



CASE STUDY

06: COMBINING SERIOUS STUDY WITH AMATEUR SLEUTHING

CREST AWARDS GIVE STUDENTS VALUABLE INSIGHTS INTO THE PRACTICAL USE OF THEIR STUDIES - EVEN WHEN THE SETTING IS A 'CRIME SCENE'. THEY PROVIDE A TANGIBLE RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT AND CAN BE EXCITING, REWARDING AND FUN.

SUMMARY

Twenty-one Year 7 students stepped into a crime scene investigation at Wakehurst Place gardens, West Sussex. Confronted with a 'dead body', they used the skills they had learnt during the day to discover what the crime was, what had happened, and to identify the murderer.

SCHOOL FACT FILE

School: Downlands Community School, West Sussex
Type of School: Specialist Science & Mathematics College
CREST Awards achieved:
■ Bronze level: 21 Year 7s

Skills

- Analytical skills
- Work-related learning
- Personal, learning and thinking skills
- Presentation and Communication skills

Links to the curriculum

- Chemistry, Biology, Applied science, and Scientific enquiry

"ENTERING FOR THE CREST AWARDS WAS STRAIGHT FORWARD; WE JUST HAD TO ENSURE THAT THE ACTIVITY FITTED THE CRITERIA REQUIRED."

Emma Owen, Science teacher

"I REALLY ENJOYED ANALYSING THE EVIDENCE AND ACCUSING PEOPLE!"

Year 7 Student, Downlands Community School



DOWNLANDS COMMUNITY SCHOOL USES CREST AWARDS AS A DYNAMIC WAY TO ENGAGE STUDENTS. HERE, THEY CREATED AN ACTIVITY WHICH WAS PART EDUCATIONAL PROJECT, PART REWARD FOR EFFORT.

WHO DUNNIT?

CREST Bronze is the perfect way for students to experience the project process – from planning to analysis to presentation. Teacher, Emma Owen developed a CREST in a Day activity for gifted and talented Year 7s: for students who'd shown particular motivation and enthusiasm in Science.

Emma felt that a CSI Crime Scene Project was an ideal choice of subject. Forensic science is something the students are interested in and, in addition to learning about forensic skills, she felt that it was good for them to get out of the classroom and do something totally original.

MURDER MOST FUN!

Set amidst the elegant surroundings of Wakehurst Place gardens, students came into a 'crime scene' and 'found' a dead body – but who was the murderer? They spent the day learning the skills they'd need to solve the murder mystery.

Through four sessions the students were taught the background behind forensics and other analytical techniques – giving them the practical skills they'd need to gather evidence and support their findings. They started with 'how to take fingerprints' and 'how to do chromatography'. Next, they looked at 'investigating the crime scene' and 'examining the evidence'. They now had the skills to make their case...

A mock-trial was held, with a pre-selected student playing the murderer. How accurate would the forensic evidence prove to be? Could a conviction be made based on the evidence provided?

"IT WAS A SPECIAL DAY FOR THE STUDENTS... WE GOT SOME VERY POSITIVE FEEDBACK AND THE STUDENTS ARE KEEN TO DEVELOP THE PROJECT FOR FUTURE ACTIVITY INCLUDING REQUESTS TO USE A REAL BODY!"

Emma Owen, Science teacher

CELEBRATION

Once the students had completed their CREST Profile Forms, they were able to discuss their work with a CREST assessor; they presented their work with enthusiasm and confidence. Their achievements were also celebrated publically: they received CREST Award certificates from their Head of Year in a formal presentation – an exciting conclusion to a valuable project.

THE NEXT STEP

Emma says that the school will be participating in the CREST Awards again but may change the activity, perhaps organising a specific experiment to be run over a period of weeks rather than an activity held on one day. She feels it would also be good to involve the students more in the original idea – something which CREST's flexibility encourages.

"IT'S A GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR STUDENTS TO GET FURTHER INVOLVED IN SOMETHING THAT WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH A RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT!"

Emma Owen, Science teacher

Want to know more about CREST Awards?
Visit: www.britishsociety.org/crest
or email crest@britishscienceassociation.org

CREST Awards are supported by:



we would also like to thank
Network Rail



British Science Association
www.britishsociety.org

Registered Charity No. 212479 and SCO39236

