(RI 4.1, 4.2, 4.3; SL 4.4; W 4.3)**

### Suggested titles:

- The Storm in the Barn* by Matt Phelan
  - Unspoken: A Story from the Underground Railroad* by Henry Cole
  - The Conductor* by Laëtitia Devernay
  - The Farmer and the Clown* by Marla Frazee
  - Shadow and Mirror* by Suzy Lee
  - Flashlight* by Lizi Boyd
  - Tuesday, Flotsam, Free Fall*, and *Mr. Wuffles!* by David Wiesner
  - The Lion and the Mouse* by Jerry Pinkney
  - Sidewalk Circus* by Paul Fleishman, illustrated by Kevin Hawkes
  - The Tree House* by Marije Tolman & Ronald Tolman
- Create a text set of bilingual books or foreign language books that feature a range of languages. Look especially for languages that use a different script (e.g., Chinese, Korean, Arabic, and Cree). Have students read the books, looking carefully at the scripts and illustrations to try and piece the narrative together. **(RI 4.1, 4.2; RI 4.1, 4.2)**

### Perseverance and Problem Solving

- Use the picture books listed in the bibliography to look at the different ways the Great Depression and the dust storms affected the characters. Discuss and present the ways different characters persevered. What creative ways did they use to find work, solve their problems, and generate hope? **(RI 4.1, 4.3, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Locate great-grandparents or senior citizens who lived during the Great Depression. Interview them and record their stories. Use the stories to think about ways they persevered. How did the family work together to survive? **(SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Read about athletes who worked hard to overcome a physical disability or the limits put on them by racial prejudice. What kinds of challenges did they face? What emotional tools did they use to help them persevere? Athletes facing physical challenges include racer Wilma Rudolph, skater Scott Hamilton, and surfer Bethany Hamilton. Athletes facing challenges due to racial prejudice include baseball player Jackie Robinson, diver Sammy Lee, boxer Joe Louis, and runner Jesse Owens. **(RI 4.1, 4.3, 4.9; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**

## Observing and Listening

- When Dorothea Lange photographed people for portraits, she spent a long time talking to them beforehand, making them comfortable and getting to know them. Even when photographing migrant workers at work, she spent time talking to them in order to be able to capture their personalities or voices on film. Have students practice silently observing people, taking notes or sketching what they observe, and inferring the stories of the people they watch. **(W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Rosenstock and DuBois describe Dorothea Lange’s special eyes, shaped by her experience with a disability. This helped her see things many Americans did not. Help students notice the people who help to make their lives easier. Have students draw a map of the school and place an X wherever school support staff work. Have them interview various staff workers and report back on the valuable work they do in helping the school run efficiently. **(SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**
- Scientists and photojournalists like Lange have something in common; they try to be invisible and simply document what they observe. Read a version of the story about Louis Agassiz and his students observing a fish. Then select an object and observe it over the space of several class periods or days. Describe your findings in words and sketches. **(RL 4.1, 4.2; SL 4.4; W 4.2, 4.7)**

## Bibliography: Books Set in the 1930s

### Picture books (with settings)

- Boys of Steel: The Creators of Superman* by Marc Tyler Nobleman, illustrated by Ross MacDonald (Ohio)
- The Hallelujah Flight* by Phil Bildner, illustrated by John Holyfield (across the U.S.)
- Voices of the Dust Bowl* by Sherry Garland, illustrated by Judith Hierstein (American prairie)
- Potato: A Tale from the Great Depression* by Kate Lied, illustrated by Lisa Campbell Ernst (Idaho)
- The Gardener* by Sarah Stewart, illustrated by David Small (New York City)
- The Babe and I* by David Adler, illustrated by Terry Widener (New York City)
- Rudi Rides the Rails* by Dandi Mackall, illustrated by Chris Ellison (Ohio to California and back)

*What You Know First* by Patricia MacLachlan, illustrated by Barry Moser (American prairie)

*Born and Bred in the Great Depression* by Jonah Winter, illustrated by Kimberly Bulcken Root (Texas)

### Novels (with settings)

- The Storm in the Barn* by Matt Phelan (graphic novel, American prairie)
- Out of the Dust* by Karen Hesse (novel in verse, Oklahoma)
- Meet Kit, An American Girl* by Valerie Tripp (American Girl series, Ohio)
- Bud, not Buddy* by Christopher Paul Curtis (Michigan)
- The Mighty Miss Malone* by Christopher Paul Curtis (Indiana and Michigan)
- Esperanza Rising* by Pam Muñoz Ryan (set in California)
- A Long Way From Chicago; A Year Down Yonder* by Richard Peck (southern Illinois)
- Dragon Road* by Laurence Yep (San Francisco and Western states)
- Blue Willow* by Doris Gates (California)
- Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor (Mississippi)
- Turtle in Paradise* by Jennifer L. Holm (Florida Everglades)
- Moon Over Manifest* by Clare Vanderpool (Kansas)
- Christmas After All* by Kathryn Lasky (Dear America series, Indiana)
- Nothing to Fear* by Jackie French Koller (New York City)

### Nonfiction (most include photographs taken by Dorothea Lange)

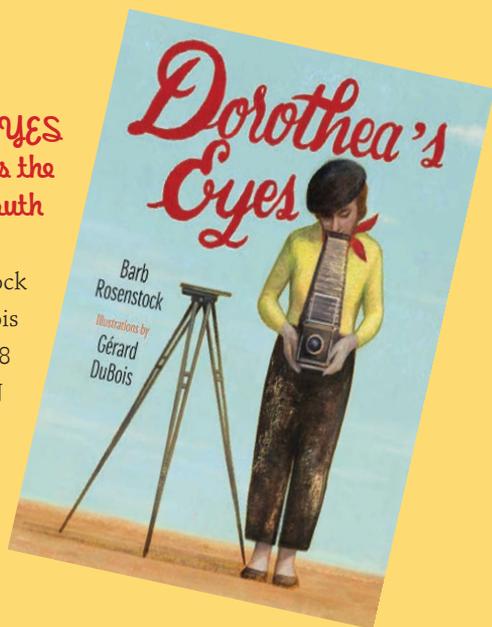
- Years of Dust: The Story of the Dust Bowl* by Albert Marrin
- Children of the Dust Bowl: The True Story of the School at Weedpatch Camp* by Jerry Stanley
- Children of the Great Depression* by Russell Freedman
- The Dust Bowl Through the Lens: How Photography Revealed and Helped Remedy a National Disaster* by Martin W. Sandler
- Migrant Mother: How a Photograph Defined the Great Depression* by Don Nardo
- The Great American Dust Bowl, a graphic novel* by Don Brown
- Welcome to Kit’s World, 1934: Growing Up During America’s Great Depression*, American Girl companion book by Harriet Brown

### Additional reading about Dorothea Lange

- Dorothea Lange: Photographer of the People* by David C. King (Show Me America series)
- Restless Spirit: The Life and Work of Dorothea Lange* by Elizabeth Partridge

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*Dorothea Lange Photographs the Truth*

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Illustrated by Gérard DuBois  
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“A solid introduction to one of America’s most celebrated photographers.” —*School Library Journal*

“An excellent beginner’s resource for biography, U.S. history, and women’s studies.” —*Kirkus Reviews*

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**Highlights**