



Who Did It?

By Philippa Werry



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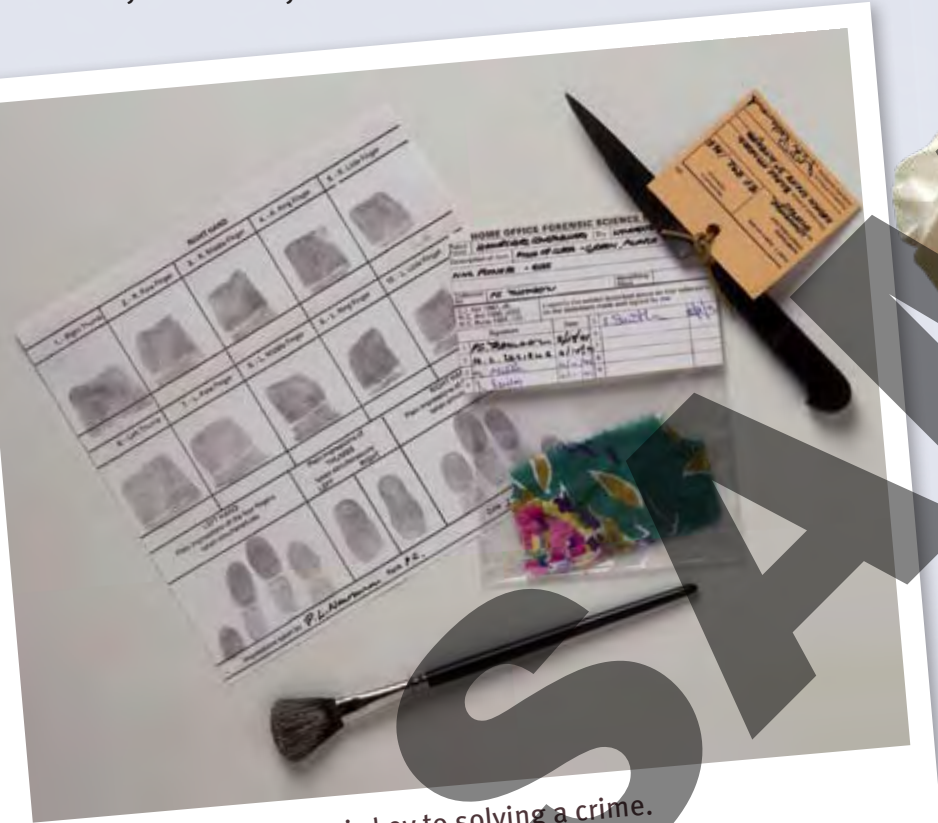
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Tracing a Criminal

Have you ever wanted to solve a crime? Here's your chance to learn how **evidence** found at a crime scene is used to track down the person who committed the crime.

It's important to treat a crime scene with care. The first thing to do when you get to a crime scene is to collect and record any evidence you find.



▲ Recording evidence is key to solving a crime.





Trace evidence is anything the criminal has left behind. ►

The criminal has tried hard to cover his or her tracks, but some clues will almost always be left behind. These may be things such as clothing **fibers**, tire tracks, tool marks, or paint flakes. There may also be something more personal, such as fingerprints, footprints, or traces of hair, blood, skin, or saliva.

These clues are called **trace evidence**, and they are **vital** to solving a crime. They might be only **microscopic**, but if handled correctly, they can help trace a crime back to the person who committed it.

The job of **forensic scientists** is to examine this evidence and identify people who have committed a crime. The evidence may have to be presented in a **court of law**, so the results have to be accurate and reliable. Otherwise, the crime may never be solved.

“**Forensic**” comes from the Latin word “forum.”

In Roman times, this was a public square or marketplace where **legal business** was also carried out.

Forensic science is the use of scientific methods and techniques to investigate and solve crimes.



▲ Finding trace evidence on a glass

FAST FACT

Edmond Locard was a French detective who invented “Locard’s exchange principle.” It explains that, wherever you go, you pick up some trace evidence, and you leave some behind. This means there is always an exchange of trace evidence somewhere.