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# IGNITING REFLECTION:

## USING PHOTOVOICE TO ENHANCE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN A PRESCRIBED BURNING COURSE



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
Davis College  
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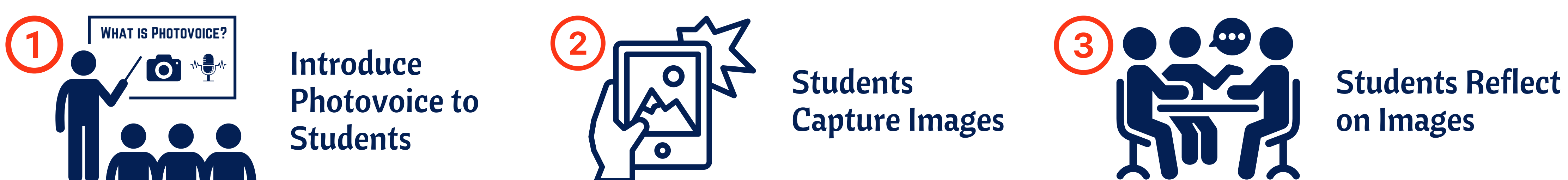
### INTRODUCTION/NEED FOR INNOVATION

- The photovoice method provides an innovative form of reflection but is rarely used in educational settings (Ciolan & Manasia, 2017).
- Photovoice is a participatory action research method in which participants identify, reflect, and discuss community-based social issues (Wang & Burris, 1997).
- Some research conducted in primary, secondary, and post-secondary classroom settings (Malka, 2022; Mulder & Dull, 2014; Whitfield & Meyer, 2005).
- Experiential learning is an integral element within agricultural education that provides hand-on experiences for students in a variety of classroom settings (Baker et al., 2012; Shoulders & Myers, 2013).
- Four-stage cycle: Concrete Experience (i.e., feeling), Reflective Observation (i.e., watching), Abstract Conceptualization (i.e., thinking), and Active Experimentation (i.e., doing) (Kolb, 1984)
- There is a need to explore the opportunities students may have when becoming an active participant in their own experiential learning process (Patka & Robbins, 2017).

### HOW IT WORKS

- The implementation of this innovative idea utilized students enrolled in a prescribed burning course.
- Students were tasked with attending field trips (i.e., burn days) in which they would travel with the instructor to a landowner's property, discuss burn plan objectives, execute the burn plan, and discuss burn results.
- Students were expected to engage in the experiential learning process by applying what they learned in prior lectures (Abstract Conceptualization, Concrete Experience) to a hands-on, real-world prescribed burning experience (Active Experimentation).

### THREE-STEP PHOTOVOICE PROCESS:



- For this project, students were given one week to capture five photos that visually represented what they learned about wildfire science while enrolled in the course.
- Photos were uploaded to Microsoft OneDrive and printed using Walmart Photo Services
- A moderator guide was developed to spark discussion about the photos, perceptions of experiential learning, and the use of photovoice for experiential learning, with Otter.ai used to record the discussion.

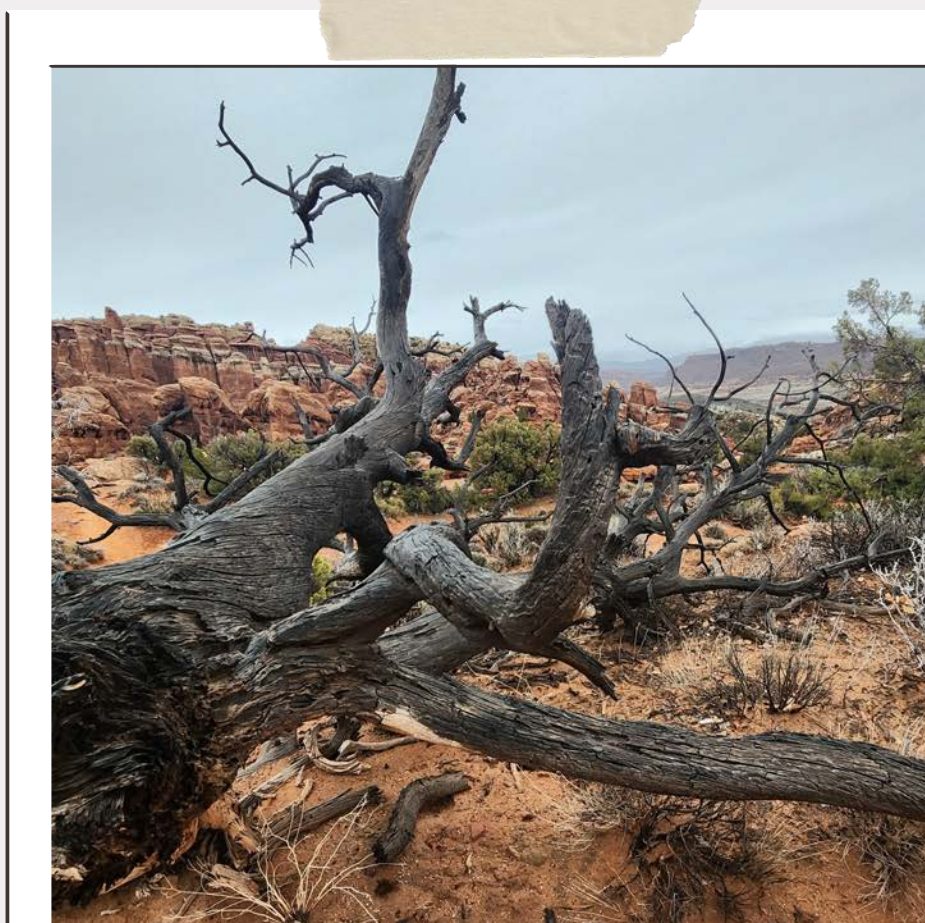
### RESULTS TO DATE/IMPLICATIONS

#### STUDENTS SAID...

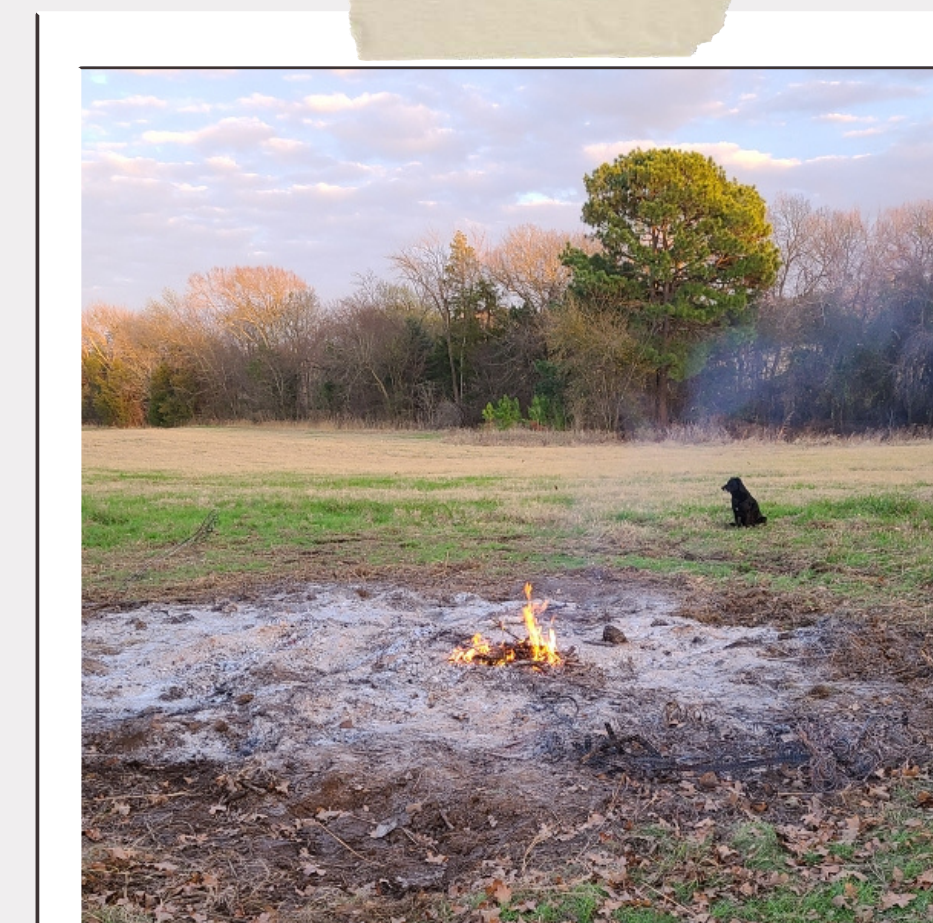
- The photovoice activity was beneficial for their overall learning experience.
- Photovoice gave them the opportunity to derive deeper meaning from their lab experiences.
- It is important to view their peers' images to understand different perspectives.
- Photovoice provided direction for the instructor on what needs to be covered in class.
- There is opportunity to observe different learning styles in the classroom.

*"I'm a visual learner...seeing the photos is better than people writing it down and describing it."*

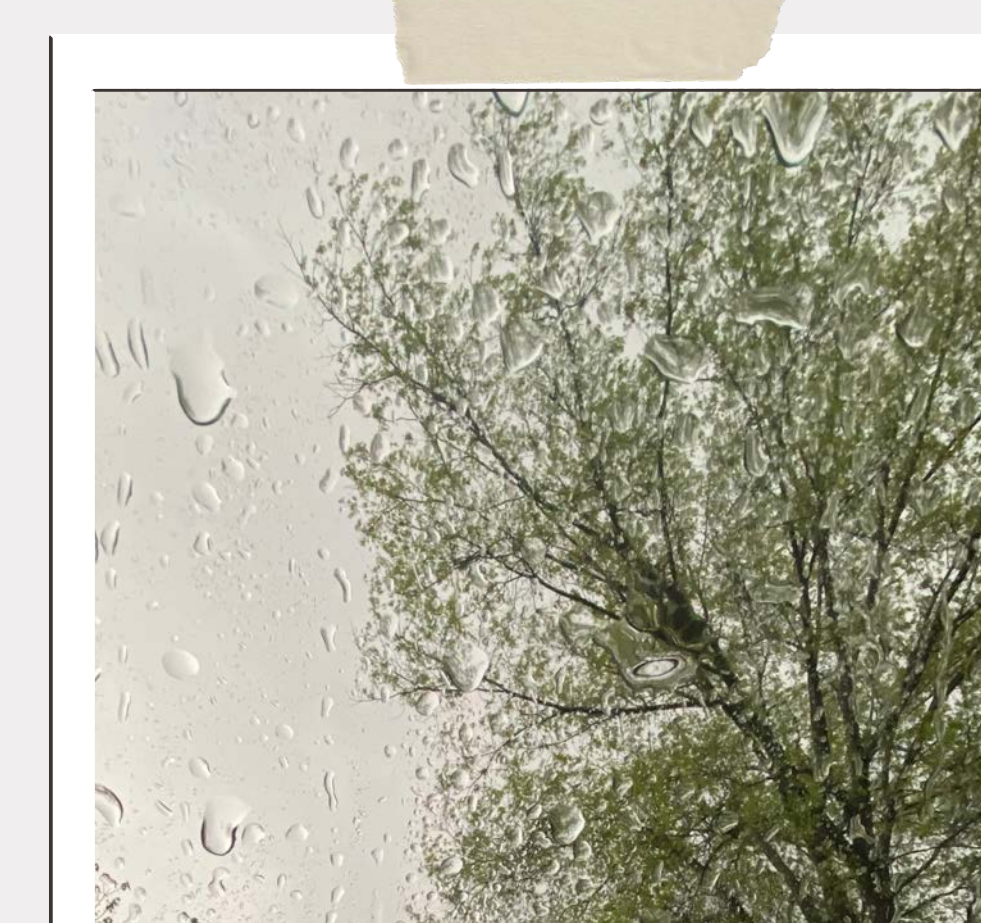
- Photovoice helped them better understand lecture content about fire-risk landscapes, fire equipment, fire breaks, fire management, and wildfire risks.



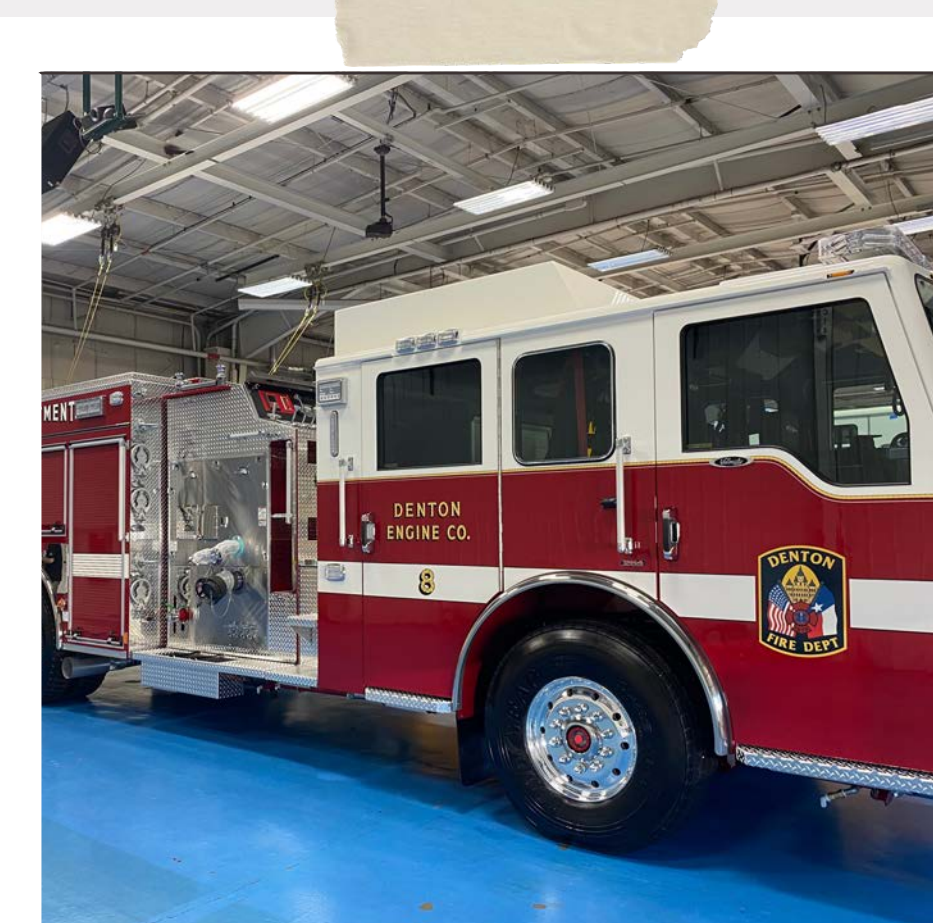
Fire-risk Landscapes



Fire Management



Fire Breaks



Fire Equipment

### FUTURE PLANS/ADVICE TO OTHERS

- Students advised future practitioners to use photovoice for reflection in courses that use both classroom instructional methods and hands-on experiences to think deeper about the course.
- Given photovoice can be used in a variety of classroom settings, instructors should develop a detailed plan specific to the course and the interest of the students.
- Instructors should plan ample time for the duration of the photovoice project to clarify the process and answer questions that may arise.

### COST/RESOURCES

- The only cost for this innovative idea was Walmart Photo Services with each image priced at \$0.12 - costs may vary depending on printing preferences.
- Students were asked to use their personal smartphone camera to capture images, but others may choose to supply their students with disposable or DSLR cameras if available.
- Students should already have access to other essential materials such as internet access and laptops for photo submission.

#### ABSTRACT & REFERENCES:



#### PHOTOVOICE RESULTS:

