A panoramic photograph has a wider view than a typical photograph. Panoramic mode is a common setting on many digital cameras (including most smartphone cameras) and is often indicated by a curved or pinched rectangle symbol. Using the panorama setting, you can slowly move the camera across a scene to capture a wide area in your photograph. This is often used to capture vast landscapes and scenes surrounding the photographer.

Make a panoramic portrait that captures the various personalities of you and your family members! Choose an interesting background, use fun clothing accessories, and dive into your characters using the panoramic mode on your smartphone camera! Explore personalities, identities, and feelings through this fun family activity.

Materials

- Device with a camera (like a smartphone) with panoramic mode
- At least two people — but the more the merrier

What is a panoramic photograph?

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Instructions

1. Choose someone to be the photographer. Open the camera app on your device and search for the panoramic mode. Take a few test photographs to understand how panoramic mode works. While taking the picture, move the camera slowly from left to right to make a smooth panoramic photo.

2. Everyone else in your group will be in the photograph together. Each person should choose two feelings to express in the photo, for example “excited” and “curious.” Brainstorm how to express these feelings in the photo and consider using props, facial expressions, and/or poses to show the feelings.

3. Choose a setting or background for the photograph. Will you be outside or inside? What will you stand in front of? Choose an area where the photographer can be 5–10 feet away from everyone in the photograph, and decide where the photographer will be positioned.

4. Once the photographer is ready, the group should gather to the left of the photographer and pose for their first emotion, for example “excited.” The photographer will start taking the panoramic photo then announce when everyone should move to perform the second emotion.

The group should move behind the photographer, then pose in their second emotion (“curious”) to the right of the photographer. It’s important for the photographer to slowly move the camera from left to right to allow the group time to get into their second position. And it’s important for the group to move behind the photographer for best results. You may need to practice the timing and take a few test photos as a group before making your final photo.

5. Switch and Repeat: Let someone else in the group be the photographer and/or choose different emotions and props to incorporate into your portraits.

Don’t have panoramic mode? You could still create personality portraits by taking one photo of your first emotion and another photo of your second emotion, and viewing them side by side! Try a whole collection of emotion photos to show the array of emotions you feel and personality traits you have!

Gretjen Helene is a visual artist and enthusiastic human who strives to embellish her world and other’s experiences with learning, healing, creativity, curiosity, gratitude, and joy. Her artistic endeavors are vast — as every arising opportunity is an exciting challenge — and so her work is not always consistent with a specific technique, style, or signature, but consistent is her motto: “The grass is greener where you water it.”