

# MYSTERY

## INSTANT MEETING

### AGES: 7-9

**Goal:** To encourage critical thinking and to encourage kids to observe their surroundings and to introduce them to the thrill of mysteries

**Program Area Covered:**  
Key to STEM - Special Interest

**Prep Time:** 20 minutes

### OPENING

- Enjoy your usual opening!
- Discuss/define mysteries with the kids. Ask them what they think a mystery is. Ask them if they've ever had to solve a mystery in their own lives or if they would ever want to solve one. Good detective stories to mention are things like *Nancy Drew*, the *Hardy Boys*, *Encyclopaedia Brown*, *Harriet the Spy*, and so on.
- Read a mystery story to them—either the whole thing or split it into two parts and read the ending at closing time. *Encyclopaedia Brown* books are usually split in several shorter stories that would be ideal in length for your meeting.
- Depending on number of children, you may want to break activities into stations.

### ACTIVITIES

#### FINGERPRINT COMPARISON

##### Materials:

- Blank paper or the supplied fingerprint booklet on page 4
- Stamp pad
- Magnifying glass(s)—to help magnify the differences in fingerprints

**1** Ask the group to look at their finger tips and tell you what they see. Tell them how each person's finger has a unique pattern in the skin called a fingerprint. Detectives and police can use fingerprints to help determine if someone was present or involved in a crime.

**2** Give each person a piece of paper and have them press their fingers one by one on the stamp pad.

**3** Instruct them to then press their finger onto the paper, transferring the ink from their skin onto the paper.

**4** Have the group look at their fingerprints and at their friend's fingerprints and see just how different and unique their fingers are!

#### Tip!

The best way to take a fingerprint is to roll the finger from one side to the other over the ink pad, then repeat the action on the paper.

## ICE MAGNIFYING GLASS

### Materials:

- One small, smooth, round bowl per magnifying glass
- A freezer
- Boiling Water
- Gloves (for when they are holding the ice magnifying glass)

*Note: Leaders will probably want to do this before the meeting and have several ice magnifying glasses ready beforehand as ice will probably not freeze before meeting is over.*

**1** Boil water on stove for several minutes.

**2** Pour water into the smooth, round bowl.

**3** Put water in the freezer and wait until it is frozen completely.

**4** Once frozen, remove ice from bowl. (Note: If ice is uncooperative, try heating the bottom of the bowl with warm tapwater.)

**5** Let them look through the ice to see how the light refracts through it to magnify words and other small objects so that they appear bigger and more noticeable to the human eye.

### Tip!

Boiling the water helps clear the water of air bubbles and other contaminants to make it easier to see through.

## CRAFTS

### MAKE YOUR OWN BINOCULARS

#### Materials per person:

- 2 toilet paper rolls
- 2 pieces of clear plastic wrap cut into 3" squares
- 2 rubber bands

#### Group materials:

- Crayons/Markers
- Stapler
- String (optional)

**1** Place the two toilet paper rolls side by side so you can look through the hole of one roll with each eye. Help the group staple each end where the rolls touch to hold their binoculars together.

**2** Wrap one square of plastic rap sheet over the end of one roll. Wrap the rubber band around the plastic and toilet paper rolls to secure the plastic in place. Place the second plastic wrap sheet over the end of the other roll (make sure to put the plastic sheets on the same end of the binoculars!) and secure in place with the other rubber band to create your binocular lenses.

**3** Let the kids use the crayons/markers to decorate the binoculars.

*Continued on next page...*

*Make Your Own Binoculars continued...*

**4** If using string, measure out string for each child - make sure it is long enough to go around their neck once then make it a little bit longer to give it some extra length so it can rest comfortably around someone's neck. Staple the ends of the string to the outside edge of the toilet paper rolls on the opposite end of where you put your lenses so you don't end up with upside down binoculars.


### **Idea!**

Hide-and-Seek is always a good game for "mysteries." It gives them a chance to use their senses to try and seek out their team mates.

### **CLOSING**

- If you read a story and didn't finish at opening, read the ending now.
- Enjoy your usual closing!

FINGERPRINT BOOK TEMPLATE

<div></div> <div>MY FINGERPRINTS!</div> <div>-----</div>				