Special Agent badge

**Purpose:** This badge teaches Cadettes secrets from the worlds of forensic science and criminal psychology.

**Step 1:** Host an “Identity Crisis” party.

Invite friends and family, or do this for your troop meeting. Serve fun, CSI-themed foods, such as bleeding heart cupcakes or eyeball cupcakes using one of the links below. Fingerprint yourself and all other guests.

- epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/bleeding-heart-cupcakes-232940
- epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/eyeball-cupcakes-232942

**Materials:**
- Clear tape
- No. 2 pencils
- White paper
- Magnifying glasses

Rub the pencil on a piece of paper, coloring in a small area. Beginning with the little finger, press on the area until the fingertip is covered with graphite. Place a small piece of tape over the fingertip print. Press the tape down gently over the fingerprint. Carefully remove the tape and stick it on a clean, white piece of paper. Record which finger the print came from. Repeat the process for the other four fingers. Try to identify the patterns in the sets of fingerprints, using the guide from the link below. Keep a tally of this and discuss your discoveries with the group. Is one type more common? Is one type more rare? Create a collage or catalog of the lifted fingerprints and play a game like Clue.

- globalsecurity.org/security/systems/biometrics-fingerprint.htm

**Step 2:** Test the effectiveness of eyewitness reports.

Eyewitness reports cannot always be counted on to provide a basis for convicting someone of a crime. Test how reliable eyewitness reports can be. Have someone run in to your meeting room. This should be someone the group hasn’t already seen that day. Have the person grab an item or ask a question, then leave in a flash.

Additional steps on next page

*Remember, girls gain confidence and leadership skills through girl-led activities. Whenever possible, let the girls take charge when completing activities. Adult help is necessary for guidance, support and safety.*
Step 2 cont.: Write down everything you remember about the person and draw a sketch of the suspect. Compare reports and sketches, then have the person come back into the room. How accurate was everyone’s eyewitness testimony? Explore more about reliability of eyewitness reports by learning about the Innocence Project at innocenceproject.org.

Step 3: Try the science forensic specialists use to investigate crimes.

The pattern of blood in a murder mystery can be used to determine the location of the attacker in relation to the victim and the location of other objects near the victim. Using water balloons outside, you can study the patterns created by a liquid. Use at least nine water balloons, doing each experiment three times for comparison. First, drop the water balloon onto a cement surface from a height of five feet. Second, throw a water balloon at a wall from a distance of six feet. Last, drop the water balloon on a step. Observe the results. Repeat each step with an object such as a hammer or corkscrew in the drop area to illustrate the pattern when an object is present and then removed. The distance from the ground and wall can be varied for additional trials. After each test, invite someone to try to figure out where the “victim” might have been standing.

Step 4: Research body language.

Detectives have to know how to read body language when questioning witnesses and suspects. Find out what body gestures and positions mean. Someone clenching their fists might mean that person is angry or a tilted head can be a gesture of sympathy. Look at photos in magazines or go to a public place and observe other people. Pretend you are a detective and guess what others are saying with their body language. You can also look at old photos of yourself. Discuss what messages you were sending through your body language.

Step 5: Practice the art of detection.

A career in forensics doesn’t always have to involve chemistry or physics. People with artistic talents can also have a forensics career—including forensics photographer, sculptor, artist and writer. Write a scene or script for your own forensic science TV drama. Come up with the crime, characters, setting, how the crime will be solved and who will solve it. For more fun, put together a performance for an audience.

Still want more? Try out a day in the life of a special agent with this link:
- fbi.gov/fun-games/kids/kids-day