

A thousand words

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After comprehending the harsh revelation of truth at the age of eight, the tooth fairy and Santa Claus were banished to the Land of Unreality and I began to question the world around me. “ Why” was the most used word in my eight year old lexicon; even used more often than “ how” and the beloved remark, “ so.” At first, I only questioned the present but as I became older, I questioned previous traditions and knowledge that I had acquired. A picture is worth a thousand words. A picture was worth a thousand words.

As I scroll through myFacebook“ news” feed, I realize that none of the pictures taken by my peers are even worth eight words. Thousands of photos congest my computer monitor in a matter of minutes. A girl takes a picture of herself with her body askew and a smile revealing only sixteen of her teeth. Exhibitionist.

Narcissist. A boy takes a photo of a party that he went to with his friends: a hazy conglomeration of laser lights and four red-eyed faces. Maladroit. Conceited. These pictures are worth approximately two words each, however, social networking websites do not truly reflect the ideals of the real world. The internet, for some, is an alternate life.

Since the internet is not real, people create an “ ideal” life because they can delete their mistakes in only a few seconds. To create this ideal life, people must be selfish and their behavior is therefore justified when using the internet, the Land of Unreality. Do pictures worth more than two words exist? Many do, though most in modern times do not. Established artists possess the ability to evoke emotions and stories through pictures. Dorothea Lange’s “ Migrant Mother” is worth hundreds of words. Rugged.

Disheveled. Poverty. Depression. Distress. Hope.

The list continues. Da Vinci's "Mona Lisa" is worth hundreds of words as well, perhaps because it has been debated for hundreds of years. Man. Woman. Mysterious. Sinister.

Smile. Content. Unease. Haunting. What pictures could possibly be worth more than the historic works of the most prominent artists of human kind? The pictures of your history. The pictures of your ancestors.

The pictures of your family. The pictures of you as an eight year old and the pictures of you as your present day self. These pictures will most likely not become historical artifacts revered in museums and will fade from the photo paper and eventually from society. These 5 by 7 inch memories are worth a million words each to me, not a thousand. Ultimately, according to my empirical calculations, the average picture is not equal to a thousand words, but 333, 367. $33 \text{ words } (2+100+1,000,000/3= 333,367)$.

33). My data is obviously skewed due to my admiration for my personal history. Whoever coined the phrase "a picture is worth a thousand words" must not have made accurate measurements or did not value personal pictures as much as I do. However, the creator of this phrase did understand one rule that applies to all pictures. Every picture (good, bad, famous, or unfamiliar) does elicit some kind of story.

We only consider pictures relevant to our life to have a value of more than a thousand words each.