

aperture On Sight

Lesson 2:

This Equals That

Form + Content + Context = Meaning

Materials needed:

Computer
Digital projector
Cameras or smartphones
This Equals That (PDF)

Reference work:

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin's *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)

Students will

- ➔ **Know:** Basic visual/photographic vocabulary.
- ➔ **Understand:** Photographic images have a distinct form; the camera is a tool for seeing.
- ➔ **Do:** Identify key vocabulary words to describe images and use cameras to illustrate them.

Artist bios and project info

Jason Fulford (born in Atlanta, Georgia, 1973) lives and works in Brooklyn and Scranton, Pennsylvania. He is a photographer and cofounder of the nonprofit publisher J&L Books. Fulford works with the photobook as his main medium and is particularly interested in using sequences to add meaning to individual images. The sequences in his books invite viewers to look carefully at the relationship between images and allow viewers to make their own connections, both formal and thematic. He is a longtime collaborator with Tamara Shopsin.

Tamara Shopsin (born in Manhattan, 1979) lives and works in Brooklyn. She is a graphic designer and illustrator whose work specializes in problem-solving and conceptual illustration. Shopsin's designs have been used on book covers; her illustrations often appear in different newspapers; and other images she creates can be seen on clothing, museum guides, and store windows. Using her eye for design, she collaborated with photographer Jason Fulford to select images from his portfolio to create *This Equals That* (2014).

“*This Equals That*, a clever and surprising picture book by Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, takes viewers on a whimsical journey, while introducing them to the fundamentals of visual literacy and teaching them associative thinking. Through a playful and considered sequence of photographs, the book inspires conversation and multiple interpretations, allowing for an inquiry-based learning experience. Teacher/parent and student/child can continually answer the question: how does this equal that?”

—**Aperture Learning Guide, This Equals That** (2014)

This book can be used to teach how form, content, and context work together to create meaning within a single image or group of images.

Lesson plan

- **Discussion:** Share the page spreads from the book *This Equals That* (2014). Begin by asking your students to make observations about each photograph while backing up their observations with visual evidence. Ask students: What do you see in this photograph? What makes you say that? Move through the sequence and ask: How is this photograph related to the one next to it? Introduce photography vocabulary or keywords that the students use—e.g., *form* (3D), *line*, *shape* (2D), *texture*, *subject*, *color*, *focus*, *background*, *foreground*, *midground*, *point of view*, *depth of field*, *time*, *pattern*, *composition*, *contrast*, etc. (See Vocabulary Terms sheet for the full list). Your goal is to discover the vocabulary words with the students. If a student describes bumps in a picture, you could redirect them to the vocabulary word *texture*. This exercise can be done quickly, with students shouting out words as they grasp the game. Document vocabulary words on the board or flip chart to review later. Print and pass out the vocabulary list so students can annotate on their own.
- **Photo exercise:** Working in pairs or groups and using the vocabulary list generated by the class for reference, invite students to embark on a photo challenge to discover and make as many pictures of the vocabulary words as possible (e.g., *form*, *line*, *shape*, *texture*, *pattern*, etc.).
- **Follow-up discussion:** Come back together and share how the pairs or groups uniquely photographed the same terms.



Going further

Discuss: Certain page spreads in *This Equals That* (2014) invite deeper investigation and conversation. For instance, students frequently grasp that the images of the dice cup and the pair of slides share a reference to action and movement not illustrated in either picture but alluded to when the pictures are placed side by side: The dice roll out of the cup, and children slide down the slide. This spread shows how formal elements demonstrate a perceived effect in the image—in this case, movement. Another example is found in the images of the person fishing and the fish stall; together they suggest cause and effect. Dig deeper with older students to explore more of these associative meanings.

Additional photo exercise: Have students choose three to five photographs from their camera roll that they made for the lesson's exercise or choose three to five photographs from *This Equals That* (2014). Ask them to put the images into their own sequence to share with the group, then ask them to explain why they sequenced the images the way they did.

**The book is a circle
Made up of squares
Turn through the pages
Consider the pairs**







Lesson 2: This Equals That

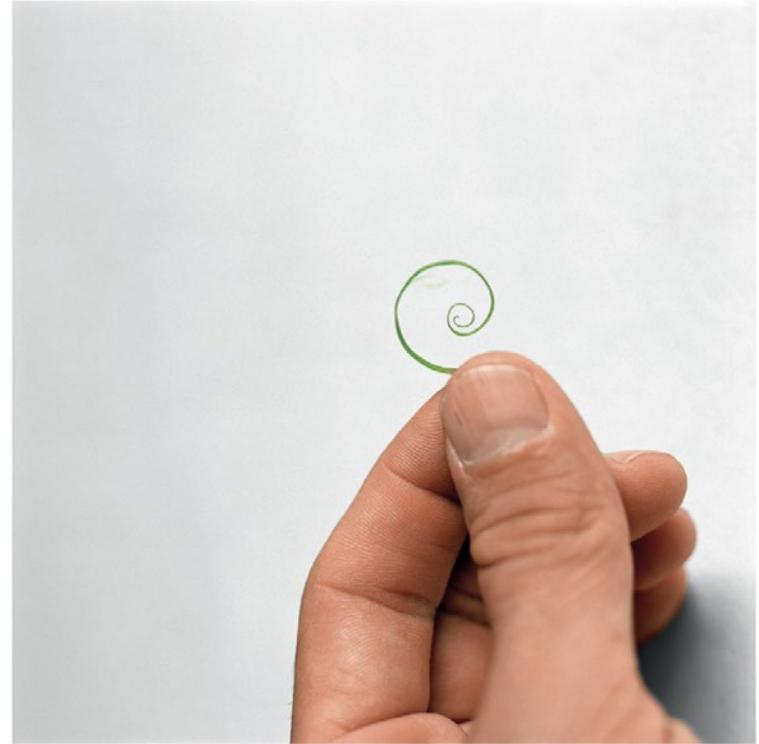
Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 6–7 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



Lesson 2: This Equals That

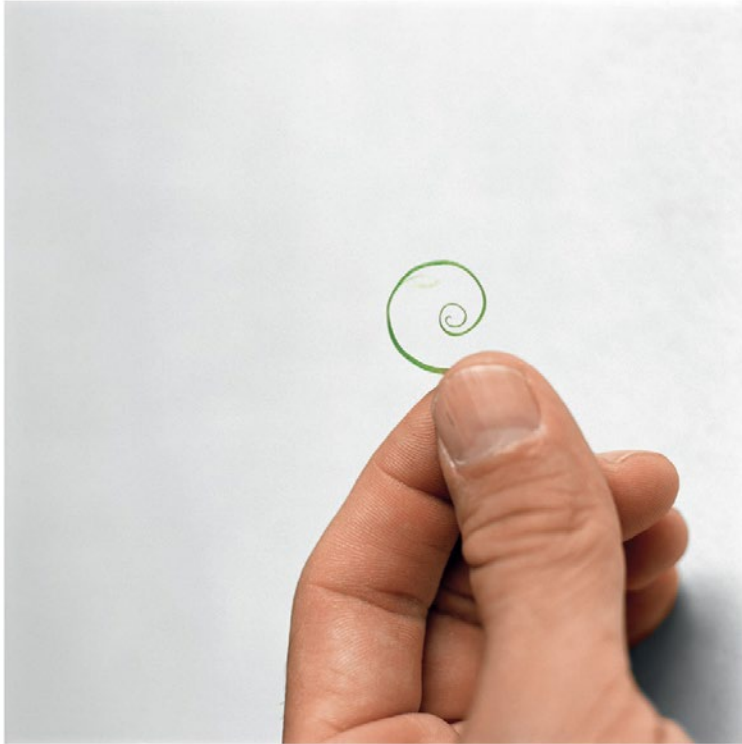


Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 8–9 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



Lesson 2: This Equals That

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 10–11 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



Lesson 2: This Equals That

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 12–13 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



Lesson 2: This Equals That

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 14-15 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



Lesson 2: This Equals That

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 16–17 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)





Lesson 2: This Equals That

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shoppin, pages 20–21 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



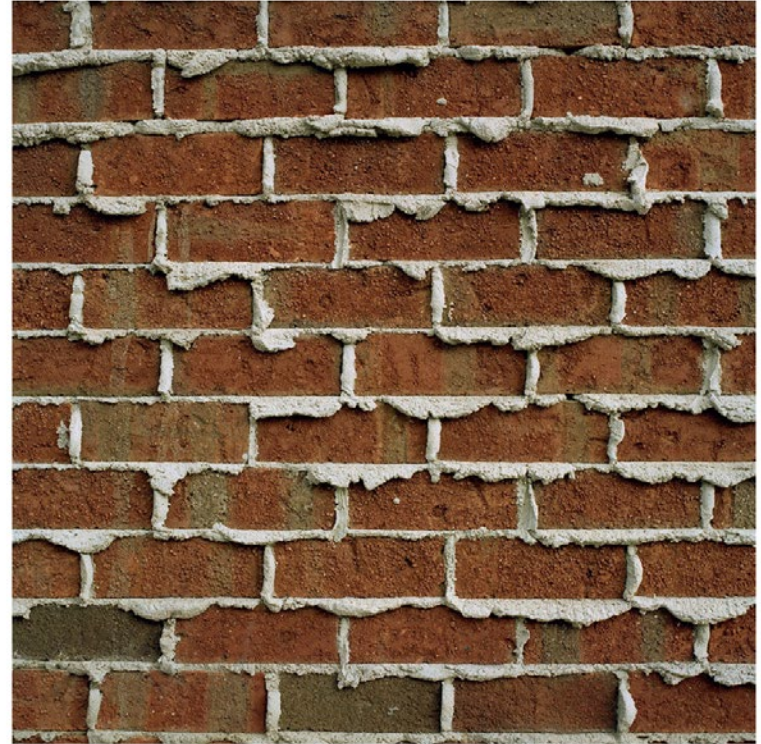
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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 22-23 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



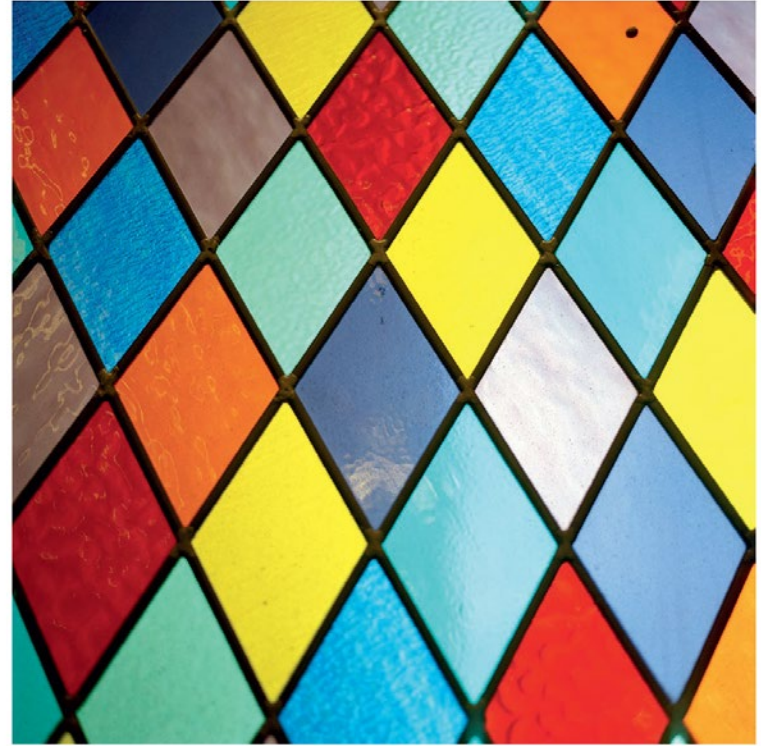
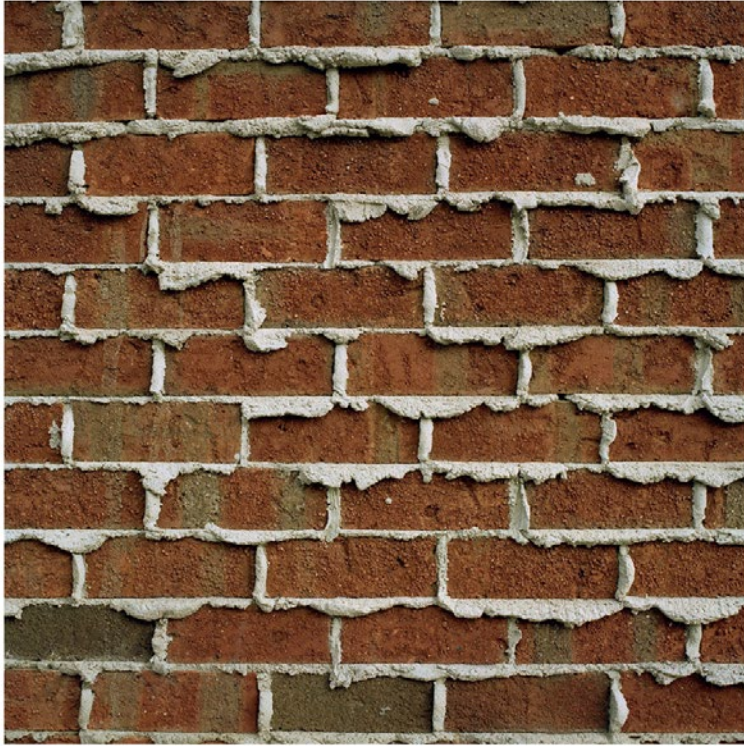
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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 24–25 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



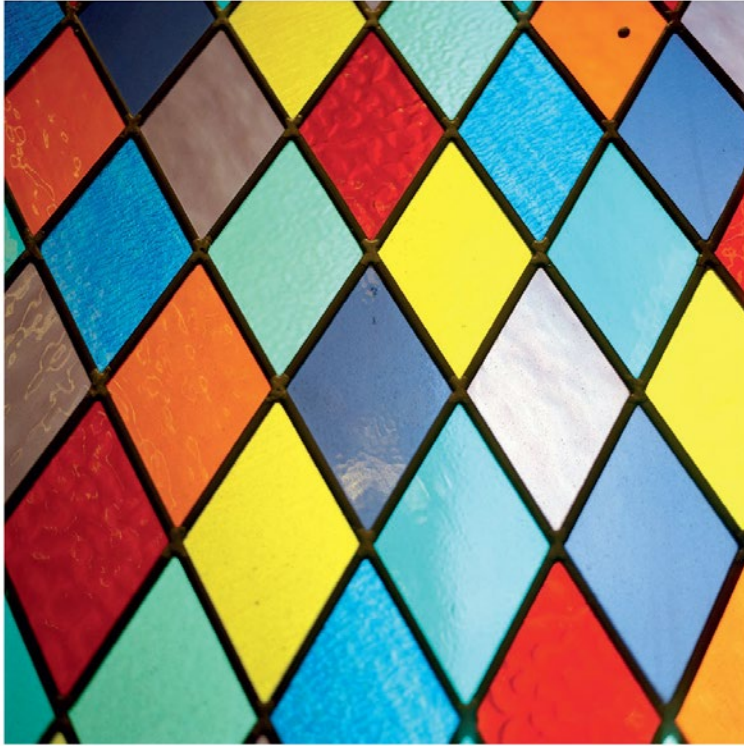
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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 26–27 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 28–29 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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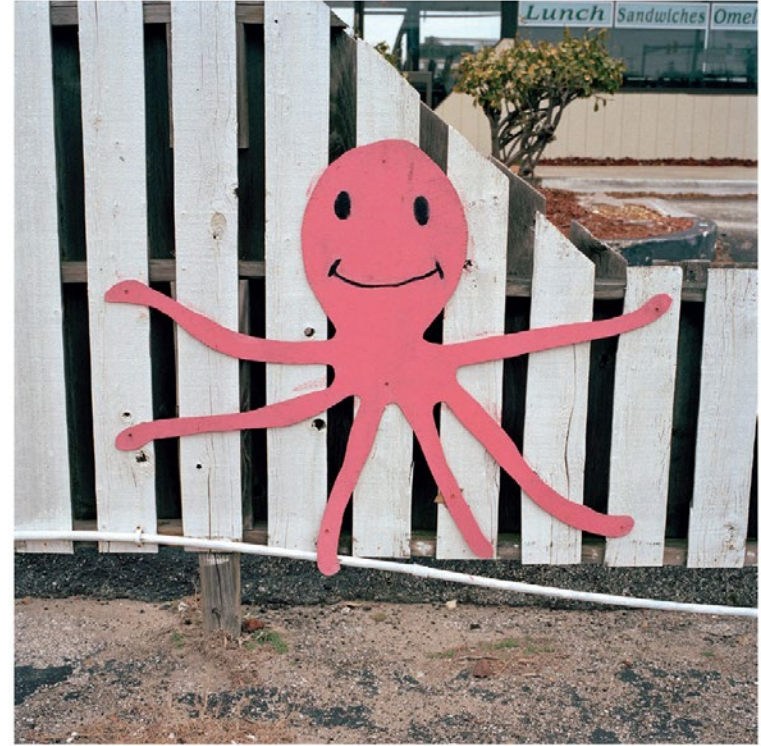
Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 30–31 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)





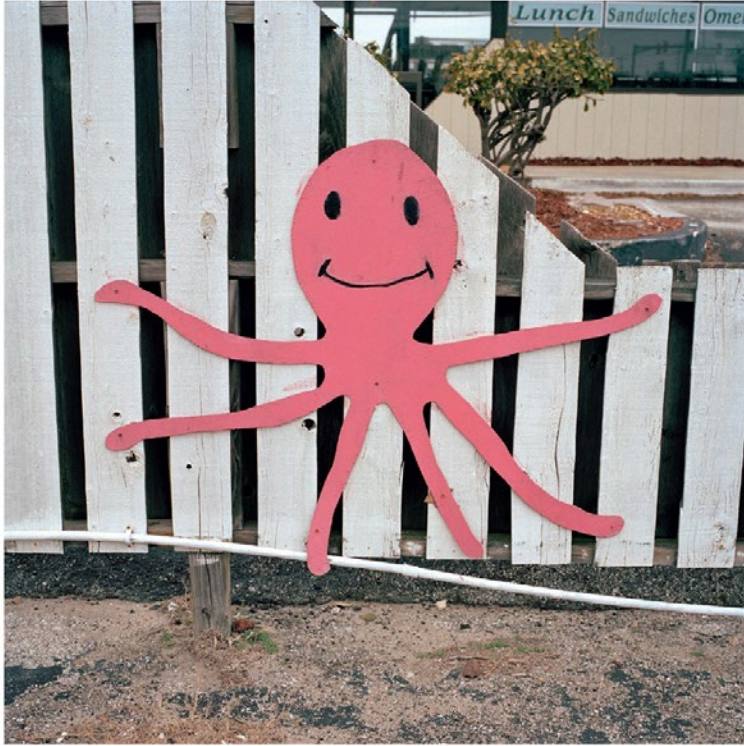
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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 34–35 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 36–37 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shoppin, pages 38–39 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)





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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 42–43 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 44–45 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 46–47 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 48–49 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 50–51 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)







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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 56–57 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 58–59 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 60–61 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)

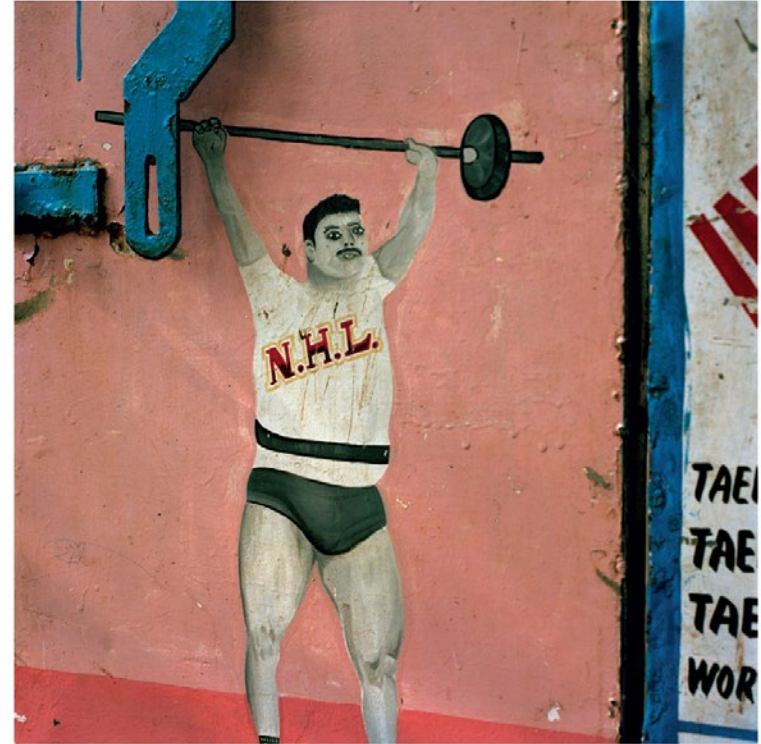


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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shoppin, pages 62–63 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)

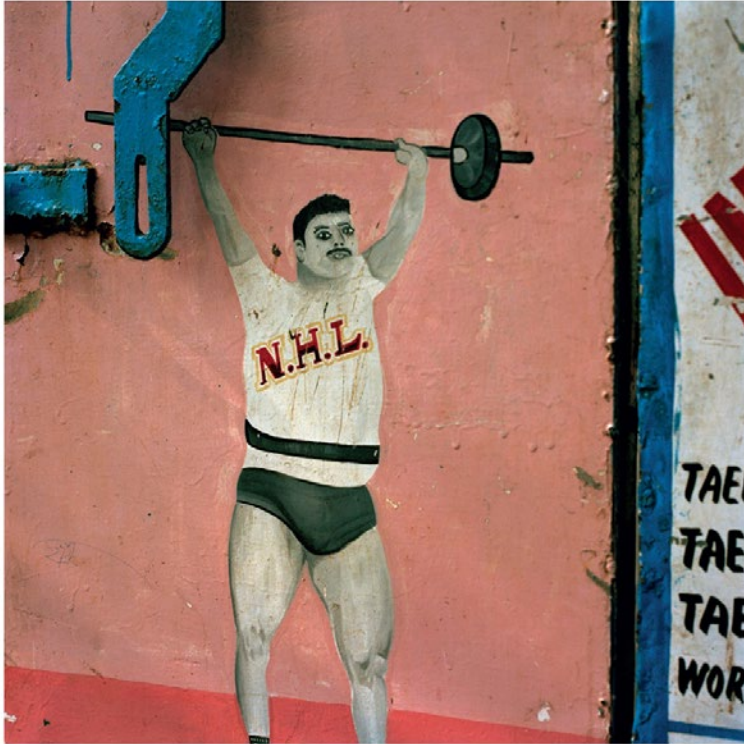






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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 68–69 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



Lesson 2: This Equals That

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 70–71 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 72–73 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)





Lesson 2: This Equals That

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, pages 76–77 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)



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This Equals That

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A learning guide for *This Equals That* is available at aperture.org/educationalpublications

Children participating in Aperture's after-school programs in underserved communities will each receive a copy of *This Equals That*, made possible by a grant from the Pinkerton Foundation and a gift from Agnes Gund.

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Aperture, a not-for-profit foundation, connects the photo community and its audiences with the most inspiring work, the sharpest ideas, and with each other—in print, in person, and online.

Jason Fulford and Tamara Shopsin, page 80 from *This Equals That* (Aperture, 2014)

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