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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1995 Volume I: Gender, Race, and Milieu in Detective Fiction

Science and Detection: Making Connections through Einstein Anderson

Guide for Curriculum Unit 95.01.02
by Gail G. Hall

Middle grade students are fans of mystery and detective stories; they are also fascinated with the way the world works. Middle grade teachers face an ever-expanding curriculum and are increasingly aware that students learn best when they are involved in meaningful activities that are interesting and integrated and which allow them to create knowledge. These interests and needs can come together within this unit which provides a model for integrating the teaching of science with language arts, i.e. writing and reading, through the detective stories about Einstein Anderson by science writer Seymour Simon.

In this curriculum unit you will find a short history of science education; a discussion of parallels between literary process skills and science process skills; a demonstration of science process in action in Edgar Allan Poe's classic tale "The Murders in Rue Morgue"; a closer look at the Einstein Anderson detective series by Seymour Simon [which is very similar to the better-known Encyclopedia Brown series] as a means of making connections between science and literature, and a model called performance assessment in which students create their own Einstein Anderson-like pieces.

(Recommended for Science and Language Arts, grades 4-6)

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