

Taliban Short Essay: Reading a Photograph



The essay, in a nutshell: You will select a photograph from the *Time* collection ([“Taking the Fight to the Taliban”](#)), read it using the critical reading skills we’ve been practicing in Boot Camp, and compose a short essay in which you research and analyze the photograph.

The website: [Time Photo Essay: “Taking the Fight to the Taliban”](#)

The big question: Through research and photographs, what are you learning about the current and/or historical climate of Afghanistan?

The three objectives:

- To practice and elevate the skills we’ve been working on in Critical Reading Boot Camp
- To gain an understanding of the Taliban in Afghanistan that will deepen your understanding of our next novel, *The Kite Runner*
- To refresh and assess your critical writing skills

The process:

Step 1 (Observe): In class, we will browse carefully the photos from *Time*’s collection and form a collective list of the questions we want answered about the Taliban and Afghanistan.

Step 2 (Question): Individually, you will settle on one photo and form the specific questions you need to research and analyze the photo.

Step 3 (Investigate): You will research until you’ve answered your questions to your satisfaction (keep track of your sources using EasyBib). You will combine your research with your Boot Camp critical reading skills to analyze the story and the message you think the photograph is trying to tell.

Step 4: (Create): You will compose a short essay in which you combine your research and analysis of the photo. The essay will consist of an introduction, one body paragraph, a conclusion.

The **introduction** will consist of...

- A hook that grabs the reader's attention and establishes the essay's tone and purpose.
- Relevant background information that address what the subject matter of the photograph and defines key terms.
- A thesis that makes a clear, specific, analytical, and provable argument about the photograph. It should establish *what* the photographer is trying to do and *how*.

The **body paragraph** will consist of...

- A topic sentence that takes the thesis one step further.
- Three specific elements from the photograph (color, foreground, background, symbols, nature, human subjects, etc.) that support the thesis.
- A lead-in for each element that describes it objectively.
- A lead-out for each element that reads it closely and argues how it supports the thesis/the photographer's intent.
- A concluding paragraph that wraps up the body paragraph.

The **concluding paragraph** will consist of...

- A restatement of the thesis (NOT word-for-word).
- Something for the reader to continue pondering.

Please see the [essay rubric](#) for more details and the sample essay.

The Timeline:

- We will draft and revise the essay in class and at home the week of September 10-14.
- **Final drafts are due in www.turnitin.com on Tuesday, September 18 by 3:00 pm.**
- Please come see me for a conference! I'm available before school and during 1st and 3rd hours each day.