How To Get Away With Murder

Part 1 - Individual Work

So far in forensics we have looked at fiber analysis, metal flame tests, chromatography of mixtures, handwriting analysis, crime scene processing, finger prints, and identifying unknown powders. We also discussed DNA “fingerprints”, blood splatters, ...

Section 1 - Research

Your first task is to analyze a real event.
- Choose a real crime or event in which forensics played an important role.
- Your job is to analyze the evidence of this case as presented by the media.

Requirements:

1) Write a detailed description of the victim;
   age, location, physical description, normal life pre-crime, profession

2) Describe the time line of events that led to the crime;
   when was the victim last seen?
   actions of the victim between ‘last seen’ and ‘found’
   when was the victim found?
   important steps in the investigation
   who was prosecuted and what was the result? or Cold case?
   actions of the detectives, and impact on the results of the case

3) Analysis of the evidence;
   What kind of evidence was collected?
   Where was the evidence found?
   How was the evidence analyzed by detectives
   Did this evidence solve the case?
4) Role of the Media
   Did the media help or hinder the process of solving this case?
   Include actual media products of the event;
   newspaper or magazine articles, TV or online resources

5) Personal Opinion
   Write an analysis paragraph to answer the question;
   "Was this an effective investigation? Why or why not?
   Focus on the use of forensics used to solve this case.

Section 2 - Evidence Processing

Your second task is to detail two methods of collecting evidence
- Choose one forensic method we studied in class (see intro)
- Choose one forensic method we did NOT study in class.

Requirements:

1) Write at least one page paper detailing the method studied in class.

2) Write at least one page paper detailing the method we did not study in class.

3) In both cases you must include;
   - A description of the method used to analyze evidence
   - A list of people who must be involved (experts, lab techs, etc)
   - A description of the sample that must be obtained for this method
   - A summary of what is learned from this method
     (is it enough to convict or is this only supporting evidence
      that needs additional evidence?)
   - A diagram or flow chart illustrating this process from start to finish
Part 2 - Group Work (2 or 3 Group members)

Up until now we have been studying real crimes in which evidence was left behind and led to the conviction of the guilty parties. In this part we will look at the ideal crime. Is it possible to commit the perfect crime? Can you actually get away with murder?

Section 3 - Planning the Perfect Crime

Your task is to plan the perfect crime. You can plan a murder or other criminal activity of your choice
- Determine how you intend to do it.
- Plan how you will avoid getting caught.

Requirements:

1) Describe your intended theoretical victim(s).
   Who are they? How do you know them?
   Where do they work? Why did you choose them?

2) Choose a method.
   What weapon will you use to commit the crime? Why this choice?
   What must you avoid doing to minimize forensic evidence?
   Is there a way to eliminate ALL forensic evidence?
   How can you deflect investigators away from you?

3) Timeline of events.
   Start with the moment you decided to commit this crime
   Include the last time the victim is seen until the body is discovered.

4) Your alibi.
   What will you tell investigators to convince them you are innocent?
   What evidence can you use to support your alibi?
   Is there a reasonable way to blame someone else?

5) Present your plan
   This can be done in report, poster, or digital format
   Expect to do a presentation to the class and DEFEND your crime.
Section 4 - BONUS Credit

Your task is to “carry out” your perfect crime.
- Create a scenario in which this crime is committed
- Present this scenario to the class

Requirements:

1) Creatively “carry out” your crime. Choose a medium

2) Present your crime to the class

OPTIONS:
Script and perform a drama and record it.
Present the video results of your acting!
Build a 3-D model to describe the scene. Moving pieces!
What events that must occur?

Proposed Time Line:

Day #1 - Description of the victim
Day #2 - Time line of events
Day #3 - Analysis of evidence and role of the media
Day #4 - Personal opinion of the investigation
Day #5 - Evidence processing
Day #6 - Group - Start planning the Perfect Crime
Day #7 - Group - Complete planning the Perfect Crime
Day #8 - Class presentations of the Perfect crime.