

## LESSON #3: Sepia Is Spectacular!

- Background information about sepia
- Converting to black and white
- Using a gradient map
- Using a photo filter
- Adjusting Hue/Saturation
- Solid color layer
- Color Variations
- A little bonus



Different people have different ideas about what makes a good Sepia photo, so I will provide you with a number of ways to change your photo to Sepia, from the very easiest to more involved methods. Each method will produce a slightly different look. It will be up to you to choose the one you like best! While working with these techniques, you will hopefully learn a bit more about how your software works and also learn to play with some new tools. Remember that in Photoshop there is never just one way to do something, so let's try them all out (well, not all, but a lot!).

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT SEPIA** (just because)

The word Sepia is always capitalized because it is the scientific name for the group of creatures that includes cuttlefish. Originally the process of printing a Sepia photo involved adding a brownish pigment from the inky cuttlefish to the photograph during development. In photographic terms, the word Sepia refers to the dark-brown color of a specially prepared photographic print using this pigment. Developers started using Sepia to replace the less stable metallic silver that had been used in developing. There must have been something to this idea, because many Sepia prints still exist today. I just thought you might be interested! It's also interesting that to make our Sepia photos,

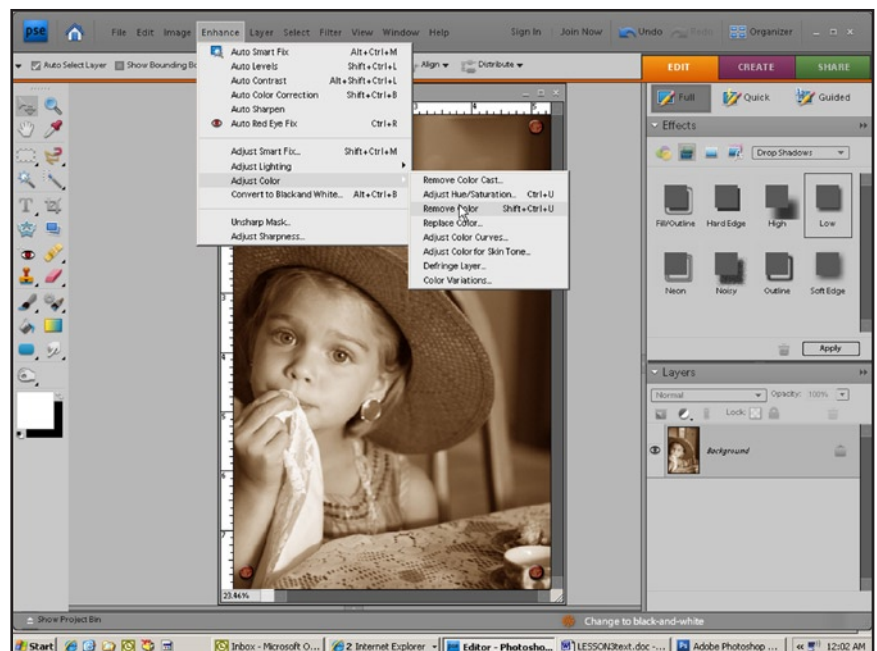
sometimes we'll be using blends of all different colors to simulate that brown cuttlefish ink!

In the first few techniques of this lesson, we will be using "Adjustment Layers." Adobe defines Photoshop adjustment layers as follows: "Adjustment layers let you experiment with color and tonal adjustments to an image without permanently modifying the pixels in the image. The color and tonal changes reside within the adjustment layer, which acts as a veil through which the underlying image layers appear." This is a little wordy, but I think you get the idea!

## CONVERTING YOUR PHOTO TO BLACK AND WHITE

To create a Sepia-toned photo, the first thing we need to do is remove the color from the photo. The subject of creating black and white photos from color photos is a huge Photoshop topic. Photoshop Guru Scott Kelby devotes an entire chapter to creating "Stunning Black and White Conversions." However, in the interest of time and space, I'm just going to show you a simple way to get it done, so we can get started creating spectacular Sepia photos. Fancier ways to convert photos to black and white can be visited at another time.

1. Open a photo, duplicate it, and do whatever correction you wish: resizing, color, exposure, sharpening, etc.
2. In [Photoshop Elements 6 and 7](#), in the top menu bar, go to Enhance>Adjust Color>Remove Color. Your photo will become black and white!

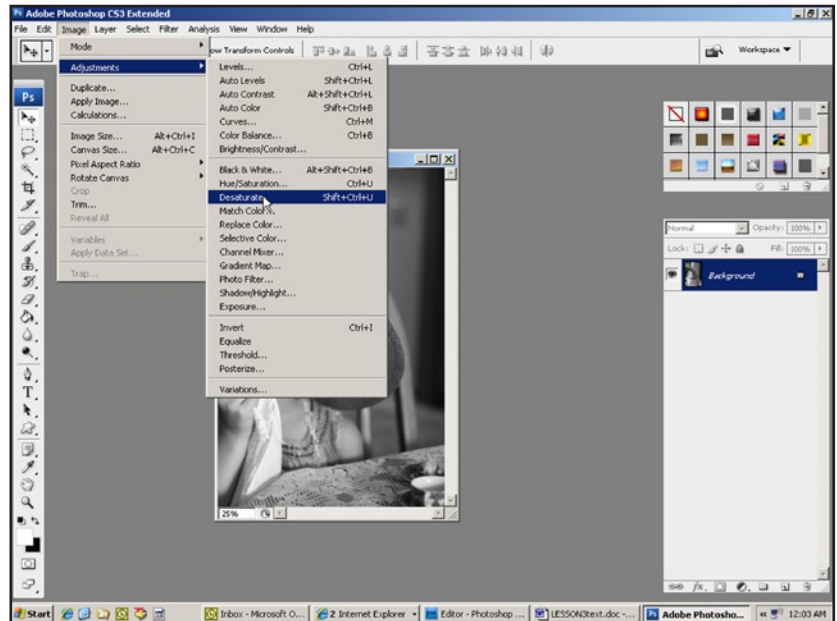


3. In Photoshop and older versions of Photoshop Elements, in the top menu bar, go to image>Adjustment>Desaturate. Your photo will become black and white!
4. Save the file with a new name. Close this photo file.

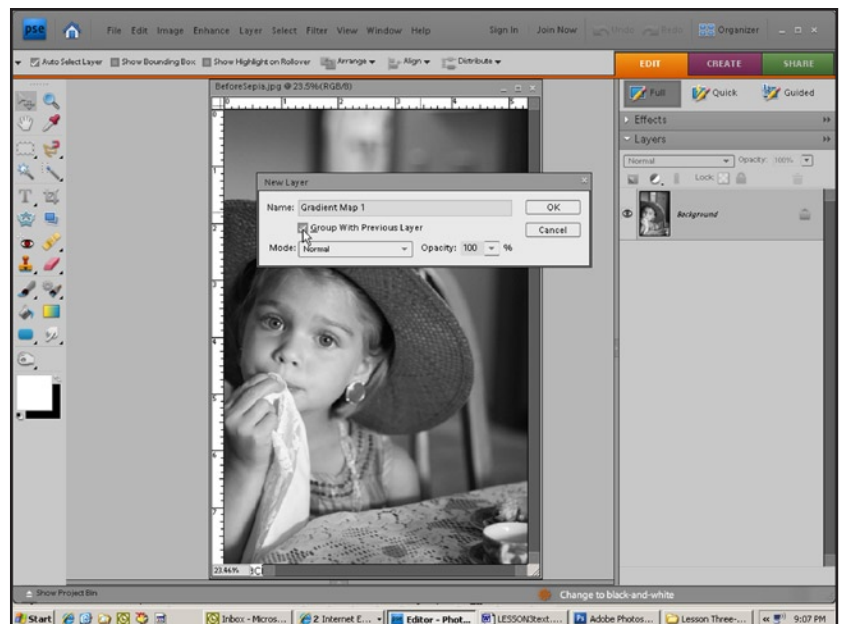
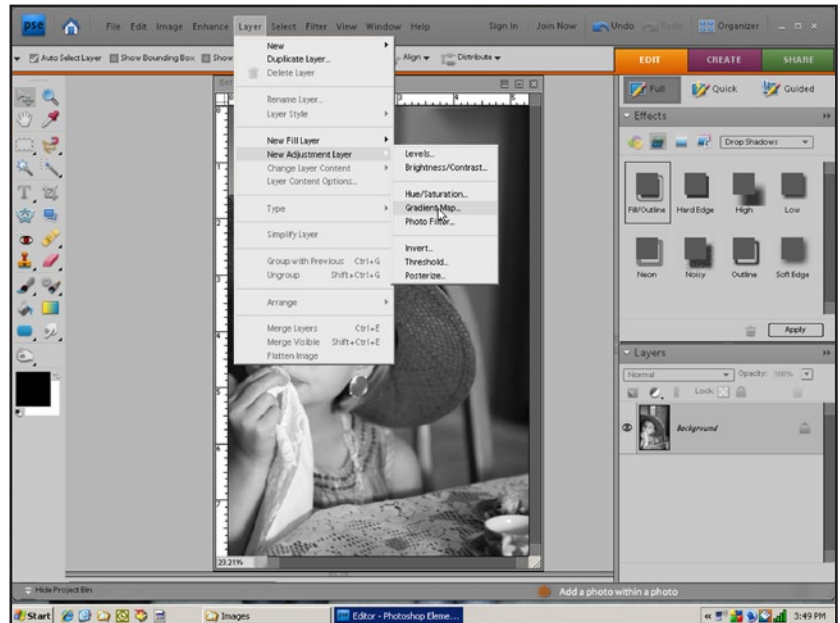
**REMEMBER: for all of the following sepia techniques, your photo must first be converted to black and white!**

### USING A GRADIENT MAP ADJUSTMENT LAYER

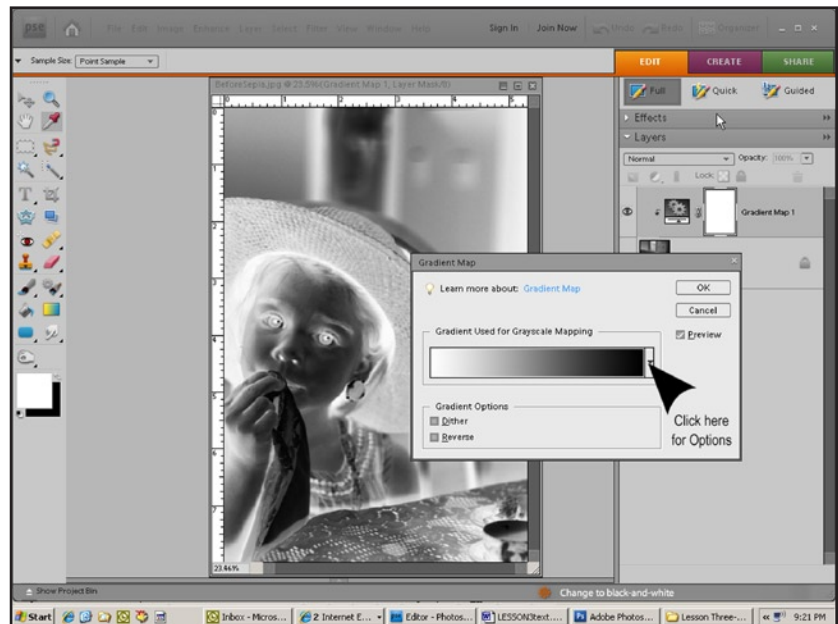
The Gradient Map command maps the equivalent grayscale range of an image to the colors of a specified gradient fill. If you specify a two-color gradient fill, for example, shadows in the image end up corresponding to one of the endpoint colors of your gradient fill, and highlights end up corresponding to the other endpoint color. Midtones end up corresponding to the gradations in between. I hope this makes sense!



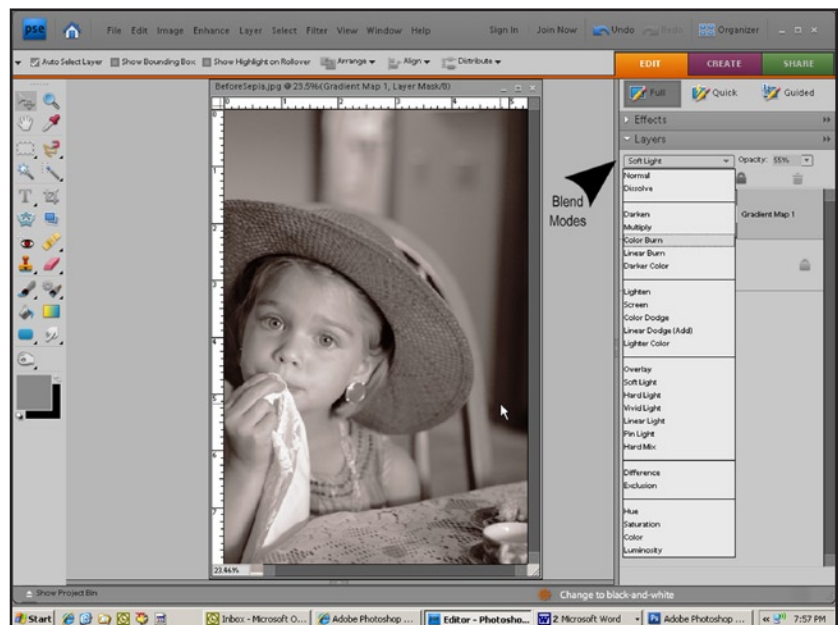
1. Open a photo, duplicate it, and do whatever correction you wish: resizing, exposure, sharpening, etc.
2. In the top menu bar, go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Gradient Map.
3. This will bring up a New Layer text box. In this box, put a check in the box by "Group with previous layer." This links the layers together so that one cannot move without the other. This would be especially important if you were using this photo with other layers, on a scrapbook page for example. We may be changing the Mode and Opacity, but we can do that later, so just click OK.



4. This will bring up the Gradient Map Option Box. Click on the down arrow to the right of the large box in the center of the menu. This is the Gradient Picker. I love that name! I chose the Copper Gradient (hover over to see names) because it has the brown tones we are looking for to convert our photos to Sepia. Click OK. Wow! That is some brown photo!



5. The brown adjustment layer is a little too intense as is, so we're going to play with the Blend Modes and Opacity to make it look more like what we want. Both of these are located above the Layers Palette.



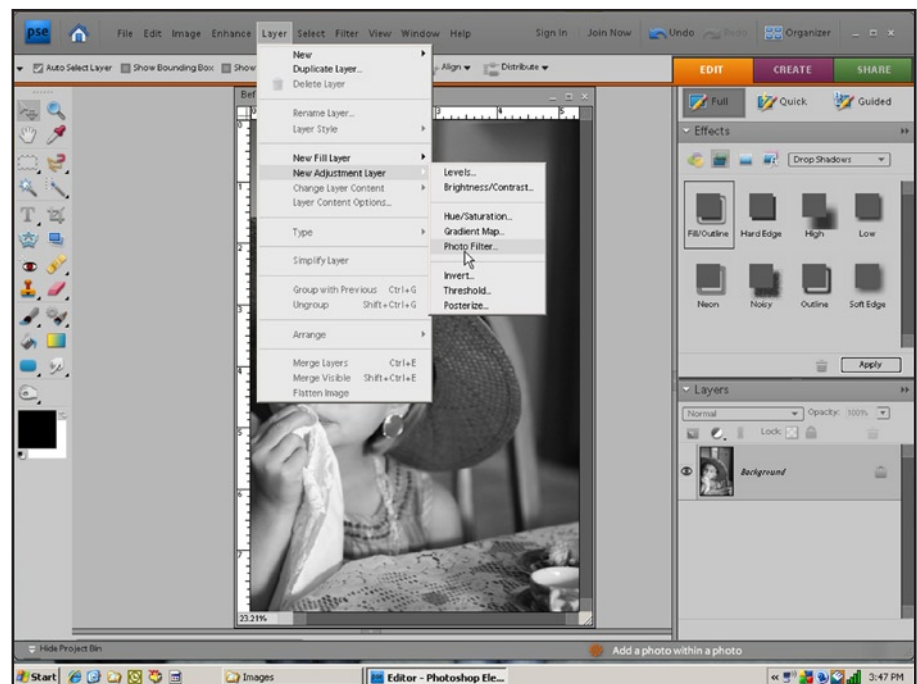
6. To tone down the brown, let's try one of the Blend Modes that adjusts light. That would be the group that starts with Overlay and ends with Hard Mix. Try applying one of these Blend Modes. If you don't like the one you used, press CTRL+Z (CMD+Z) to undo your choice and try another one. I used Soft Light.

7. After you have chosen the Blend Mode you like, you'll probably want to reduce its effect. To do this, click on the arrow next to Opacity to open the Opacity Slider. Slide it to the left until you like the effect. Mine is set at 60%.
8. This is a very subtle effect, and you might think that it doesn't look any different than when you started. Click the little eyeball to the left of the Gradient Map layer to make it invisible. Then you will see your original photo. Click the eyeball off and on a few times to see the differences.
9. When you are pleased with your photo, go to Layer>Flatten image in the top menu bar. This will flatten all the layers into one Background Layer. Save the file with a new name. Close this photo file.

## PHOTO FILTER ADJUSTMENT LAYER

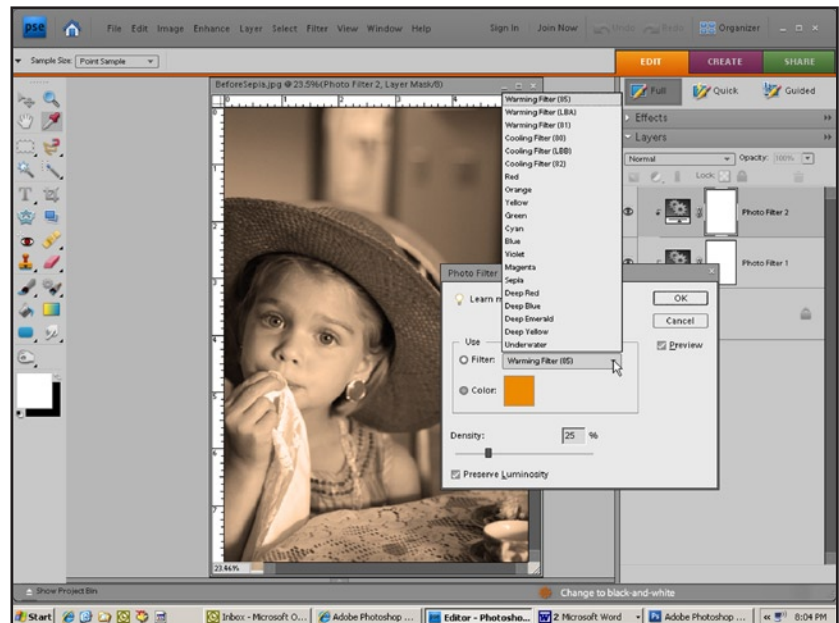
The Photo Filter adjusts the color balance of photos much the way a filter that you add to your camera lens might do.

1. Open a photo, duplicate it, and do whatever correction you wish: resizing, exposure, sharpening, etc.
2. In the menu bar at the top of the screen, go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Photo Filter.



3. This will bring up a New Layer text box. In this box, put a check in the box by "Group with previous layer" as you did before.

4. When you click OK, you will see the Photo Filter Options box. Click on the arrow in the filter box and you will see a list of colored filters. Since we are working with Sepia, select the sepia filter. Since I really want to see the Sepia, I selected a density level of 95. Click OK.



5. If you want to try different density levels, press CTRL+Z (CMD+Z) to remove the filter and start again. It's fun to play with these filters. Try different densities. You can also change the Blending Modes and Opacity, as we did in the Gradient Map section above. Again, click the little eyeball off and on to see the difference you have made in your photo.

6. When you are happy with your photo, go to Layer>Flatten image in the top menu bar. This will flatten all the layers into one Background Layer. Save the file with a new name. Close this photo file.

## HUE/SATURATION ADJUSTMENT LAYER

This process changes the color of your photo and its intensity. It's fun to play around with it, and make funky-looking photos!

1. Open a photo, duplicate it, and do whatever correction you wish: resizing, exposure, sharpening, etc.

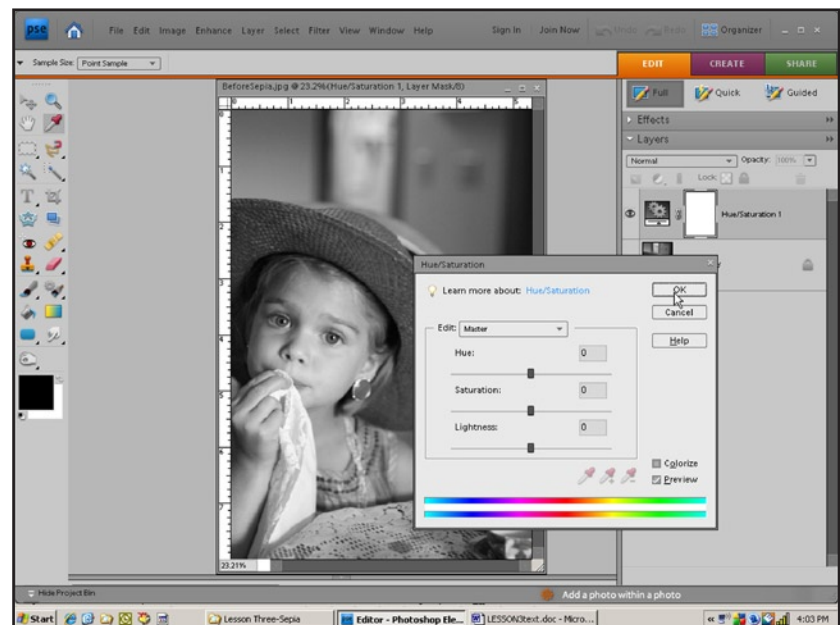
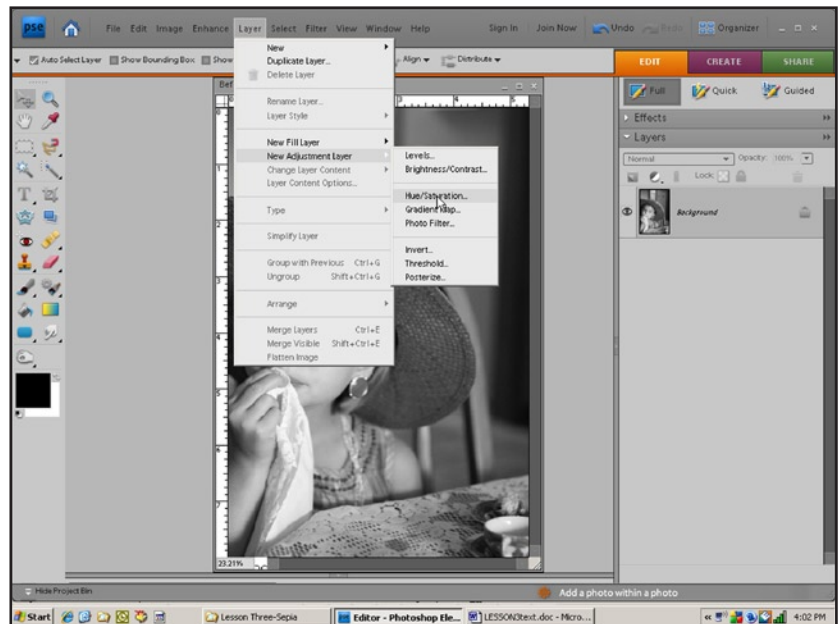
2. In the menu bar at the top of the screen, go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation.

3. In the New Layer box, click Group With Previous. Click OK. This will bring up the Hue/Saturation Option box.

4. Near the lower right of the box, check the Colorize box. This will actually change the color of your photo.

5. Now you can move the Hue slider to get a color you like. Mine is set at 47. Slide the Saturation slider to adjust the intensity of your chosen color. Mine is set at 31. You can move the Lightness slider to make the color darker or lighter. I left mine at zero. Click OK.

6. The Hue/Saturation command is another fun one to play with. You can create all manner of far-out photos in addition to adding Sepia and even removing color casts from your photos. But that's another lesson!





7. When you are happy with your photo, go to Layer>Flatten image in the top menu bar. This will flatten all the layers into one Background Layer. Save the file with a new name. Close this photo file.

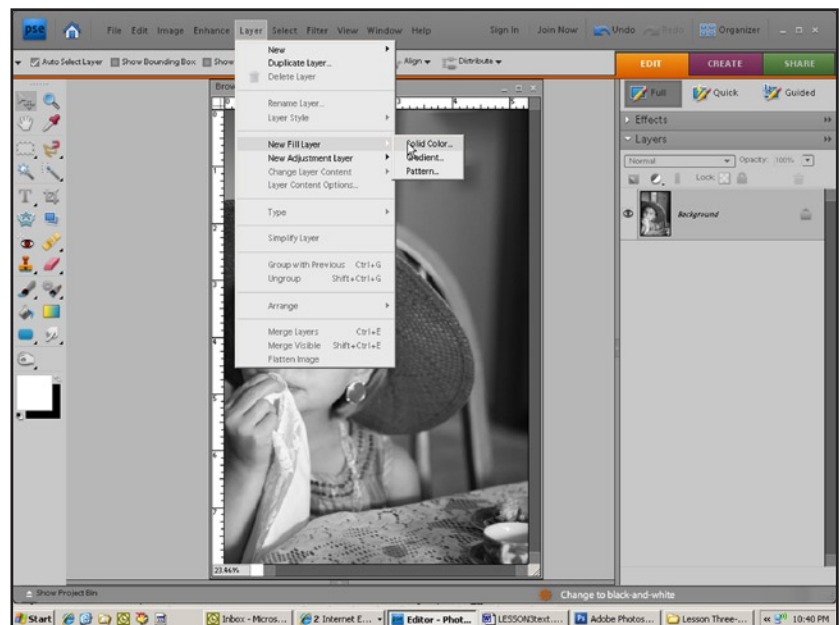
## SOLID COLOR FILL LAYER

1. Open a photo, duplicate it, and do whatever correction you wish: resizing, exposure, sharpening, etc.

2. In the menu bar at the top of the screen, go to Layer>New Fill Layer>Solid Color. This time we are going to fill the layer above our photo with a color.

3. In the New Layer box, check Group With Previous Layer and click OK.

4. This will bring up the Color Picker. Choose a color that you think will eventually make a good Sepia color. I chose an orangish brown by going to the bottom of the rainbow strip, clicking on orange and then choosing a color from the orange spectrum Color Picker. Click OK.

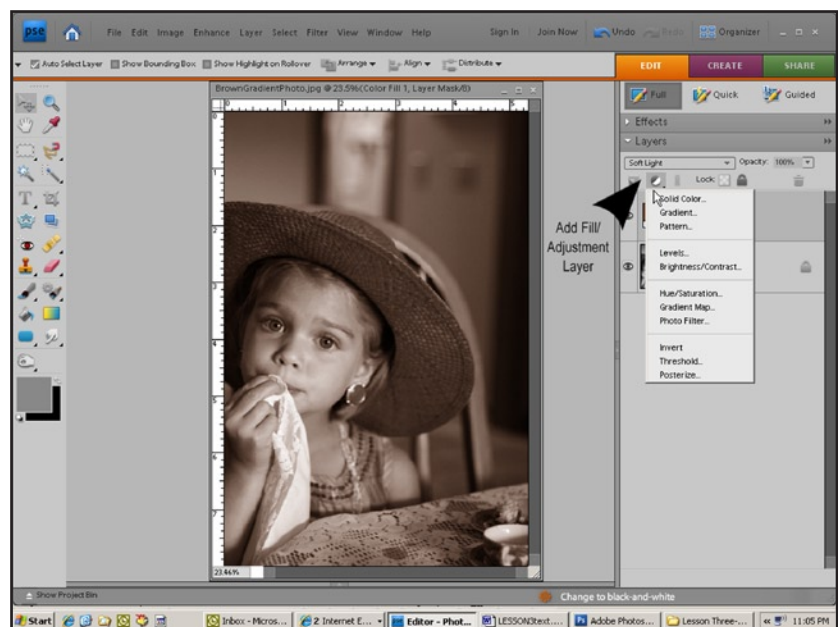


5. The layer above your photo is now completely filled with a color and you can't see your photo. Let's do something about that by experimenting with the Blend Modes and Opacity as we did when we used the Gradient and Photo Filter adjustment layers above.

6. Soft Light and Overlay Blend Modes work well here but try out some of the other Blend Modes just for fun. You'll be amazed at some of the artistic effects you can achieve.
7. You might try lowering the Opacity of the Fill Layer to see if you like the effect. After applying the Soft Light Blend Mode, I left my Opacity alone and came out with a Sepia that I really like.
8. When you are happy with your photo, go to Layer>Flatten image in the top menu bar. This will flatten all the layers into one Background Layer. Save the file with a new name. Close this photo file.

### A little shortcut:

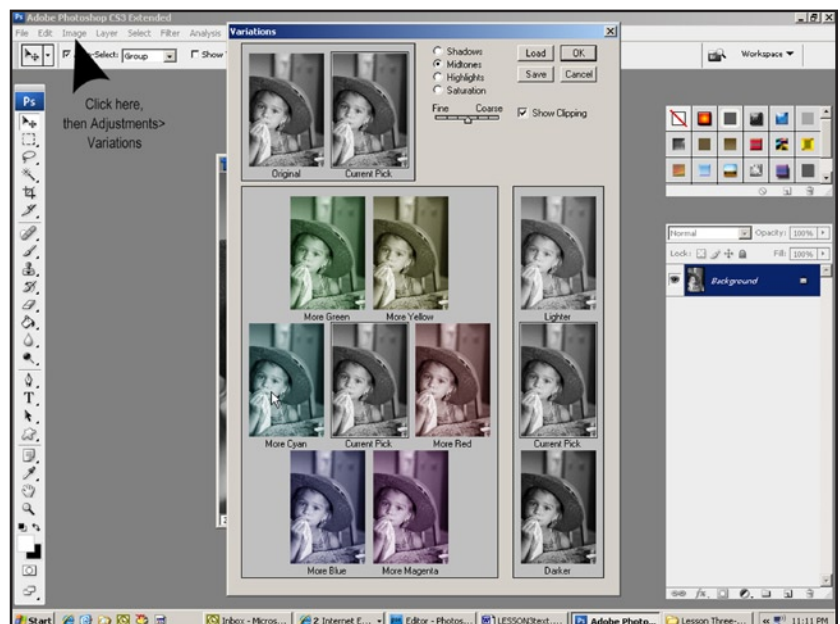
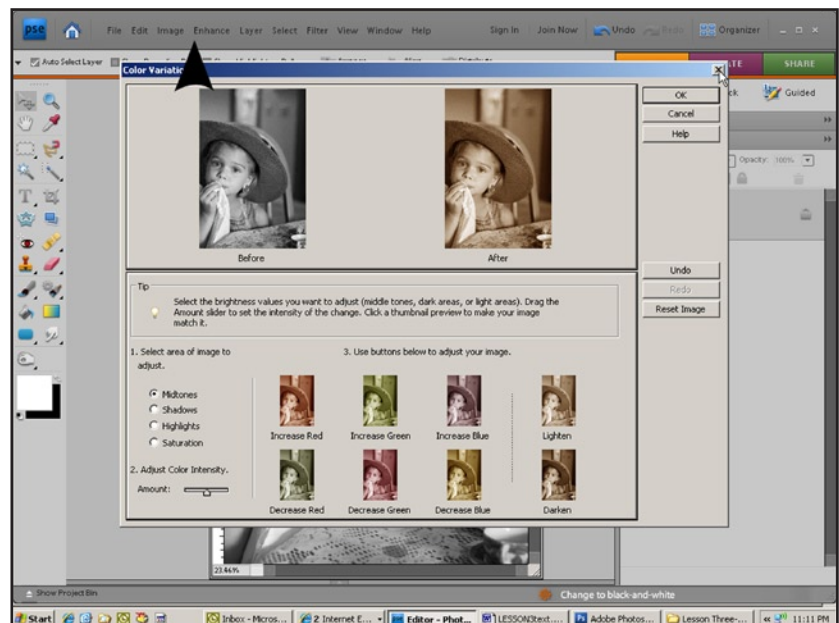
Now that you have learned a bit about Adjustment and Fill Layers, I thought you might like to know a quick way to find them on your workspace. There is a little circle, half black and half white, either above or below the Layers Palette, depending on your version of PSE or Photoshop. Click on the circle and it will bring up the Fill/Adjustment Layer drop down. Isn't this much quicker than going to the top menu bar?



## COLOR VARIATIONS

There's one last method of adding Sepia tones to your photo that I'd like to share with you. This one is very easy and is my own personal favorite Sepia technique.

1. Open a photo, duplicate it, and do whatever correction you wish: resizing, exposure, sharpening, etc.
2. The Color Variations command is in many different places in various versions of PS and PSE. In PSE 6 and 7, it is found at Enhance>Adjust Color>Color Variations.
3. In Photoshop and some earlier versions of PSE, it is found at Image/Adjustments/Variations.
4. This command allows you to increase and decrease the various colors in your photo. Try out some of them and see how this works. You can always click the Undo or Cancel button!



5. I find that I usually get a Sepia that I really like by adding a little red to my photo. Decreasing the blue usually makes it even better.
6. When you are happy with your photo, save the file with a new name. Close this photo file.

## IN CONCLUSION

You've learned some of the ways Photoshop allows you to create a Sepia-toned photo. I hope you've also learned some new tools and commands to play with. You can have some great fun and create interesting photos if you experiment with these techniques. Again, please be sure to ask questions or add comments in our Forums. I'd also love to see your Sepia photos added in our Gallery.

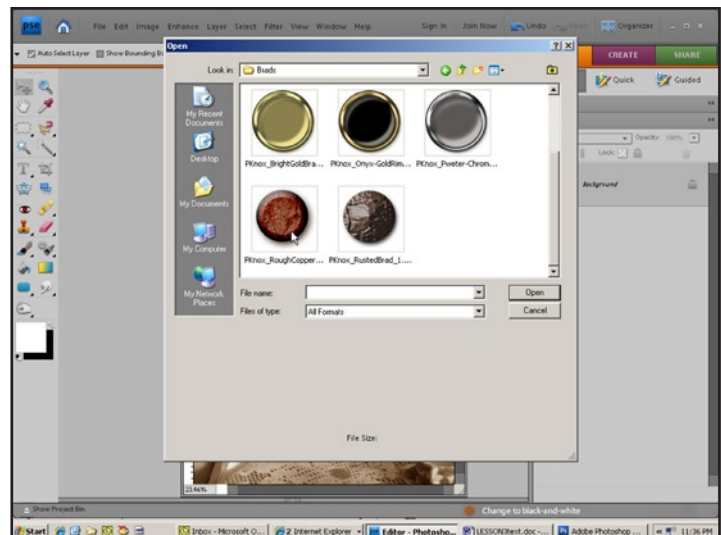
But wait. We're not done! I have a little surprise for you! My in-real-life buddy, Pattie Knox, has gifted us with a little package of goodies: eight of her digital brads to add some interest to our photos. These brads are specially chosen to work well with Sepia photos. I hope you enjoy them! And just in case you need some help using them, here's a quick lesson.



## ADDING BRADS TO YOUR PHOTO

1. Download the brad package from the link in the class forum.
2. Open your photo.
3. In the top left of your screen, go to File>Open and navigate to the folder where you have saved the brads.

4. If you right-click on View Menu at the upper right of the Open box, you can click on Thumbnails and you can see each brad. Select the brad you want to add to your photo and click Open.



5. Select the Move Tool at the top of the left toolbar. Position your cursor on the brad, hold down the mouse button and drag the brad onto your photo.
6. Select the Move tool (top tool on the left toolbar) and, with the arrow keys on your keyboard, move the brad into position in the corner of your photo.
7. This is the time to decide if you like the size of the brad on your photo. If you'd like to resize, press CTRL+T (CMD+T), and you can resize the brad by holding down Shift and pulling out or pushing in from the corner.
8. Adding realistic shadows to items is a huge Photoshop topic, but for now, I'll explain how you add a very simple shadow to your brads. The process is a little different for Photoshop and PSE. I'll give them separately.

9. In PSE, go to the Effects Palette.

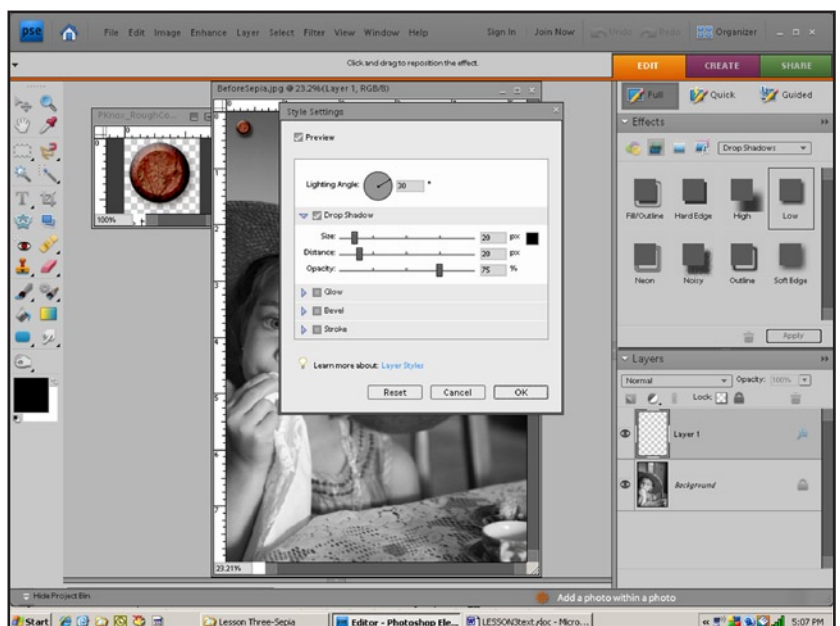
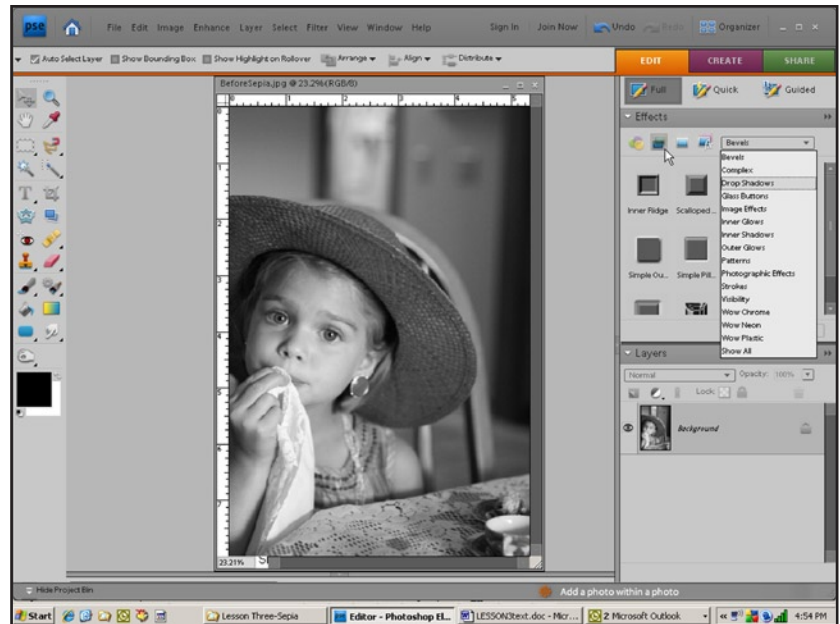
a) At the top of the Effects Palette, click on the second icon from the left, Layer Styles.

b) In the small box on the top right of the Effects Palette, click the arrow and you will get the Layer Styles dropdown menu.

c) Click on Drop Shadows. This will bring up an array of the different Drop Shadows that are available.

d) With your brad layer highlighted, select the Low shadow, and click Apply. You should now see that your brad looks more dimensional with a slight shadow.

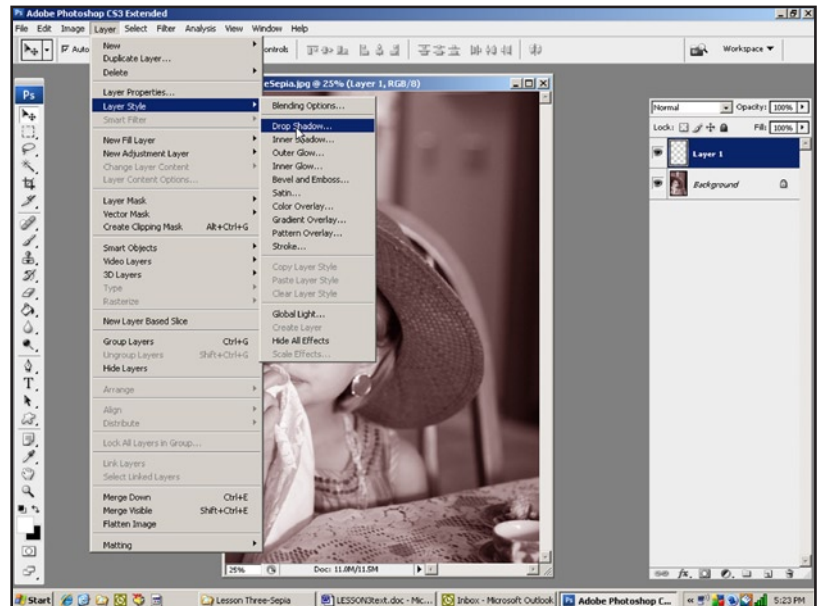
e) This default shadow is rather large. In the brad layer in the Layers Palette, you will see a small blue or gray fx on the right. Double-click on the fx. This will bring up the Shadow Options box.



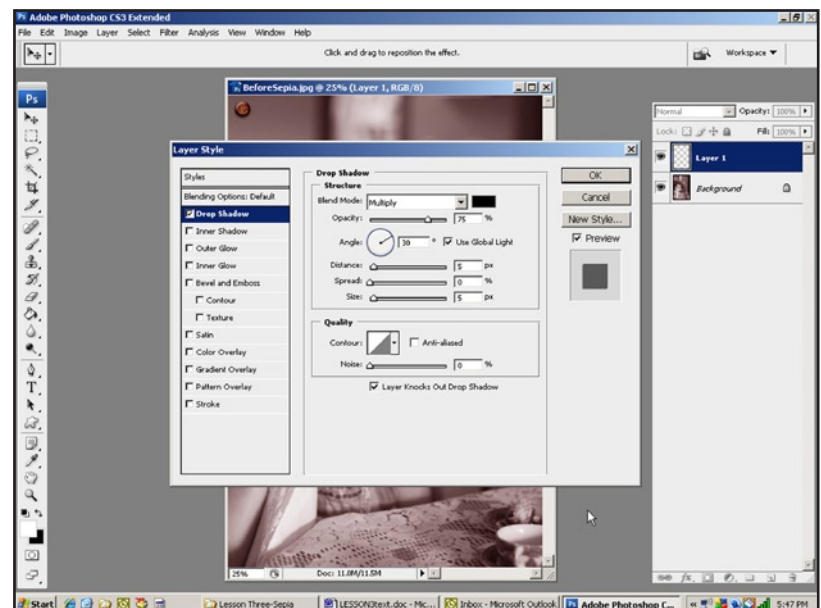
- f) Set the Size and Distance to about 5 pixels for a nice small shadow. The Opacity looks good at about 75%. Click OK.

10. In Photoshop, in the Layers Palette, select the brad layer.

- a) In the top menu bar, go to Layer>Layer Style>Drop Shadow.
- b) This will bring up the Layer Style Options Box.
- c) There are places for many changes in this Options Box, but let's just change the Distance to 3 px and the Size to 3 px. Click OK. You should now see that your brad looks more dimensional with a slight shadow.



11. Right-click on the brad layer and choose duplicate layer. Do this two more times and you will have 4 brads. Move them into position, flatten the layers and save your photo!



## NEXT UP

Lesson Four-These Photos Can Be Sketchy!