

MYSTERY

INSTANT MEETING

AGES: 9-12

Goal: To encourage youth to closely observe their surroundings and discover the fun of mysteries while solving their very own mystery.

Program Areas Covered:

Beyond You • Try New Things
• STEM

Prep Time: 30-60mins

OPENING

- Enjoy your usual opening
- Discuss mysteries with the group—ask what a mystery is; what they find interesting about mysteries' what kinds of mysteries can be found in real life; what makes a good mystery; if they've ever had to solve their own mystery (what it was, and how they solved it); how do you solve a mystery and so on.
- Mention books such as *Nancy Drew*, *Hardy Boys*, and *Sherlock Holmes* to give the group an idea of things they could read to further their journey into mysteries.

ACTIVITIES

DETECTIVE RELAY RACE

Materials Needed:

- Two detective hats
- Two wigs
- Two trenchcoats
- Two magnifying glasses
- Two pairs of glasses

1 Divide the group into two teams, one detective outfit per team.

2 Mark a starting line and a run-to line 20 feet apart.

3 Have both teams line up at the starting line and give the first player in each team their detective outfit. When you say go, the player must put on the entire outfit and run to the race-to line.

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Idea!

Challenge the group to write their own mystery stories. Have them work in teams and see who can finish their story faster to add a bit of spice to the challenge. When they're done, have them share their stories with the rest of the group and discuss the mysteries that were written.

Detective Relay Race continued...

4 The player must yell “problem solved” or another similar phrase before running back to hand the outfit to the next player.

5 Each player must repeat the process of putting on the outfit and running to the run-to line and back. The first team to finish the relay race wins.

MAKE YOUR OWN FINGERPRINT POWDER

Materials:

- Corn Starch powder
- Plastic tablecloth
- Candles
- 1 flame-resistant dishes per person
- 1 container with lid per kid (ie. small tupperware box)
- A spoon

1 Before you start, make sure the surface you are using is covered with the plastic tablecloth or other vinyl or plastic protective cover.

2 Instruct each kid to put a bit of starch into the flame-resistant dish and a bit in the container with lid.

3 Light the candles and help them hold the flame-resistant dish over the flame until the starch becomes soot.

4 Let the group scrape the soot into the box or bowl until the amount of soot and starch are relatively equal.

5 Mix the two together thoroughly and voila! Your very own fingerprint powder.

6 To use the powder, dust it generously over the spot you think a fingerprint may be, blow away the excess powder, and then use clear tape to lock the fingerprint in place. Stick the tape to a blank card and study the print you’ve just picked up.

Idea!

Clue is a great board game to illustrate the intrigue and thrill of mysteries. Play a round or two with the group. If you have more members than the game is meant for, split them into teams and encourage them to work together to figure out the mystery.

CRAFT/ACTIVITY

MYSTERY SOLVING KIT

Materials:

- Paper Bags (enough for one per child)
- Containers of fingerprint powder from previous activity
- Tape and index cards for lifting and keeping fingerprints
- A small make up brush for dusting for fingerprints (one per child)
- A small notepad for taking notes (one per child)
- Pencils/Pens/Markers/Writing utensil for notebook (one per child)
- A small magnifying glass (one per child)
- Rubber gloves (one pair per child)
- Any other small items that you think could fit into a Detective's Kit

1 Before the meeting, spread out all the supplies in a line.

2 Give each child a paper bag (they can decorate them if they wish/if you have markers/pencil crayons available) and instruct them to choose all the supplies they think they would need for their own personal mystery solving kit.

3 For discussion ideas, ask the youth why they think detectives use each of the items presented and what other kinds of things they might use for solving mysteries.

MAKE YOUR OWN MAGNIFYING GLASS

Materials:

- Plastic bag (one per group member)
- Water - Need boiling water and explanation??
- Small embroidery hoop (one or two per group member)
- Wooden dowels (one per group member)
- Hot glue
- Scissors
- (Optional) Paint to color the embroidery hoop and dowel

1 If using paint, paint the embroidery hoop and dowel first. Might be preferable to do this right at the beginning of the meeting and then come back to it after giving it a bit of time to dry.

2 Fill the plastic bags with about 10% water and make sure to seal fully.

3 Hold each of the four corners of the water bag together to center the water.

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Make Your Own Magnifying Glass continued...

4 Lay the bag center down inside the bottom embroidery hoop circle.

5 Top with the outer circle and tighten the hoop together for security.

6 Turn the hoop over and cut around the bag along the back of the hoop. Make sure the bag being left behind is pulled tight before cutting.

7 Seal off the bag and the hoop closer with hot glue.

8 Glue on dowel for hand hold.

9 Voila! Your very own magnifying glass!

STEP 3:



STEP 5:



STEP 7:



FINAL PRODUCT!



Photos courtesy of:

<http://www.justmommies.com/gradeschool-kids/kids-crafts-and-activities/kiddies-diy-make-your-own-magnifying-glass>

CLOSING

- Challenge group to find mysteries in their everyday lives!
- Enjoy your usual closing!