

Watergate

History's Mysteries—Solve the Crime of the Time



About the authors

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WELCOME TO WATERGATE!

In this hands-on investigative activity, students are given an authentic task: to think like criminalists and review mock forensic files of a historical event. Students gather, analyze, and interpret evidence, engaging in tasks such as examining physical objects (e.g., a model of a guillotine, bullets, a blood-spattered uniform), poring over photographs, analyzing documents, and reading maps and charts. A PowerPoint® presentation includes an introduction to the task, a coroner's report, and several types of sources from the "crime scene." Students then fill out a "forensic report" graphic organizer, hypothesize how the event took place, and conclude by reading a "Mystery Solved" handout that provides historical background on the "crime." Optional extension activities include having students create a "breaking news" TV report, write a front-page newspaper article, or compose a "news alert" text message. Grades 6–12.



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Purpose and Overview

Activity Introduction

Welcome to *History's Mysteries: Solve the Crime of the Time*. Included are investigative case files that cover some of the main areas of world history standards-based curriculum. The central purpose of these files is to spark interest and excitement in students for further study of a given unit.

A History Mystery is rooted in having students act like a criminalist whose job is to gather, analyze, and interpret forensic evidence. Real-life criminalists are skilled in studying everyday items, examining bullets, and analyzing documents. Likewise, in a history class a teacher's job is to help students develop critical thinking skills also based in gathering, analyzing and interpreting data.

In this hands-on investigative activity, students are given an authentic task—to think like criminalists and review mock forensic files of a historical event. Each file contains primary and secondary source replica/realia that students analyze in order to hypothesize how a given event took place.

This activity works best as an introduction to a world history unit, but it may also be used as a way to review before a DBQ based assessment at the end of a unit. Students are motivated to solve each Mystery both with accuracy and speed as the first student/team to do so correctly wins a "Criminalist of the Year" nameplate for classroom display.

How does a History Mystery work?

Students are given the task of reviewing a historical event case file and filling out a Forensic Report. Once this initial step is completed, students then read a **Mystery Solved: Press Release** that reveals all the accurate details of the real life History Mystery.

Each *History's Mysteries Case File* review and **Forensic Report** are completed in a single (60 minute) class session. The follow up **Mystery Solved: Press Release** reading and follow up activities (**Front Page News, Breaking News Report, or Text Message News Alert**) can take another half to full one hour class period.

Each unit comes with reproducible student analysis sheets, teacher directions, student directions, CD-ROM that allows students to view the files on a computer (or the entire class with an LCD projector).



Teaching tip

For more scaffolding and challenge to the activity, you can also add a step where students work on a **Front Page News Article, Breaking News Report, or a Text Message News Alert** in which students further synthesize what they believed took place in either an essay, short skit, or short summary form (for better language mastery, beginner or advanced writing skills, ELL and/or AP Students).

Daily Directions

Two Day Activity

Materials

- Computers, LCD projector.
- Reproducible copies of:
 - the **Forensic Report**
 - the **Criminalist of the Year Plaque**
 - the **Criminalist of the Year Name Plates**
 - the **Mystery Solved: Press Release**

Direction Notes

A day before you begin the activity, we must prepare for it by doing the following:

- Determine which method for displaying the case files works best for you (set of computers LCD projector printed out slides, etc.)
- Pull out the reproducible copies of the **Forensic Report** and **Student Directions** to make enough copies of them for class.
- Pull out the reproducible copies of the **Criminalist of the Year Plaque** and the **Criminalist of the Year Name Plates**.
- Pull out a reproducible copy of the **Mystery Solved: Press Release**, for the given case file, and make enough copies of them for class.

Teaching tip

Make one copy of the **Criminalist of the Year Plaque** and the **Criminalist of the Year Name Plates** each for every class that you have.



Daily Directions

Activity Day 1

Materials

- Copies of the **Forensic Report**
- **Case File**

Direction Notes

1. Pass out **Forensic Report** sheets to students.
2. Then depending on which method of case file viewing you are choosing, following the directions below.

LCD projector—Walk students through the directions and the case file by flipping through the slides.

Individual computer use—Walk students through how to flip through each page of the file as a class and then walk along the room to make sure students are on task and filling out the Forensic Report correctly.



Whole class



Individual

Forensic Report

Submitted By: (Student/Teacher Name) _____ Period: _____ Final Score: _____

FORENSIC REPORT

Directions: You are a **Forensic Analyst** responsible for gathering, analyzing, and documenting forensic evidence in order to solve the criminal mystery presented to you. In your role, you have to look at the Crime Scene **Crime Scene Photo Report** and **Witness's Report**. Your notes will fill in each of the areas below. Remember: The application of forensic practices within the legal process is essential to the justice system and a forensic analyst's job is to provide that.

STAGE 1: REVIEW CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHS

Forensic Categories	Describe what you see in the Crime Scene photographs.
Objects: List out all of the objects you see in the photos.	
People: Describe what the people look like in the photos.	
Location Details: Describe the Area in the photos, whether it's a building, in the street, etc. How do you enter the scene?	

STAGE 2: REVIEW POLICE REPORT

Incident Name: Describe what happened.	
Incident Name: Describe who was involved.	
Incident Name: What type of incident was it?	

What was the motive of the crime?
Why did the crime take place?

REPORT REVIEW

<input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Crime Scene Photographs	<input type="checkbox"/> Contact Analyst 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Witness's Report	<input type="checkbox"/> Time to Contact Analyst 2 or 3
<input type="checkbox"/> Completed Forensic Analyst's Research	



Whole class

Daily Directions

Activity Day 2

Materials

- Copies of ***Mystery Solved: Press Release***

Direction Notes

1. Ask the class if anyone would like to share their theory of what happened and why or what the motive behind the actions were.
2. After a couple of students have shared out ideas, explain that the real life historical event will be explained today as you start a new unit of study.
3. Pass out the ***Mystery Solved: Press Release*** and read it aloud in class. Begin class discussion.

Day 2 (3) Activity—Alternative

Materials

- Copies of:
 - ***Breaking News Report***or
 - ***Front Page News***or
 - ***Text Message News Alert***

Follow the “Activity Day 2” directions above and then...

4. Pass out *Breaking News Report*/*Front Page News*/*Text Message News Alert*.
5. Read the directions from the top of the *given* sheet assignment aloud and have students begin the assignment.



Read or say



STUDENT DIRECTIONS



In order to solve a History Mystery you will need to have the following:

- A **Forensic Report**
- A **Mystery File**
- A pen or pencil
- And an Open Mind

Let's review all the sections of the **Forensic Report** and the **Case File** so that you are familiar with all the areas of the file and what you need to do.

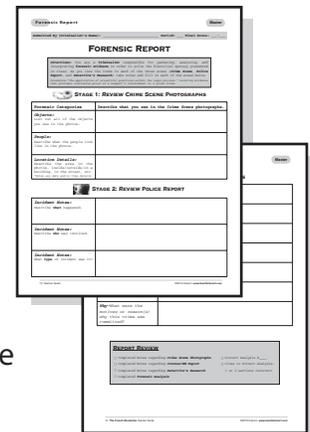
Case File Sections:

Each section will be labeled using a special symbol to distinguish each area or office it came from.

Crime Scene		If you are looking at notes and photos about the Crime Scene , they will be marked with the symbol of a body outline and caution tape .
Police Report		If you are looking at documents and photos with specific information about the victim's body, then these are part of the Police Report and they will be marked with a photo of a police officer writing a report
Detective's Research		And if you are looking at notes, documents, and/or photos from the Detective's Research , they will be marked with the symbol of the investigator's badge.

How do I fill out the **Forensics Report**?

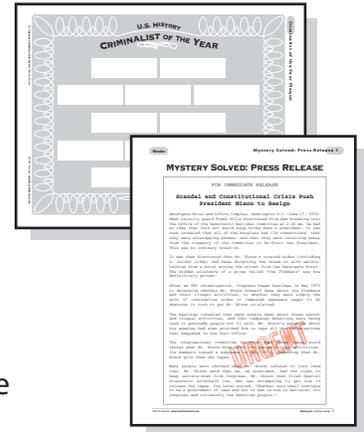
- After you view the items in each of the three areas (**Crime Scene**, **Police Report**, and **Detective's Research**) take notes and fill in each of the areas on the **Forensic Report**.
- Pay close attention to which office is reporting information and *match the symbols on your file with the symbol on your report* when you writing in your information.
- For example, if you see the symbol for the **Crime Scene** office on the top of the file page you may use that information to answer the questions about the **Crime Scene** in your **Forensics Report**.



The image shows a sample 'Forensic Report' form. It has a header section with 'Forensic Report' and a date field. Below that, there are three main sections: 'STAGE 1: Review Crime Scene Photographs', 'STAGE 2: Review Police Report', and 'Report Review'. Each stage has a table with columns for 'Description' and 'Notes'. The 'Report Review' section has a list of questions to be answered based on the information gathered.

How does this activity end?

- Once you have completed review the entire file and have filled out all of the sections of the **Forensics Report**, look over your answers before you turn it in to your teacher.
- The first student (or team) who is the most accurate with their analysis for this History's Mystery will become the **"Criminalist of the Month"** and receive a name plate on the class plaque.
- Finally, once the entire class has turned in their reports, you will read a **Mystery Solved: Press Release** that will tell you the background behind the case you just finished reviewing.



Keep in mind that as you review the items in the file, you are acting as if you are a **Criminalist** responsible for *gathering, analyzing, and interpreting* forensic evidence. These actions are key to helping you solve the historical mystery presented in class.

GOOD LUCK!

MYSTERY SOLVED: PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scandal and Constitutional Crisis Push President Nixon to Resign

Watergate Hotel and Office Complex, Washington D.C.—June 17, 1972—
When security guard Frank Wills discovered five men breaking into the office of the Democratic National Committee at 2:30 am, he had no idea that this act would help bring down a president. It was soon revealed that all of the burglars had CIA connections, that they were wiretapping phones, and that they were receiving money from the treasury of the Committee to Re-Elect the President. This was no ordinary break-in.

It was then discovered that Mr. Nixon's trusted aides (including G. Gordon Liddy) had been directing the break-in with walkie-talkies from a hotel across the street from the Watergate Hotel. The hidden existence of a group called "the Plumbers" was now definitively proven.

After an FBI investigation, Congress began hearings in May 1973 to determine whether Mr. Nixon himself knew about the Plumbers and their illegal activities, or whether they were simply the acts of overzealous aides or campaign managers eager to do whatever it took to get Mr. Nixon re-elected.

The hearings revealed that many people knew about these secret and illegal activities, and that campaign donations were being used to persuade people not to talk. Mr. Nixon's paranoia about his enemies had even provoked him to tape all the conversations that happened in the Oval Office.

The congressional committee believed that these tapes would reveal what Mr. Nixon knew about the secret illegal activities. Its members issued a subpoena in July 1973, demanding that Mr. Nixon give them the tapes.

Many people were shocked when Mr. Nixon refused to turn them over. Mr. Nixon said that he, as president, had the right to keep secrets—even from Congress. Mr. Nixon then fired Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, who was attempting to get him to release the tapes. Cox later stated, "Whether ours shall continue to be a government of laws and not of men is now [a decision] for Congress and ultimately the American people."

In April 1974, Mr. Nixon turned over transcripts but not the tapes. Many people wondered what would happen if one branch of government refused to accept the authority of the other two branches of government: If the president didn't have to listen to Congress, would that mean the U.S. had become a dictatorship? Were there no longer checks and no balances? Mr. Nixon's lawyers even compared him to King Louis of France when arguing against turning over the tapes.

The country was in suspense until July 1974, when the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that Nixon had to hand over the actual tapes because he had no official "executive privilege" to defy a congressional committee. However, the tapes he turned in had a crucial 18½ minutes missing—they had been erased.

In July 1974, Congress began impeachment proceedings against the president, saying that Mr. Nixon had obstructed justice. On August 8, 1974, President Richard M. Nixon became the first president to resign. Vice President Gerald R. Ford became president, even though he himself had not been elected as Vice President. (Mr. Ford had been a congressman and was appointed Vice President when Nixon's elected Vice President, Spiro Agnew, resigned over tax evasion charges.)

Mr. Ford immediately granted Mr. Nixon a full and unconditional pardon for all crimes, less than two months after Mr. Nixon's resignation.

Submitted By (Criminalist's Name): _____ Period: ____ Final Score: ____/____

FORENSIC REPORT

Directions: You are a **Criminalist** responsible for *gathering, analyzing, and interpreting forensic evidence* in order to solve the historical mystery presented in class. As you view the items in each of the three areas (**Crime Scene, Police Report, and Detective's Research**) take notes and fill in each of the areas below.

Forensics—"The application of scientific practices within the legal process." Locating evidence that provides conclusive proof of a suspect's involvement in a given crime.



STAGE 1: REVIEW CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHS

Forensic Categories	Describe what you see in the Crime Scene photographs.
<p>Objects: List out all of the objects you see in the photos.</p>	
<p>People: Describe what the people look like in the photos.</p>	
<p>Location Details: Describe the area in the photos, inside/outside/in a building, in the street, etc. <i>*Notes any date and/or time details.</i></p>	



STAGE 2: REVIEW POLICE REPORT

<p>Incident Notes: Describe what happened.</p>	
<p>Incident Notes: Describe who was involved.</p>	
<p>Incident Notes: What type of incident was it?</p>	



STAGE 3: REVIEW DETECTIVE'S RESEARCH

Your Notes—Write down any and all information that you feel may be relevant or useful later to fill out Stage 4 of your report.

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, intended for students to write their notes.



STAGE 4: FORENSIC ANALYSIS

What crime took place?	
Who is responsible for the crime? (<i>Perpetrators.</i>)	
Who were the <i>victims or targets</i> of the action?	
Where did the crime take place?	
When did the crime happen? (<i>Time/exact date when available.</i>)	
How was the crime committed? (<i>How was the crime carried out?</i>)	
Why —What were the <i>motives or reason(s)</i> why this crime was committed?	

REPORT REVIEW

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Crime Scene Photographs | <input type="checkbox"/> Correct Analysis #_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Coroner/ME Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Close to Correct Analysis— |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed notes regarding Detective's Research | <i>1 or 2 sections incorrect</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Completed Forensic Analysis | |

Texting Person's Name: _____ Period: ____ Final Score: ____/____

TEXT MESSAGE NEWS ALERT

(Summary)

Directions: In this activity you are acting as if you have been given the task of sharing what you just learned in class with all of your closest friends and family members via a text message. Use the basic information from the **Mystery Solved: Press Release** and your **Forensic Report** to fill out the information below.

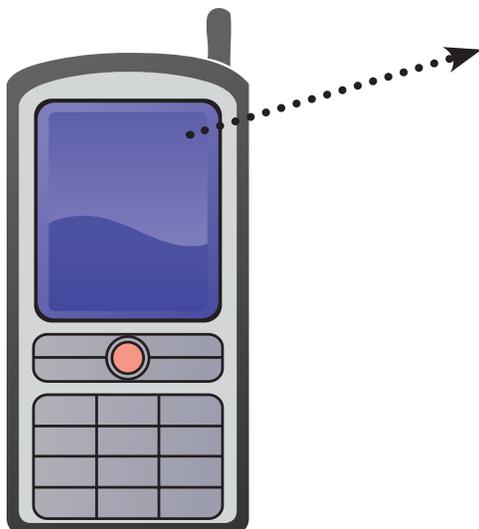
Step I. What information do you think is most important to share? (List 3 main ideas below)

1.

2.

3.

Step II. Now using 17 words or less, write in the screen on the right what your news alert text message would be about the event you just learned about in class.



Reporting Group Members (Each Person's Name): _____

Period: _____

BREAKING NEWS REPORT

(Short Skit)

Directions: In this activity you are acting as if you are a television news station reporting on the information and crime you recently reviewed. Use the basic information from the **Mystery Solved: Press Release** and your Forensic Report to fill out the information below. Once you are finished filling this out please have your teacher review this sheet before you begin rehearsing your news report skit.

1. Television station you are reporting for: Channel _____
2. "On Location" reporter: _____
(This is one person reporting back to the news studio.)
3. "In Studio" anchor reporters: _____ & _____
(These are two individuals who will introduce the skit and introduce us to the "On Location" reporter for the report.)
4. Where is the "On Location" news report taking place?
"We are here live at: the courthouse the local police station the local History Museum the local school coroner's office other: _____,
where it was recently discover that _____

We found some people who would talk to us about this event and this is what they had to say.

5. You must speak with at least two different people during your report.
Interview #1: (Name) _____ (Occupation) _____
• What information will they share?

Interview #1: (Name) _____ (Occupation) _____
• What information will they share?

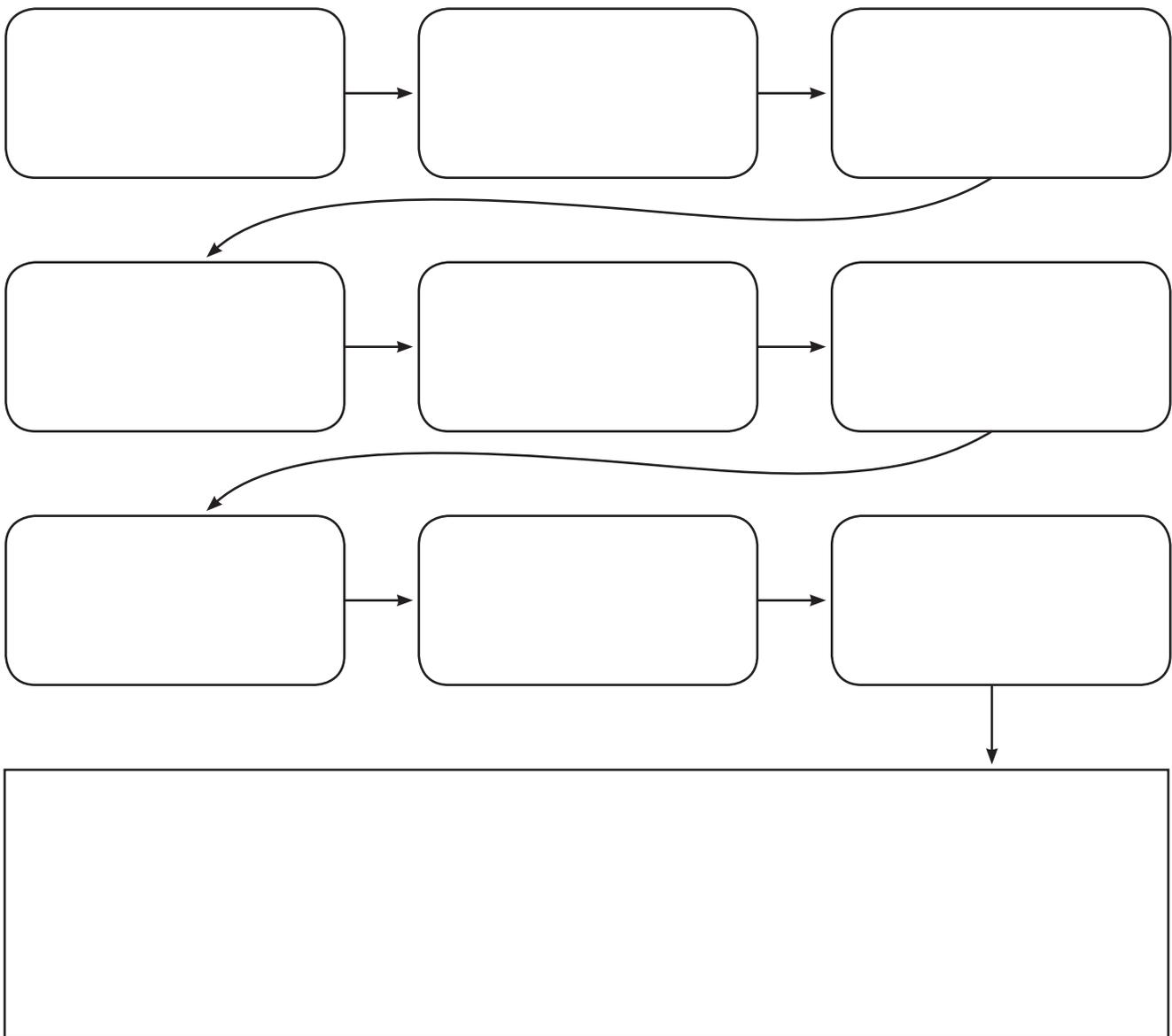
Submitted By (Criminalist's Name): _____ Period: ____ Final Score: ____/____

CRIMINALIST THEORY

(Graphic Organizer)

Directions: You are a **Criminalist** responsible for creating a written summary of what you believe took place during the presented crime. Using your **Forensic Report**, write a short descriptive story of what you think happened noting what **Area** helps to prove your ideas.

Plot the crime, what do you think happened? Draw the sequence of events below:



U.S. HISTORY

CRIMINALIST OF THE YEAR

CRIMINALIST OF THE YEAR NAME PLATES

Directions: Type in or write in the names and dates of your top student criminalists who will be honored on the plaque.

NAME:
MONTH:

TEACHER FEEDBACK FORM

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E-mail: _____

Interact unit: _____

Comments: _____

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Name of student: _____ (print)

Age of student: _____ (print)

Parent or guardian: _____ (print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address:

Phone: _____

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