

CANVAS PHOTOS TITLE EMBELLISHMENTS JOURNALING

The Challenge (#7): Title Derivation

A good title connects your photos to their story.

Words develop and change over centuries to meet the needs of a culture. The word "scrap," meaning "small piece," comes from the Old Norse of 1387 "skrap" which is defined as "scraps, trifles." The word "scrapbook" was first recorded in 1825.

Your titles can change over the time it takes you to create a page in order to meet the needs of the story you're telling.

LABELS THAT MEAN MORE

When I began making "Initially Awkward" I looked at the photos of my sons with friends they spent a lot of time with as preschoolers and called it "Old Friends." By the time I finished the page, I'd come up with a label that went farther than telling who these kids are, it tells HOW they are at this moment.

Here's a process for developing a label title into one that gets past the surface of your subject.

1) Start with a placeholder title in your mind as you being scrapbooking the page. My placeholder title in this example was "Old Friends."



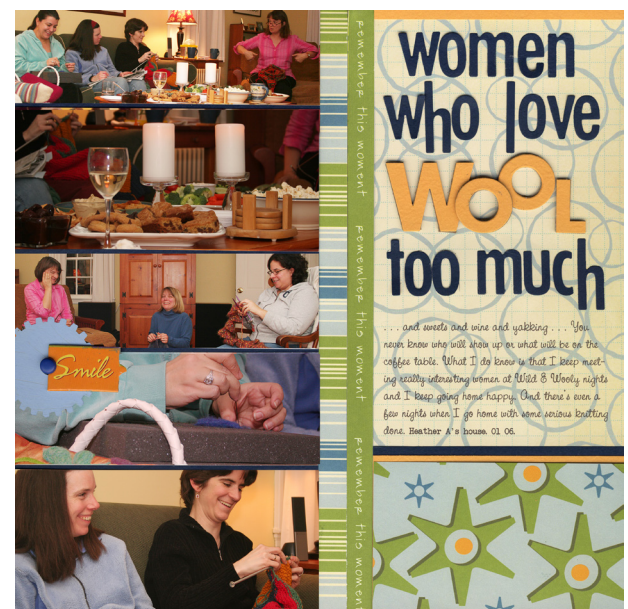
2) Write your journaling before you come up with a final title. It's often through the writing that we discover what's really important about the photos we're scrap-booking. At this point, there may be a phrase from your journaling (or maybe a quote from one of your subjects) that provides your title. If you're still not there, though (as I was not with "Initially Awkward"), try the next step.

3) Take a look at your photos from an angle that considers personality and behavior, and start making a list. With "Initially Awkward," I could see happy, dressed up, self-conscious, slow to warm up, and then the common phrase "Initial Awkwardness" came to mind. I liked that concept, but it felt distant. Yes. The kids HAD an initial awkwardness. But what WERE they? If I could name that, I would have a label that told more than "Old Friends." They WERE "Initially Awkward."

SAYINGS, TITLES, & PHRASES

Discovering a movie title, a line from a song, a well-known phrase, or a lesser-known and eloquent line of poetry that connects your photos to their story is always satisfying. Sometimes those connections are easy, as in "Soda-Pop Anniversary." It was about my husband's gift to me on our anniversary. The gift of a 12-pack of Diet Coke isn't all that elegant and doesn't sound all that special until I journal about him biking to get it and carrying it home on his back. I wanted something fun and so I played off the traditionally-recommended anniversary gifts (1st is paper, 2nd is cotton, 50th is crystal) gave just that tone.

"Women Who Love Wool Too Much" is another fun title that was an easy connection to make: women, knitting, we love our nights out, we call our group "Wild N Wooly." Remembering the book "Women Who Love Too Much" gave me a twist that works for this page.



When the connections are not so easy or obvious, here's a process for finding your title.

1) Start with a title placeholder. In this example from a vacation outing to a flight museum, I started with: flight and fly and air.

2) Look up synonyms for your words. Think about what connections these new words trigger. Look up synonyms of the synonyms you've found.

For the verb "fly," I found float, skim, ascend. I liked "ascend" and looked at synonyms for that and found "rise" and "soar."

3) Look for phrases, quotes, taglines, titles and more that include your key words.

In the sidebar here are a sampling of websites for looking up quotations, lyrics, & movie lines.

4) Examine the quotes and lines you've found to find the piece that works.

When I was looking at quotes, lines, titles and phrases with "fly," "ascend," and "soar" I found this quote by Helen Keller, and knew it was perfect for my subject (which was not so much the flight museum but my sons' love of planes and flight):

One can never consent to creep when one feels an impulse to soar.

I plucked out "Impulse to Soar" for my title.

YOUR CHALLENGE

Start a page with a "placeholder" title and end up with a different title. Tell us how you get there.

Online resources for titles

QuoteLand.com offers many topics and subtopics for searching and browsing as well as reference links. <http://www.quoteland.com/>

LyricsMode lets you search for a word within a song title. <http://www.lyricsmode.com/>

IMDb's tagline is "earth's biggest movie database," so come search or browse this database by genre, year, cast, crew member, movie title and more. <http://www.imdb.com/Sections/Quotes/>

Dictionary.com includes a thesaurus, word translator, and encyclopedia reference <http://dictionary.reference.com/>

Bartleby.com allows you to search a remarkable collection of dictionaries, encyclopedias, thesauri, quotations, and the full text of major works of fiction, non-fiction, and verse. <http://www.bartleby.com/>

