Target Audience: Youth 8-12 years old. Activities can be adapted for younger and older youth.

Description: Using real-life forensic labs, youth learn how to search for evidence and gather clues, just like forensic scientists do. From analyzing fingerprints and handwriting samples, to conducting laboratory experiments, these fun and easy activities show children how science is used to solve crimes.

Format: Each of these activities can be presented in one class period from 45-60 minutes. Extensions can be made for older and younger children with companion texts available in the kit.

Activity 1: Fingerprinting
Youth will learn the history of fingerprinting as a technique for identifying suspects of a crime and perform their own fingerprinting experiment.

Activity 2: Ink Analysis
Youth will learn how chromatography is used analyze and compare different types of inks and perform their own chromatography experiment.

Activity 3: Powder Analysis
Youth will learn how forensic scientists use chemistry to identify unknown substances at crime scenes and perform their own experiment on different types of powders.

Activity 4: Tire Impressions
Youth will learn how crime scene investigators use tire impressions as evidence from crime scenes and perform their own tire impression experiment with toy cars.

Activity 5: Handwriting
Youth will learn the techniques used in handwriting analysis and perform their own handwriting analysis experiment.

Activity 6: Teeth Impressions
Youth will learn how forensic dentists use teeth and teeth impressions to assist in crime solving and perform their own dental impression experiment.

The “Detective Science” curriculum and activity kit can be borrowed for one month.