

"Forensics 101"

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Activity #1

"The Feet Can Measure the Height"

Skill Focus- Math skills are needed for the fascinating field of Forensic Anthropology. Students will measure, apply formulas and use an Excel spreadsheet.

Directions for activity:

Forensic science is used to identify human remains as well as to analyze evidence at the crime scene. Follow this step by step activity using a mathematical formula and a spreadsheet to calculate a persons height based on foot size.

<http://www.cyberbee.com/whodunnit/foot.html>

Assessment Poster- Students can work in groups to make a creative poster that includes: spreadsheets, tracings of the feet that were measured, etc.

For further reading & investigation:

The Bone Detectives :

How Forensic Anthropologists Solve Crimes and Uncover

Mysteries of the Dead by Donna M. Jackson, Charlie Fellenbaum

The Bone Lady : Life as a Forensic Anthropologist

by Mary H. Manheim

Activity # 2

"Solve the Peetnik Mysteries"

Skill Focus- Reading skills are needed as detectives use deductive reasoning and make inferences based on the facts of the case & prior knowledge.

Directions for this activity:

Direct students to this website to work in pairs to solve the mystery.

<http://www.enlightenme.com/enlightenme/superthinkers/pages/index.html?>

Assessment poster: Students can work together to create a flow chart which identifies the major clues and breakthroughs in the case.

For further reading & investigation:

<http://www.fbi.gov/kids/games/undercover.htm>

Activity # 3

"Dusting for Fingerprints"

Skill Focus- Students must become scientists with keen observation skills and be able to compare data.

Directions for this activity:

Direct students to this webpage before the activity.

<http://www.fbi.gov/kids/k5th/whatwedo3.htm>

Students have their "mug shots" taken with Polaroid camera and then have their fingerprints taken using an ink pad. Later on they place their "latent prints" (the ones found at the crime scene) on pieces of plexiglass. Prints are "lifted" in the following manner. Each print is dusted with cocoa powder. Scotch tape is placed over the powder. When the tape is lifted, you can see the prints. Place the tape with the prints on white paper. The lifted prints can be compared with the actual prints

Assessment poster: Students can create a poster matching game for others to try to link the latent prints with the actual prints. Include mug shots!

For further investigation:

<http://www.cyberbee.com/whodunnit/fp.html>

<http://www.cyberbee.com/whodunnit/dusting.html>

<http://www.thesolutionsite.com/lesson/25051/lesson1.html>

<http://www.fbi.gov/kids/k5th/kidsk5th.htm>

<http://www.fbi.gov/kids/6th12th/6th12th.htm>

Activity # 4

Role Playing: The Eyewitness and The Police Sketch Artist

Skill Focus- Students will need to exercise their powers of observation, memory and listening skills to be successful in this activity. Knowledge of portraiture a plus!

Directions for this activity:

Have the student "sketch artists" leave the room. Arrange to have a student from another class run into the room and create a confrontation. The student should "steal" something from the room. Let the "eyewitnesses" describe the perpetrator to the "sketch artists." Using the sketches, try to identify the suspect from a "line-up"

Assessment poster: Students create a poster with a photo of the perpetrator comparing them to the artist drawing. Each includes a narrative account of what was witnessed.

Further reading & investigation

Test your skill at identifying suspects

<http://www.blackdog.net/refrigerator/identi-kit/>

http://www2.oprah.com/tows/pastshows/200309/tows_past_20030926_c.jhtml

<http://www.fbi.gov/kids/games/matching/matching.htm>

<http://www.fbi.gov/kids/games/undercover.htm>