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Cub Scout INVESTIGATORS

Learn how law enforcement officials use **SCIENCE** to solve mysteries.

Policemen who are sent to study the scene of a crime are called "**crime scene investigators.**"

Cub Scouts at the Connecticut Yankee Council's day camp last summer earned the title **Cub Scout Investigator.**

Crime scene investigators use science to figure out exactly what happened. This is called **forensic science.**

Cub Scout investigators learned similar skills, such as **fingerprinting, footprint impressions and tracking.**

"CSI skills are kind of what the F.B.I. would use if they were trying to figure something out," says 7-year-old Wolf Cub Scout Michael Shavinsky. "We learned to identify plants, rocks, even people."

The hundreds of Cub Scouts gathered at Hoyt Scout Reservation in Redding, Conn., also enjoyed camp activities like nature hikes, craft projects and archery.

But the highlights came when the boys split into groups with names like **Super Spies, Spy Scouts and The Kid Police.**

Fingerprints Don't Lie

By making, lifting and studying their fingerprints, 9-year-old Webelos Scouts Alexander and Luke Saalborn learned that no two people have the same fingerprint, even those identical in so many ways.

Alexander and Luke are part of a set of triplets. They look very much alike, but their fingerprints are different.

The guys placed their fingers on an inkpad, then pressed them on a piece of paper. The prints looked similar, until the



SKULL

JAW

boys looked really close.

"We had to solve problems by using a magnifying glass," Alexander says.

Problems like ... which brother's print was which!

When solving mysteries like these, it's important to always keep your eyes peeled.

"You had to keep your eyes open," Luke says, "and look down to see what you can find."

Scouts made their own footwear impressions and learned how to track both animals and humans by focusing on the ground below them as they hiked.

Yuck!

In the Dr. Seuss book "Bartholomew and the Oobleck," an entire kingdom is nearly covered in a sticky material called oobleck that rains down from the sky.

These CSIs made their own oobleck—a slimy combination of water and cornstarch that changes back and forth between liquid and solid.

They also experimented with liquids by adding salt to them and looking at them under a microscope. You can tell a lot about a liquid by seeing how it behaves when mixed with salt.

Webelos Scouts also studied insects by identifying skeletal remains inside owl pellets.

These are the kind of projects crime scene investigators do all the time.

Even if you don't grow up to be a forensic scientist, you are likely to use investigative powers like these in your everyday life.

"Being a CSI helps you get a leg ahead of everyone else who is not going to camp," Michael says. "It's going to help you know more and figure more things out."

"And it helps you with your science projects at home."♣



Above: The Cub Scouts mix water and cornstarch and use it to cast footprints. Right: You never know what you'll find when you start dissecting owl pellets. Below: Cub Scouts watch as a CSI expert adds salt to water to change its density. The different layers of water contain different amounts of salt.

