

The Law-Related Education Academy is sponsored by the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education with funding made possible by the Arizona Department of Education.

“CSI: Cracking the Case with Forensic Science” Academy
(Middle/High School)

First on the Scene Lesson Plan

Please obtain administrator approval prior to implementing this lesson.

Objectives: Students will...

- practice the proper sequence of steps when first arriving at a crime scene.
- practice photographing, measuring, and sketching a crime scene.
- understand why each step is important to preserve the investigation.

Protective Factor Developed: Critical Reasoning Skills

Materials:

- ✓ Evidence items (3-4)
- ✓ “First on the Scene” strips (1 set per group)
- ✓ Gloves (1 pair for demonstration)
- ✓ Booties (1 pair for demonstration)
- ✓ Evidence markers or folded notecards (1 for each piece of evidence)
- ✓ Camera or device for photographing the scene (1 for demonstration)
- ✓ Measuring tape (1 for demonstration)
- ✓ Notepad or graph paper and writing utensil (1 pp)
- ✓ Whiteboard and markers
- ✓ Consequence strips (1 set per group)

Prior to the Lesson:

Set up a few **evidence items** at the front of the room. Evidence can be anything but should be suggestive of a story. Examples include a plastic cup with a lipstick smear and/or fingerprints, a partially written to-do list, a shoe beside a trail of dirt, or items that are knocked over.

Timeframe: 50 Minutes

Team Teaching: For effective implementation of Law Related Education (LRE), team teach with the classroom teacher by...

- Having both the officer and teacher rotate among students and to different groups. Both instructors will provide positive feedback and engage in friendly conversations with students. This procedure will help reduce classroom disruptions, increase student engagement, and build supportive relationships with students.
- Encouraging classroom teachers to participate in all activities by injecting clarification statements by relating relevant content to their curriculum. In this method, students will see more connections to their student life and be willing to carry over concepts and skills learned in LRE.
- Assigning the classroom teacher part of the lesson instructions. Team teaching with the classroom teacher enables the students to further see the importance of LRE lessons. It also provides an opportunity for the classroom teacher to demonstrate teaching skills conducive to effective teaching. Student attention can be maintained more easily with different voices and personalities experienced throughout the lesson.

Lesson:

1. Divide the class into small groups of 3-4 students in each.
2. Distribute a set of **First on the Scene strips** to each group. Have groups work together to arrange the steps in the correct order.
3. Call on one group to share what they think the first step is and explain their reasoning.
 - Step 1: Deal with emergency situations (e.g., assist an injured person or secure a weapon).
4. Call on another group to share what they think the next step is and their reasoning.
 - Step 2: Rope off the entire area with crime scene tape.
5. For steps 3-7, continue calling on different groups to share their responses and reasoning. After each correct step, invite one student from the group to come to the front of the room and complete the step using the mock crime scene. Walk them through the correct process as described below.
 - Step 3: Put on **gloves** and **booties**
Explain that investigators always wear gloves and protective coverings (like booties) before entering a scene to avoid contaminating evidence. Have one student demonstrate putting them on.
 - Step 4: Place **evidence markers**
Give the student a few numbered evidence markers (or numbered folded notecards). Have them place a marker next to each visible piece of evidence without touching it. Emphasize that markers help document the location of every item before anything is moved.
 - Step 5: Use a **device** to photograph the entire scene
Explain that investigators start by taking overall photos of the entire area from multiple angles, then move in closer for mid-range photos of key items and finally take close-ups that clearly show details and evidence markers. Emphasize that photos must capture how the scene originally looked before anything is disturbed.
 - Step 6: Measure the room and perimeters
Have students use a **measuring tape** to record the length and width of the room and note the boundaries of the inner perimeter (where evidence is found) and the outer perimeter (the

larger secured area). Explain that accurate measurements help ensure the scene can be recreated later if needed.

- Step 7: Sketch the scene and log measurements

Provide each student a **notepad or graph paper**. Have them draw a rough sketch of the room, labeling key evidence items with their marker numbers and writing down all measurements. Encourage them to include a north arrow and clear labels for each item (e.g., “E1 – cell phone,” “E2 – shoe print”). Demonstrate by recording a sample sketch and measurements on the **whiteboard**.

6. Emphasize that each one of these steps protects the evidence and helps investigators understand what happened. By carefully observing, documenting, and thinking ahead, you can uncover connections that might otherwise be missed.
7. Ask groups to think about what might happen if investigators were to miss one of these steps. Distribute a set of **consequence strips** to each group. Have groups work together to pair each strip with one of their steps.
8. Go through the steps in order and call on groups to share what they think could be a consequence of missing that step. Validate or correct.
 - i. *Emergency: Someone could be seriously harmed or killed, and the scene may be contaminated.*
 - ii. *Roping Off: Evidence could be contaminated or removed by unauthorized people.*
 - iii. *Gloves/Booties: Investigators could leave their own fingerprints or DNA on evidence.*
 - iv. *Marking Evidence: Important items may be missed or recorded incorrectly.*
 - v. *Photographing: Visual context of the scene would be lost.*
 - vi. *Measuring: Evidence locations could not be accurately recreated.*
 - vii. *Sketching: Relationships between items would be unclear and reports less reliable.*
9. Debrief by leading a whole group discussion: Why is it so important to follow every step carefully during an investigation?

The Law-Related Education Academy is sponsored by the Arizona Foundation for Legal Services & Education with funding made possible by the Arizona Department of Education.

“CSI: Cracking the Case with Forensic Science” Academy
(Middle/High School)
First on the Scene Lesson Plan
Standard Correlations

Social Studies

8.SP3.7 Construct and present explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples, details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

8.SP3.8 Present arguments and explanations on topics of interest to others to reach multiple audiences in and outside of the classroom print, oral, and digital technologies.

HS.SP3.8 Present arguments and explanations that feature ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues using print, oral, and digital technologies.

English Language Arts

7.SL.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

7.SL.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, appropriate vocabulary, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

8.SL.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

8.SL.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with relevant evidence, sound valid reasoning, and well-chosen details; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

9-10.SL.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

9-10.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence in an organized, developed style appropriate to purpose, audience, and task, allowing listeners to follow the speaker’s line of reasoning, message, and any alternative perspectives.

11-12.SL.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

11-12.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence in an organized, developed style appropriate to purpose, audience, and task, allowing listeners to follow the speaker’s line of reasoning, message, and any alternative perspectives.