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1995 Volume I: Gender, Race, and Milieu in Detective Fiction

With Detective Fiction in the Urban Classroom

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by Soraya R. Potter

I am a Chapter I reading teacher at Jackie Robinson Middle School in New Haven. At present I teach fifth through eighth graders most of whom are working and readingon first through sixth grade reading level. My students range in age from ten to fifteen and they come from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds and home situations. Their academic ability and the level of their general knowledge also varies considerably. Some students in the same reading class can barely read, spell or write and others are in the city's talented and gifted program. Generally their basic skill levels are below average but, many have untapped potentials well beyond that point. Unrepresentative of New Haven's overall school population, my classes are predominantly comprised of African Americans. Many of my students are members of families with multiple problems. Some have lost siblings and or a parent in violent crimes. Some of my students are in my class for two months at the beginning of the year and two months at the end of the year, and still others are there only for a week or two before they move on. This year, I lost one of my students to the lures of the street. To the best of my knowledge, he is still alive. Few of their lives are without difficulty. At this age/grade level, very few parents and guardians are supportive of the school in particular and the education system in general. The few who are still supportive of their children want to help but are not sure of the best way to go about it. The everyday pressures of life tend to put a halt to many if not all of their best intentions.

Right now, because I tend to loop many of my more stable students—that is keep them with me if I can for the entire duration of their stay at Robinson—I am beginning to see that somewhere during the middle of their sixth grade year to the middle of their seventh grade year many of my students are losing the high goals and aspirations that they came to Robinson with in fifth grade and retained at the beginning of their sixth grade school year. That may be a result of facing the competition of more academically prepared peers, along with the pressures which all teenagers, especially those growing up in inner-city America, encounter. For many of them, the road ahead appears to be a difficult one.

This year, the New Haven Public School system has come up with the novel idea that Chapter I students should read novels. In keeping with the new key word, Multi-culturalism, they have tried to choose books about teenagers from various cultures. This in and of itself is a good start, but most inner city African American students are not interested in the rite of manhood of the Aborigine. They can barely understand their own society and all of its rules about the rites of passage. While all of the six novels chosen have their merits, many leave our children asking, "Why am I reading this?" (Admittedly, there are many students who will ask this question about any book ever written.) As a result of this new requirement, and my constant search for new and interesting books for my students to read and write about, I can see a place for detective

fiction in my classroom.

When I signed up for the seminar, I was not familiar with detective novels. I did not think that I really had to read them in when I was school because there were so many fast paced, first rate detective shows on television; neither did I think that I could beneficially suggest that my students read them. I felt that I would hear my old questoion, “Why should I read the book when I can rent the movie or watch the BBC’s production on PBS?” I had a good handle on the action and what was meant by the term detective fiction, but as for actually having read one, well that was another story. From the onset, I knew that I would have to do a lot of reading, and boy did I read. For the first time in a long time I felt what my students feel when I ask them to read something longer than what they encounter in a basal reader, a fifteen page story where more than half of the pages are pictures. Previously, I could not get into the story line nor could I find any merit in reading some of the earlier works. “They were not relevant to my time, or to my life.” I have never been to England and the London described in many of these novels no longer exists, but it’s a capricious genre, and I soon found comfortable settings, as every reader does. I found that I quite preferred reading some of the novels to watching detectives on television. I’ve even found that there are a few detectives that I actually enjoyed.

I also had to contend with the art or craft of detective stories; the act of deductive reasoning. When I hear the term “deductive reasoning” I cringe because the amount of chaos that incorrect or faulty reasoning can cause is phenomenal with Chapter I students. I also think about all of the detectives that I have seen on television ,from Mannix to Cannon, and all of the detectives in the movies. As was the case with many of my students, reading for me, as a youth, was something other people did or something that I did because I had to pass a test. Reading for pleasure was as foreign as a Martian in a burnt pumpkin bell bottomed leisure suit. Today, things have changed. Now I also think about the most famous detective, a dashingly slender six foot tall fellow standing under a lamp on a foggy London street. He is wearing his trademark long brown trench coat, the kind that we speak of today as’ London Fog,’. He is smoking a wide mouthed pipe and its smoke curls enticingly up around his almost concealed face. He is wearing a deerstalker’s cap, which upon closer inspection we notice has two neatly pinned back ear flaps—like a flyers cap. His name is Sherlock Holmes, one of the two most famous residents of 21 Baker Street. Just slightly behind him and in the dimness of the street lamp is his companion, the second famous resident. He is a portly man, who wears an air of intelligence as well as he wears his professional man’s black suit, white shirt, black shoes, hat and bow tie. His image is a bit more obscure, just as his role is in the stories he tells about their lives and their studies and discussions of crime. He stands in Holmes’s shadow, in this case only because he is not standing directly in the light of the lamp. His name is Dr. Watson. Although Sherlock Holmes is by far the most popular and memorable of the fictitious detectives, he was not the first detective to have his exploits written down. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle merely took the grains of sand created by earlier authors, which was melted into glass by Edgar Allan Poe and his contemporary, real life detective Eugene Francois Vidoq , and tempered and formed it into the magnifier of society that it is today.

One of the first works of detection dates back to the fifth century BC., *The Histories* by Herodotus. The detective in the story “The Clue of the Headless Corpse” is the king. He also happens to be the victim. With bloodhound persistence, he sets out to capture the culprit and manages to successfully do so by arranging a marriage between him and his daughter the Princess after several unsuccessful bids at tricking him into capture. From what I could gather, the detectives in Herodotus’ day were ordinary people who felt the need to avenge any wrong done to them in a fair manner. They used the evidence presented to them to make inferences and then in turn used these inferences to solve or attempt to solve the crimes perpetrated against them. The stories were written as simple observations of events in history with no attempts on the behalf of the author to embellish the events.

In later classical literature, detectives were called “sharpers” as in the story from *The Arabian Nights* as translated by Sir Richard Burton entitled “The Three Sharpers”. These were people who lived on the fringes of society. They did not work, in any traditionally acceptable sense, for a living. They were content to live by their wits. To my understanding they were like the tricksters of folktales. They competed with each other, much in the manner of African Tribal Folktale Competitions, to solve the riddle or mystery placed before them by the king or sultan. They were, at the time of the first appearance of *The Arabian Nights* , the popular folk heroes of the day. With their cunning, they never ceased to confound their contemporaries with knowledge of situations which were beyond immediate observation. (Cassiday, p. 3)

By the eighteenth century and the appearance of Voltaire’s Zadig c.1747 (see specifically the chapter entitled “The Dog and the Horse”), E.T.A. Hoffmann’s *Mademoiselle de Scudery* c.1821, and—one of my favorite authors,—Alexandre Dumas’s *The Man in the Iron Mask* c.1850 (see specifically the chapter entitled “Duel in the Bois-Rochin”)—even though it was written after the appearance of Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Purloined Letter* (c. 1841)—, deduction was being used to achieve an entirely different effect. The focus of the literary world had shifted from the Near East to France, where deduction, reason and intellectualism were increasing rapidly. In skilled literary hands, story materials dealing with deduction had become more subtle and imaginative. While actual scenes of detection appeared , they occurred only as specific incidents rather than as the central core of the story line. (Cassiday, p 4.)

The form that we call detective fiction today was refined in part by Eugene Francois Vidoq and Edgar Allan Poe. Vidoq, a successful thief turned legitimate in his old age, is credited with forming the now famous Paris Surete. France’s Paris Surete was the first detective agency established under the heading of the police force. Vidoq is credited with the creation of book length criminal studies intended for professional perusal. Edgar Allan Poe , the second author credited with the refining of the modern detective fiction genre, ironically was the American poet who was forced to write prose to feed himself. Poe is credited with the invention of the detective short story which has remained virtually unchanged. In Poe’s formula, ratiocination, Latin for “the act of reasoning” was the term which is today replaced by deductive thinking. In Poe’s formula we find the essential ingredient without which the Golden Age of Detective Fiction could not exist: The Amateur Sleuth. In all of Poe’s Tales of Ratiocination, Dupin, the master, discusses all of his cases or noteworthy news items with his sidekick , the unidentified “I” who, for lack of anyone else to speak of, we will call Poe. Dupin is able to baffle the reader with his cunning ability to solve the case when it seems that every avenue has been exhausted. Contrary, however , to popular modern detective fiction, the amateur, in this case Poe, possesses above average intelligence. He is equally as learned as Dupin himself. Dupin seems to take pride in outwitting or solving the case presented by the Monsieur G——the Prefect of the Parisian police. I do not think that Poe held the Parisian police in high regard and since, to the best of my knowledge, he had never traveled any farther than from Massachusetts to Maryland, the United States police force was probably the cause of this. (Poe had been known to have quite a few run ins with the American legal system, having spent quite a few nights in jail for gambling debts and disorderly conduct.) This lack of respect for the legal system is especially evident in the fact that Dupin usually deduces the answer to the puzzling question or deed leading us to believe that the Prefect never can. This feeling is clearly evident at the end of “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” when Dupin says, “let him discourse; it will ease his conscience. I am satisfied with having defeated him in his own castle. Nevertheless, that he failed in the solution of this mystery, is by no means that matter for wonder which he supposes it: for, in truth, our friend the Prefect is somewhat too cunning to be profound. In his wisdom, he is no stamen. It is all head and no body , like the pictures of the goddess Laverna,—or at best, all head and no shoulders like a codfish.”(Poe, 284) By 1843, the London police had emulated Paris Surete and had created a “detective division” thereby coining the phrase ‘detective’ to designate certain special police and setting the stage for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to bring the deductive novel to its modern

maturity. (Cassiday, pp. 4&5)

The art and skill of deduction or making good inferences is in the gelling or syllogizing that takes place in the detective's mind as he makes the connection. (Of course the reader is not privy to some important general information that the detective keeps stored in his brain.) We are only able to see what he sees through the eyes of the amateur detective who dutifully records the steps that our hero takes. The deduction or inference is a combination of a few ingredients. What I shall call the wet ingredients are those details that the reader can see as a result of the dutiful recording of events. The dry ingredients are those details that the detective has stored in the brain; information that (s)he has studied while in college. Sherlock Holmes, for example, had many interests, among which were physics, etymology , police science, medicine and history. 'Dry ingredients' can also come from something the detective has read in a newspaper or has heard through the ever popular grapevine. The grapevine is not necessarily a reliable source, but investigating the truth behind some gossip that she 'really didn't mean to overhear' usually gets Nancy Drew a little closer to solving the case. When the detective mixes the 'dry ingredients' with the 'wet ingredients' the resulting "batter" is the conclusion, or what we call 'the educated guess'. Before going any further, there are five words or phrases which bear defining so that all things can be "Elementary, my dear fellow teacher, elementary."

> Detection: the long trail of discoveries and deductions that finally results in the exposure or the 'detection' of the person responsible for the crime.
> Deduction: part of the act of detection, usually the determination of an elusive or unknown information that becomes a link in the chain leading to detection. Deduction involves the discovery of the true character of an unseen or unknown condition by the process of reasoning from evidence or fact.
> Evidence: data by which the investigator, or detective bridges the unknown and surmises hidden truths. This can be done through written communication or physical objects like footprints or the smoking gun. This is what I would call a wet ingredient.
> Clue: the critical or observable sign or evidence. It is the key piece of evidence that leads the investigator through intricate obstacles toward the solution of the problem. This is yet another example of a wet ingredient.
> Red Herring: evidence which has been tampered with either by the author or the criminal to throw the reader or the investigator off the trail. The dry ingredients are made to look wet. (In keeping with the previous analogy, this is what happens when there are more dry ingredients than there are wet ingredients; you end up baking bar cookies, not cake.)

True detective genius excels in the area of the dry ingredients; although the dry ingredients are the most dangerous because they are "presuppositions". This is the information that the detective has stored inside his or her head from history or reported fact. The best detectives seem to have at their grasp a limitless supply of current events, knowledge of human nature and the scientific principles of animate and inanimate objects.

Junior detective “Cam” Jensen has her photographic memory which allows her to ‘take pictures of a scene ‘and store it for future use; and “Encyclopedia “Brown has his encyclopedia-like memory which stores all of the details that he has read or heard about. The application of deductive logic to a problem fascinates the observer because the second step in the chain is never known to the reader. The seemingly brilliant leap over the second step (the addition of prior knowledge)and instant producing of the final and correct solution (the fully frosted culprit on a silver platter) is what makes avid readers love detective novels. They are fascinated by detectives and their apparent omniscience.

One of the reasons that detective stories have maintained their popularity over the years is the element of reader involvement. Trying to guess who is responsible for the crime, together with enjoying the solid action, keeps the reader interested and makes him or her want to find out what happens next. This cerebral challenge and the constant presence of action are two of the primary reasons for introducing the detective novel to low level readers. It also doesn’t hurt that most detective novels are serialized. This allows the reluctant reader to find more of the same kind of book with familiar characters which are on their reading and skill level. While your students are reading books that they like, you get the benefit of knowing that they are receiving an accurate historical perspective of the time in which the book is set or written as well as reinforcing values which are severely lacking in other sorts of fiction our students encounter.

Without even realizing it, our students will be able to walk away from any well written detective novel with three basic truths: First, the good guy always wins; author P.D. James says, “ The crime novel is a moral form. Murder is uniquely wrong. It is probably the most moral kind of fiction that we have in that respect”. (Flack, p.xvi). Second, brains always outwits brawn. Occasionally the detective may resort to using his fists or the gun to bring the perpetrator to justice or to protect the innocent, but in the end it is the use of reason which ultimately leads to the triumph of good over evil. And third, but most importantly, human life is regarded with the highest respect, and in so treating it, the detective writer is forced to seek other methods to incorporate action into the novel than the blow-up-your-enemy, quantum body count of Hollywood. Occasionally modern detective fiction does produce a number of casualties as in Dashiell Hammett’s Red Harvest. Detectives are supposed to right huge wrongs without blowing up half the state or continent in the process. Preferably they are to do this with out sacrifice of even one human life. The brain, not the automatic assault weapon is the ultimate tool which is used for the good of humanity and the preservation of a society of law and order.(Flack, p.xviii)

While researching this unit, I thought about several of my students who are not specifically talented in their command of written English language, but whose talents may rest in spoken language or in their ability to illustrate a story so clearly that one could read it without the use of words. Often in my lessons I lose these students because the goal is not geared to their specific skill. I have been seeking a plan or method of teaching and evaluating these students so that they too may experience some measure of success in my class. I needed more than the three approaches to how children learn that I was taught. I learned that all people fall into three categories of learning. They are either audio learners, visual learners, or kinesthetic learners. In other words they either learn best by constantly hearing something,(whether taped or in a lecture) by seeing something (whether it is an experiment or a movie) or kinesthetically, (by touching or coming into physical contact with what they are learning). In searching for the answer, I came across a 1994 publication by the Center for Applied Research in Education(C.A.R.E.) entitled *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* . This author states that each person possesses all of the seven types of intelligence which they can develop to an adequate level of competency. Each of the seven intelligences work together in complex ways, and there are many ways to be intelligent in each of the categories.

The seven intelligences are as follows:

Linguistic Intelligence : the working command of the skills of written and spoken language.(These are the writers and speakers in the classroom)
Logical Mathematical Intelligence : the command of scientific and mathematical skill. (These are the serious Math Bee and Science Fair competitors)
Spatial Intelligence : the command of space and the ability to put ideas down in non traditional forms like drawing. (These are the class artists and calligraphers)
Bodily Kinesthetic Intelligence : the command of body movement and placement to express emotion or meaning. (This is the child who 'talks' with their hands well, whose body and facial movements express their thoughts before their minds can put them into words. They are the ones who look sometimes like they know the answer and when they are called on they sometimes choke.)
Musical Intelligence : the command of rhythm. (The child who can pound out popular music on his desk chair, knee and chest.)
Interpersonal Intelligence : the ability to see ones role as a valued member of a society and to work toward setting and achieving goals.(The student who realizes why they have to be in school now and works hard to rise up out of the situation that they find themselves in.)
Intrapersonal Intelligence : the ability to reason out a problem and apply that same reasoning to themselves (The child who can read a story and tell the class how and why the lesson learned applies to their life.)

Each of the seven intelligences can at anytime be activated or deactivated. Activation and deactivation usually occurs during early childhood when the child is learning by watching their parents actions. Crystallizing and paralyzing experiences are the two keys to the development of the intelligences. Crystallizing experiences are usually "turning points" that wake up sleeping intelligences. Paralyzing experiences are those that "shut down" intelligences. Familial factors, access to resources and mentors, historical and cultural factors as well as geographic and situational factors are some of the environmental influences which can promote or retard the development of the intelligences.

Armstrong, following the suggestions of Gardener (*The Unschooled Mind* , 1991), suggests using the "Christopherian Encounters" approach to expanding the thinking processes of the students. Just as Christopher Columbus challenged the notion that the Earth was flat by sailing safely "over the edge" and returning, thereby showing its curved shape, so too educators must challenge their students' limited beliefs by taking them "over the edge" into areas where they must confront the contradictions in their own thinking.

Using what we know the seven intelligences to be and mean, I am asking teachers to:

1.) Move the students beyond the literal summary of the work.
2.) Devise experiments around which a work of detective fiction is or can be based.
3.) Have students draw a desk that could have been used by a character in a specific work.
4.) Explore the arts and create ways with and without words to express a character's feeling or mood.
5.) Assist students in undoing modern stereotypes of music in bringing a piece of detective fiction to life.
6.) Help students to go beyond the simple motivations in studying the character's place in a piece of literature or history.
7.) Deepen the students' understanding of themselves by relating different parts of the piece of detective fiction to their own personal life experiences and backgrounds.

As most teachers were trained to teach using Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, many will either be wary of accepting a new concept or wonder how this theory of multiple intelligence will work with what they already know. Bloom's Taxonomy states that there are six levels of learning that take place in a students' mind. These six levels are defined as follows:

Knowledge: rote memory skills (facts, terms, procedures and classification systems)
Comprehension: the ability to translate, paraphrase, interpret or extrapolate.
Application: the ability to transfer knowledge from one setting to another.
Analysis: discovering and differentiating the component parts from the whole.
Synthesis: weaving the component parts into a larger whole.
Evaluation: judging the value or utility of information using a set standard.

If we consider each learner's abilities, start each student off working in their area of specialization and move them through the levels of Bloom, then our students will have mastered that particular skill in his or her own way of learning. For example, a person who possesses spatial intelligence may acquire the concept of local environment in the following way:

Knowledge : remember the basic configurations of specific trees. Comprehension: look at diagrams of trees and tell what stage of growth they are in.
Application : use geometric principles to determine the height of the tree.
Analysis : draw the cellular structure of a tree root.
Synthesis : create a landscaping plan using trees as a central feature.
Evaluation : evaluate the practicality of landscaping plans.

The goal of this unit is to create a learning environment in which my students feel that they have access to physical or human resources, and that their home environment or culture is an integral part of the learning process, and not a hindrance. The unit should be taught in such a way that it challenges the students naive beliefs, provokes the questioning and thinking process, invites multiple perspectives, and ultimately stretches the student's mind to the point where it can apply existing knowledge to new situations and novel contexts. In our classrooms and in our daily lives, good problem solvers and detectives are bloodhounds for facts and clues. They are systematic and leave no avenue uncharted no matter how remotely related. They bring past experience and learning to bear in sorting, saving and organizing data pertinent to the investigation. A hypothesis or prediction follows which is either confirmed or disproved. A resolution is the final stage where loose ends are tidied up and the acclaim and the rewards are enjoyed or disappointing results are acknowledged. The problem solver or detective proceeds to new avenues of research or new cases.

The writing of this unit coincides with the writing of the Library Power Grant applications. In keeping all of the information that I have recently learned in mind, I am going to attempt to create a unit that both keeps the school vision in mind as well as establishes a role specifically for the Library Media Specialist. At Jackie Robinson we have an especially helpful Media Specialist. With respect to my unit she will be an integral and indispensable member of this curriculum unit. I am in the process of using her expertise to create a collection of high impact and low reading ability level novels for students of various ages and abilities. She will be utilized as a resource person who will be able to direct students, by computer e-mail, to human resource persons such as pathologists, criminologists and local mystery authors. Together we will make our Library Media Center a Scotland Yard upon which our young sleuths can converge. She will be a significant mentor in teaching students how to search for information, analyze evidence, check and verify sources and use media tools to create an unbeatable case.

GOALS BLOOM'S SIX LEVELS OF EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

(figure available in print form)

LESSON PLANS

ALL GRADES
UNIT INTRODUCTION

Lesson 1 (Linguistic Intelligence) Have students listen to a verbal explanation of the function of deductive reasoning and problem solving, read one of Donald Sobol's "Two-Minute Mysteries" and complete a worksheet requiring them to write out the information which is prior knowledge and the informational clues provided by the culprit.

Lesson 2 (Spatial Intelligence) The teacher draws (places pictures if drawing is not an option) on the board graphic images that correspond to the meaning and form of each step involved in deductive reasoning and problem solving. For example, a picture of a lock with a question mark inside of the key hole represents the motivational set, a magnifying glass represents the search, an old fashioned chemistry set microscope can be representative of analysis, a smoking pipe can represent the hypothesis, a chemistry beaker on a Bunsen burner is representative of verification or testing, and a justice or measurement scale can be representative of the resolution.

Lesson 3 (Bodily Kinesthetic Intelligence) Ask the students to use their bodies to demonstrate each of the six steps used in deductive reasoning.

Lesson 4 (Musical Intelligence): Students make up different sounds to use during the reading of a story and then make those sounds when they think the time is right during a specified reading assignment.

Lesson 5 (:Logical-Mathematical and Interpersonal Intelligence) Students form groups of four to six. Each group is given two "Two-Minute Mysteries" which have been cut into strips. Each group will be given ten minutes to put the stories into order. The students have to work together. Each student has to read aloud one of the sentences form the story that is in front of them, but no student is allowed to reveal his or her lines until they feel that they have arrived at the point in the story where their line should be placed. For example, Tommy reads, "She silently opened the door." Susan can not read, "Nancy sat down in the overstuffed chair." until Mary has read, " She peeked into the room to make sure that no one was there."

Lesson 6 (Intrapersonal Intelligence) Students are asked to create their own short mysteries using each of the six steps to solve the problem. The story should relate to something that could happen at school and they should cast themselves as the sleuth.

Sixth through Eighth Grades

A writing Project

Objectives:

1. The students will be able to write a short mystery which will include several elements.
2. The students will read several of the exploits of Dr. Haledjian from any one of Donald J. Sobol's Two Minute Mysteries series.
3. The students will brainstorm the common attributes of a short mystery.

Activities:

Day 1 Write out the following list of words on the board. Have the students copy it into their notebooks. Together with the students you should try to figure out the meanings of the words from you head. For words that you are unsure of the meanings of, consult the dictionary.

attorney	fingerprint	robbery
burglar	henchman	ruthless
clue	innocent	smuggle
code	intuition	society
convict	investigate	solution
corpse	justice	steal
deduction	motive	surveillance
escape	parole	suspense
evidence	payoff	victim
private eye	witness	

FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigations)

Day 2 Check the second half of the second column and third column of words. Ask the students to tell you the words for which they knew the meanings and check their meanings. Start, if time permits, reading your first selected mystery. Do not give them the solution, let them guess the solution.
Day 3 Read and try to figure out the solution to the stories that you can finish in one class period. You should select and copy at least five stories for one fifty minute class period.
Day 4 On the chalkboard write the words SHORT STORY and MYSTERY below it. Tell the students that what we want to do is figure out what all four of these stories had in common. Elements like characters should be expanded upon.
Day 5 Tell the students that the neighboring town principal's computer was stolen and that there were no other clues. Ask them to write a short story in which they are the detective, the culprit is an undesirable character and the story of the incident is being told to them by another friend.. Remind them that the solution has to be hinted at in some way during the course of the tale.
Homework: Create your own mystery using all of the information from class. Your story should be one full page to one and one half pages long.

The Hound of the Baskervilles

Objective:
The students will be able to demonstrate the concept of

Deductive Reasoning in a variety of ways.

Read Chapter 1 to your students

Pre Reading Activities

Teachers of this unit: Send each and every staff member (teachers, administrators, custodians and cafeteria workers) a brown paper bag labeled with a number. Ask each person to place a few items that will provide clues to his or her identity, such as area of expertise, sex general age, interests and favorite food—but nothing with a picture or name that will give him or her away. For example, I might put in a bookmark, a highlighter pen, a red pen, a seashell with some white sand glued around the edges, a Kent State University or University of Miami sticker, a covered elastic ponytail band and two hair clips. The goal is to have one bag for each student, however pairs of students or small groups could share bags and would benefit from trading observations and ideas.

As you hand out the bags explain that each contains items representing a staff member at school. By observing and analyzing these clues, students are to try to identify the person the items belong to. Have the students work at writing detailed descriptions of the items in their bags. Remind them that keen observation is the key to a detective's success. For example a pink hair ribbon is not just "a ribbon", but "a pink ribbon 12 inches long and 2 inches wide, worn and crinkled from frequent use.

Next have the students reread their observations, then draw a conclusion about their person's identity based on each item. For example, the ribbon indicates the person is female, probably likes pink, and might use the ribbon to hold back long hair. As a last step, point out that many detectives rely on a vast amount of knowledge of human nature in making their deductions. Students should now consider what they know about their teachers and other staff that might illuminate their conclusions.

When students are ready to venture an educated guess, they write a suspect description. In keeping with the mystery mode, ask your student to create a crime that their suspect committed and to include such information as the suspect's physical appearance, employment, food and (nonalcoholic)beverage preferences, present and past residences, hobbies and interests. By this time students are into the spirit of the activity and really use their imaginations in creating their sketches. Along with thinking and writing opportunities, this activity allows students to look at the master detective in a new way.

Active Reading

Have the students read the novel during class time. This will force them to pace themselves and to become more interested in finding out what happens next. Assign one question to be answered and allow one question to be asked (hopefully they will be able to answer it upon completion of the text) upon reading each of the fifteen chapters of the text. Also have the students write down any clues that they find and think are

important while they are reading.

Post Reading

Activity 1:
Students who finish reading early will be one or two class periods ahead of the others. Instead of speeding ahead and hoping that the others will be able to catch up, this activity may well be worth while.

Have students look at their notes and see if they are in line with the notes of the detective in his solution of the case. If they are not, have the students write out the clues that they missed and be prepared to discuss why they thought that these clues were not as important as others.

Activity 2:
If more than one half of the class fails to grasp why the author relied on some clues more than others then this activity may come in handy.

How Writers "Plant" Clues in Plots by Patricia Osborn

> Foreshadow: to give clues or hints that help the reader make educated guesses about how a story will progress or end.

Imagine reading a story of a house, reportedly haunted, on a dark and stormy night. You'd naturally be disappointed if a ghost, real or imaginary, didn't appear as you were led to expect through foreshadowing. Or, a character might warn another of a treacherous undertow that made swimming dangerous. It's likely that someone will be caught in that undertow—and this, too, is an example of foreshadowing.

Directions:
Read the following examples , and explain how each uses foreshadowing. Then, answer the additional questions concerning each. Be prepared to explain the reasons for your answers.

> 1. To George Williams went the distinction of being the first to suggest making Sam Billings the new town-treasurer. The moment he made the nomination at the annual town meeting there was an enthusiastic chorus of approval that resulted in the first unanimous election in the history of Androscoggin. . . .The election of Sam to the office of town treasurer pleased everybody. He was a good business man and he was honest. . . . After he was elected everybody wondered why they had been giving the office to crooks and scoundrels for the past twenty years or more when the public money could have been safe and secure with Sam Billings. The retiring treasurer was still unable to account to everyones satisfaction for about eighteen hundred dollars of the town's money, and the one before him had allowed his books to get into such a tangled condition that it cost the town two hundred and fifty dollars to hire an accountant to make them balance.—"The Rumor" by Erskine Caldwell
> (1) The passage and title seem to foreshadow that _____
> (2) The probable plot order is _____
> (3) The action will likely take place in _____
> (4) What clues are given to the time period of the story? _____

(5) What question about the action is raised in the paragraphs given? _____

2. Pan was a half white, half Chinese girl. Her mother was dead, and Pan lived with her father who kept an Oriental Bazaar on Dupont Street. All her life Pan had lived in Chinatown, and if she were different in any sense from those around her, she gave little thought to it. It was only after the coming of Mark Carson that the mystery of—"Its Wavery Image" by Sui Sin Far

(1) The passage and title seem to foreshadow that _____

(2) The probable plot order is _____

(3) The action will likely take place in _____

(4) What clues are given to the time period of the story? _____

(5) What question about the action is raised in the paragraphs given? _____

Activity 3: The Project by Sue Jones Erlenbusch

Have your students choose one of the following projects or design their own. If they design their own project, then they should fill out the project proposal form provided and submit it to you for approval.

1. Make a diorama of Baskerville Hall in its setting upon the desolate moor.
2. Write a report on Monsieur Bertillon whom Dr. Mortimer described as the highest expert in Europe.
3. Write a report on Neolithic man. Include illustrations of their homes clothing and tools.
4. Write a bio-poem about the author or one of the characters in the story .
5. Make a model of the fiendish hound.
6. Write a biographical sketch of the famous author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.
7. With a group of classmates who have also read the story, create a cast of finger puppets and put on a play based on the story.
8. Sir Henry traveled by ship from Canada to England. When he landed in Southampton, he took a train to London. From Waterloo Station, he took a horse-drawn cab to Baker Street. He and Watson took a train to Devonshire and a wagonette to Baskerville Hall. Draw a map of Sir Henry's journey. Include illustrations of the ship, train, horse-drawn cab and wagonette.

Project Proposal

Name _____ Beginning Date _____ Completion Date_____

Describe the project in detail: _____

Why do you want to do this project? _____

What will the final product be? _____

How will you share your final product? _____

Comments: _____

Activity 4: The Test
Name:_____ Date:_____

The Hound of the Baskervilles

1. Who wrote this book?
    a. John Watson
    b. Robert Newman
    c. Arthur Conan Doyle
2. What did Dr. Mortimer find near the body of Sir Charles Baskerville?
    a. a suicide note.
    b. the footprints of a giant hound.
    c. a loaded revolver.
3. How did Seldon, the escaped convict get food on the barren moor?
    a. He stole it from the shepherds.
    b. His sister sent it to him from the Hall.
    c. He killed sheep and cooked them at night .
4.. Dr. James Mortimer told Holmes that he coveted his
    a. brain
    b. skull
    c. wealth
5. The gray circular rings of stone covering a slope on the moor were
    a. The wigwams of prehistoric man.
    b. a sacred burial ground of the Druids.
    c. a ceremonial site of ancient astronauts.
6. What happened to Sir Henry’s old clothes when his new ones arrived from London?
    a. They were stolen like his boots.
    b. They were sold at a church bazaar.
    c. They were given to Seldon.
7. Mr. Frankland’s daughter was
    a. Mrs. Oldmore of High Lodge, Alton.
    b. Beryl Stampleton of Merripit House.

c. Laura Lyons of Coombe Tracey.

8. The hound probably would not have chased Seldon if he had not
    a. been wearing Sir Henry's old clothes.
    b. accidentally stumbled into its lair.
    c. been carrying a baked ham stolen from the inn.
9. How was Seldon related to Barrymore?
    a. Seldon was Barrymore's younger brother.
    b. Seldon and Barrymore were first cousins.
    c. Barrymore was Seldon's Brother-in-law.
10. Holmes knew it was not Sir Henry's body when he discovered that the dead man
    a. was bald.
    b. was tall and lean.
    c. had a beard.
11. How did Holmes figure out that Stapleton was a Baskerville?
    a. He examined the old court records.
    b. Stapleton's wife told him so.
    c. He noticed a resemblance to Sir Hugo .
12. The hound was part _____ and part _____.
    a. bloodhound / mastiff.
    b. Irish wolfhound / German Shepherd.
    c. Doberman / Rottweiler.
13. Beryl told Holmes that he could find Stapleton
    a. on a slow boat to China.
    b. in an old tin mine on an island in the heart of the Mire.
    c. in a long-forgotten tunnel between Merripit House and Baskerville Hall.
14. How did Sir Henry soothe his shattered nerves?
    a. He underwent shock therapy in Edinburgh, Scotland.
    b. He traveled around the world with Dr. Mortimer.
    c. He traveled to India to learn how to meditate.
15. Who shot the hound to death?
    a. Sir Henry.
    b. Watson.
    c. Holmes.

Essay Please choose one.

Please retell as accurately as you can all of the clues that Sherlock Holmes found and used to solve the mystery. How did they come together to form the logical conclusion that Holmes came to. or

Using your book, find two places where Sherlock Holmes brings previously known information to the case to help in the discovery of clues and the solution of the case. Discuss why this information was necessary to the solution of this case.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Armstrong, Thomas: *Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom* The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Virginia. 1994. A great resource for understanding how differently people learn.

Ambrose, Tamara: *Middle Years Magazine* . "My Dear Middle Schoolers". Scholastic Inc. New York. Jan./Feb., 1995. An excellent resource for teachers of middle school children.

Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan: *The Hound of the Baskervilles* . Worthington Press, Florida, 1994. A timeless tale of murder and mystery, excellent for teaching problem solving skills.

Erlenbusch, Sue Jones. *Tales of Mystery, Suspense and Supernatural* . Center for Applied Research in Education. New York, 1995. A great resource for teachers of this unit who would like to teach mysteries on other levels.

Flack, Jerry D. *Mystery and Detection: Thinking and Problem Solving with the Sleuths* . Teacher Ideas Press. Colorado, 1990. A great resourse for ideas for teaching mysteries. Its audience is the teacher of gifted students, however the information can be modified as all students are gifted in many ways.

Kesling, Robert. *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine* . "Unsolved". Bantam Doubleday Dell Magazine. Iowa, 1995. A great resource for current mysteries by many not so well known authors whose works are excellent.

Muschla, Gary R. *The Writing Teacher's Book of Lists* . Prentice Hall. New Jersey, 1991 A practical approach for incorporating writing into the literature based curriculum.

Osborne, Patricia. *Reading Smarter* . "Unit 10 Ready for Action—Plot". Center for Applied Research in Education. New York, 1995. A worksheet filled idea book designed to get students to read smarter.

Poe, Edgar Allan. Tales of Edgar Allan Poe The Franklin Library Pennsylvania, 1979. A complete anthology of the prose writings of Edgar Allan Poe. Sobol, Donald J. Encyclopedia Brown Takes the Case. Bantam Skylark Books. New York, 1988. An excellent introduction to the work of the young super sleuth.

Sobol, Donald J. *Two Minute Mysteries* . Apple Paperbacks of Scholastic Inc. New York, 1967. A great resource to use to teach students about the parts and the writing of detective fiction.

Tierney, Robert J. et.al.. *Reading Strategies and Practices: A Compendium* . Allyn and Bacon, Inc.. Boston, 1985. An excellent resource for the reading teacher who is seeking to create new materials for the reading classroom.

Student's Reading List

5th Grade

Encyclopedia Brown: Takes the Cas e by Donald Sobol. New York: Bantam Skylark, 1967. 103 pages.

The Arm of the Starfish by Madeline L'Engle. New York: Dell, 1965. 240 pages.

Something Upstairs by Avi. New York: Avon, 1988. 116 pages.

Deadly Stranger by Peg Kehret. Mahwah, NJ: Troll, 1987. 174 pages.

Eat Your Poison Dea r by James Howe. New York: Avon, 1986. 121pages.

6th Grade

Down a Dark Hall by Lois Duncan. New York: Dell 1974. 181pages.

The Callender Papers by Cynthia Voigt. New York: Ballentine, 1983. 182 pages.

The Third Eye by Lois Duncan. New York: Dell, 1984. 220 pages.

The Truth Trap by Frances A. Miller. New York: Ballentine, 1980. 197 pages.

7th and 8th Grades

The Cat Who Talked to Ghosts by Lillian Jackson Braun. New York; Jove Books, 1990. 218 pages.

The Hound of the Baskervilles by Arthur Conan Doyle. Florida: Worthington Press, 1994. 203 Pages.

I Know What You Did Last Summer by Lois Duncan. New York: Pocket Books, 1973. 198 pages.

Murder at the Vicarage by Agatha Christie. New York: Dell, 1973. 198 pages.

Teacher's Resource List

In addition to one copy of each of the books selected above just for you to read, enjoy and take notes in, here are some other resources you might find helpful:

Tales of Mystery, Suspense and the Supernatural by Sue Jones Erlenbusch, Ed.D. Center for Applied Research in Education, 1995 More than 200 ready to use Quizzes, Projects, Activities & Listening Lessons for grades four through eighth.

The Writing Teacher's Book of Lists by Gary R. Muschla. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991. A practical approach to teaching writing using a literature based curriculum.