

Early Level 4 Non-fiction – The Great Ordinary

In 2011, Edith began work on a new project. She stood at the end of her driveway and took photos of students walking to school. She didn't hide her camera. A few kids noticed and asked what she was doing. Her response? "I told them that I was making an important document!" Edith named the project "The End of My Driveway". Most of the photos in the series show kids deep in their own worlds, as if there's no camera there at all. Some of them are with friends, chatting and laughing. Others are alone. A few look purposeful, like they're running late for school. One or two are slouching, maybe still waking up. Each photo is different, but they share one important thing: none of the students is posing. These are just ordinary kids starting an ordinary day, something Edith was very keen to capture. That's because she sees her work as a kind of record – or "document" as she puts it – for people in the future. "When I'm dead, in a hundred years from now, maybe people will look at these photos and see what this time and place really looked like."

Edith's had a great deal of success as a photographer. But how does she know when she's taken a winning photograph? "It's a feeling," she says. "That's silly, right? But if the feeling's not there, I won't end up taking a good picture."

Written by Hannah Sperber, featured in School Journal November 2016