

Notes on Crime Scene

These are middle school children, so I have never been comfortable having a murder crime scene. I have always tried to have a crime that I thought was age appropriate. I have also tried to keep the names of the suspects gender neutral and avoided using pronouns in the scenario so that any gender assigned to the suspects is assigned by the students.

I have also made figuring out who was implicated by each piece of evidence an important part of the crime scene analysis. This is something you might want to stress.

There are two basic types of crime scenes I have seen used. In one scenario someone breaks into somewhere a shipment of chemicals has just been received and removes the labels. The student is asked to identify the chemicals so that the labels can be put back on and then the other types of evidence are used to solve the crime scene.

In the second type of crime scene, the chemicals are spread between the crime scene and the suspects. This means that the process of elimination will not work as an identification technique. It is expected in this type of crime scene that the same chemicals will be found at the crime scene and on at least one of the suspects. The results of the chemical analysis will be used in conjunction with the other types of evidence to determine the suspect. The crime scenes associated with this are of this type.

Many students will do a knee jerk reaction that the suspect whose DNA matches the crime scene must be guilty, but if someone leaves DNA for some other reason & no other evidence links that suspect to the crime, it is unlikely that it is the suspect with the DNA match who is the culprit.

In Regionals the judge, with prior notice may opt to include the 1st six recyclable plastics for identification and culprit implication. The students would be expected to do a density test in these Regionals. The results of the burn test will be provided to them. Because this is a possibility, a section has been added on plastics ID.