

What About The Words?

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When we scrap our photos, we are creating beautiful photo albums to be admired in the future. But when we do some sort of journaling along with our photos, it changes everything. It lets the viewers of our pages know so much more of what this photo means to us.

As journaling goes, it seems we either love to journal or hate it, and many times hating it stems from a feeling that we don't know how to journal well. There are an amazing number of techniques that can help us feel more confident.

What we really want to convey through our words is the story that isn't captured by the camera, what it means to you, what emotions go with it. This helps your viewer have a more complete understanding of why this picture is special. This is true even if it's something obvious like a wedding or graduation picture - sharing your emotions allows it to touch your viewers more deeply.

It can be helpful to create the first draft of your journaling as a text document rather than doing it right on your scrapbook page. That way you get the words down, then you can copy them into the text box on your page. You can also spell check here if you're concerned about spelling errors, although I personally believe that journaling is still a powerful tool even if the spelling isn't perfect. And the beauty of digiscrapping is that you can go back later and make corrections if you need to.

To start with, there are the trusty 5 "W's" of journalism - who, what, when, where, why. If you can get these 5 points down about your pictures, you've got a great start on effective journaling.

One approach is to tell the story of the picture in your own words. If this seems undoable to you, try pretending you are telling the story to your best friend, then just write it out. Or maybe you have an especially helpful friend or family member who would let you tell them the story, then write it out for you.

Writing a letter to someone is another good way to convey your feelings. Sometimes if I'm scrapping a page for one of my children, I will write a letter that uses the picture as a basis, but may go even further into my memories and dreams for them. I hope that will bring the page more meaning in the future (when they actually sit down and look at the books...LOL!) and will let others know how I felt about my children. This works the same for friends, family members, pets - pretty much anyone you can think of.

Using lists can be an interesting technique. You might make a Favorite Things list or a Top Ten list to go with your photo. Try it - this less "traditional" approach might be the perfect fit for your journaling style.

There are some great places in our Digitals forums to spread your journaling wings. There is a section called "Quotes, Poems & Journaling" here:

<http://digitalscrapbookpages.com/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=52>, where you can find great journaling prompts. Feel free to add your own journaling ideas as well. Angie Young hosts our Tell Your Story Art Journal Challenge, found here:

<http://digitalscrapbookpages.com/forum/forumdisplay.php?f=159>, where she gives you a journaling prompt as well as a mini kit to work with in creating your layout.

Speaking of Quotes, Poems and Journaling, quotes, poems, and song lyrics are a wonderful way to convey the meaning of your page to your viewers. I keep a file of my favorite quotes, and I also have a lot of word art. If I'm stuck finding my own words, I can usually find a quote or poem that will say what I want to say. Sometimes I have a quote or word art that I love so much that I will design an entire layout around it.

Several years ago I bought a book called "What About The Words" from the editors of Memory Makers. It is a great book just full of ideas about making your journaling an outstanding part of your layout - this book always helps me if I am stuck. There are other books as well, and I know this one is still available through Amazon.

If all else fails, there's always Google. You can search for information on journaling, and there's no telling what articles you'll find. Blogging is a form of writing that is very close to our scrapbook journaling, so don't pass over suggestions about how to be a better blogger.

You may have figured out by now that journaling is near and dear to my heart. I love having this tool to capture so much information for future viewers. I hope you've found a new idea or two of how to make your pages into real treasures.