

**Using photos from Chiapas to teach about self and others, learning environments and familiarize learners with the Zapatista movement.**

**Levels:** 6-8, 9-12

**Subjects:** ELL/ESL, arts, social studies.

**Objectives:** This lesson aims to introduce learners to the situation of indigenous peoples in Chiapas with special reference to the efforts of the Zapatista communities to build a dignified education system, through the medium of the English language and photography, while developing critical thinking skills. It will focus on learning environments in the autonomous Zapatista schools and on those of the learners in their home countries. It will address:

- a) learning environments/schools
- b) aids to learning
- c) understanding the experiences of people in other socio-cultural settings

Learners will interpret photographs through the following activities:

- a) describing photos
- b) interpreting photos
- c) analyzing the context of photos
- d) analyzing the mood and feeling of the photo and how the elements of the photo contribute to this

Learners will be able to answer the following questions:

- a) What can photos tell us about life in Chiapas?
- b) What can they tell us about how we and how others live?
- c) What can they tell us about schools in Chiapas?
- d) What can they tell us about how others learn?
- e) What can they tell us about how we learn?

## Ourselves and Others-How We Learn.

**Introduction:** If you have a camera, or the learners have access to photographic equipment, you might begin by asking them to take some photos of their own learning environment. These photos could then be used for analysis, or the learners could simply describe the classroom they are in, taking special note of all the support mechanisms they have for the learning process (e.g. blackboard, interactive whiteboard, computer, books, etc.). They can discuss how these supports are used and how they facilitate their learning.

**Interpreting a photo:** Show the group this photo.



- What can you see in the photo?  
Looking at the floor and desks,
- What things are similar to your classroom?
- How does this differ from your own classroom?
- What do you notice about the clothes of the students?
- Why do you think the girl in the photo has her face covered?
- How does that same girl look? How do you think she feels?
- Would you like to attend this school? Why/why not?
- Do you think they are in a good situation?

**References for the teacher:**

Why the Zapatistas cover their faces.

<http://schoolsforchiapas.org/new/lesson-plans/mask/>