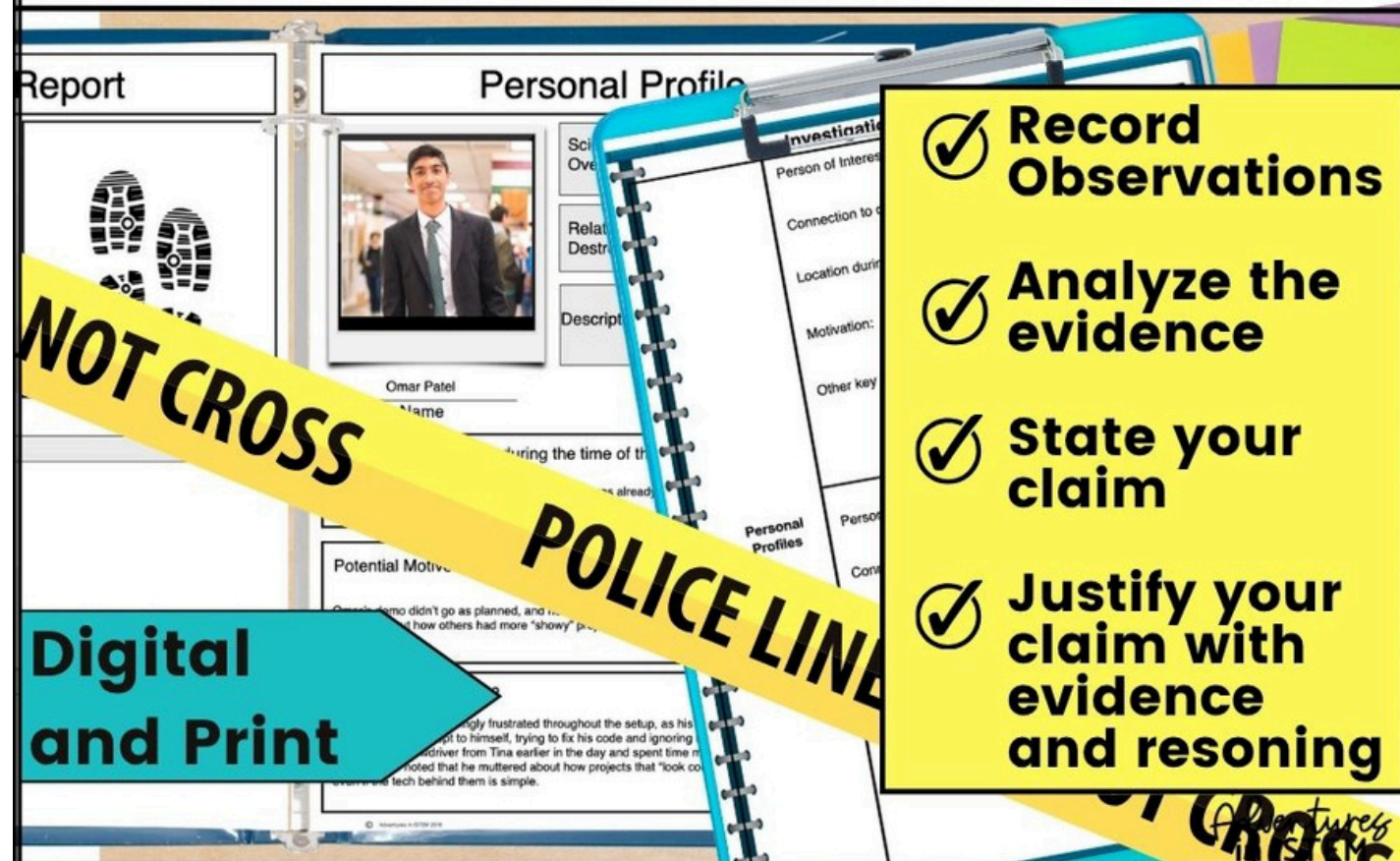


CSI INVESTIGATION

CER Practice

Forensic Science



Case of the Sabotaged Robot
Introduction to CER

Scroll Through

To take a peek inside!

Help students analyze data, pull out key details from passages, and then share their findings in a CER.

Resource *includes*

- ✓ **Teacher presentation**
- ✓ **Student journal**
- ✓ **Police reports**
- ✓ **Forensic reports**
- ✓ **writing template**
- ✓ **Grading rubric**
- ✓ **Sentence starters and student self-assessment checklist**

CSI INVESTIGATION

CER Practice



The image shows two overlapping 'Evidence Report' forms. The front form is highlighted with a red border and has a hand holding a green marker writing on it. The back form is partially visible and has a blue border. Both forms contain the following information:

Evidence Report

DETAILED REPORT:

Item No. : FGR02
Case No. : USLE1542
Date of Collection: 05/09/2025
Collected by: Officer Valeria Chen
Location of Collection:
Gymnasium, Redwood Middle School
1025 Pine St.
Ferndale, CA 48069

DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE:

Sample of drink found on the table of Tina Marshal. The
as orange soda.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY:

Received From: Officer Valeria Chen
Received By: Darik Smith
Date Processed: 05/25/2025

EVIDENCE:

542
05/09/2025
icer Valeria Chen
n:
Middle School

The forms also feature illustrations of evidence containers: an orange-capped vial on the front form and a blue-capped vial on the back form.

DO YOUR STUDENTS STRUGGLE WITH



Interpreting data



Finding the key details in passages



Using evidence to support a claim



Using reasoning to link the evidence to the claim



I've Got You Covered

- ✓ Engaging lesson where the students become the detectives
- ✓ Data tables to interpret
- ✓ Police report for students to pull out key details
- ✓ Journal to help students record their observations
- ✓ Sentence support to help them write their CER



This activity was a great way to work on CER without being too "science-y." I teach 9th grade instructional biology and this was just the right amount of science and writing. My students lose interest very quickly and solving the mystery kept them guessing. After every piece of evidence, they were were trying to figure out how he died. Great resource!- Carolynn

CSI INVESTIGATION CER Practice

The image shows three overlapping forms. The top form is an 'Evidence Report' with a yellow border, containing fields for 'Item No.', 'Case No.', and 'Date of Collection', along with a fingerprint image. The middle form is a 'Personal Profile' for Omar Patel, featuring a photo, a 'Science Fair Project Overview', 'Relationship to Destroyed Robot', 'Descriptors', and several text boxes with incident details. The bottom form is another 'Evidence Report' with a green border, containing fields for 'Item No.', 'Case No.', 'Date of Collection', 'Collected by', 'Location of Collection', 'DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE', and 'OF CUSTODY'.

Evidence Report (Yellow Border)

Item No. : MJW02
Case No. : USLE1542
Date of Collection: 05/09/2025

Personal Profile (Blue Border)

Science Fair Project Overview
Voice-activated AI assistant

Relationship to Destroyed Robot:
Borrowed tools from creator

Descriptors:
Indian, short straight black hair, 5'8", 130 lbs, wears size 9 high-top sneakers

Omar Patel
Name

Where was the person during the time of the incident?
He was seen leaving school late, after the gym was already locked.

Potential Motive?
Omar's demo didn't go as planned, and he seemed discouraged by the outcome. He made frustrated remarks about how others had more "showy" projects and worried his would be overlooked.

Additional information?
Omar appeared increasingly frustrated throughout the setup, as his voice-activated assistant failed to work properly. He kept to himself, trying to fix his code and ignoring most of the other students. He borrowed a screwdriver from Tina earlier in the day and spent time making adjustments at his booth. A few students noted that he muttered about how projects that "look cool" always get more attention, even if the tech behind them is simple.

Evidence Report (Green Border)

Item No. : SBK02
Case No. : USLE1542
Date of Collection: 05/09/2025
Collected by: Officer Valeria Chen
Location of Collection:
Gymnasium, Redwood Middle School
1025 Pine St.
Ferdale, CA 48069

DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE:
Fabric swatch of Tina Marshal

OF CUSTODY:
Received From: Officer Valeria Chen
Date Received: 05/09/2025
Received By: Darik Smith
Processed: 05/25/2025

What Are *students* Doing?

- ✓ Reading police reports
- ✓ Analyzing and interpreting data from the forensic reports

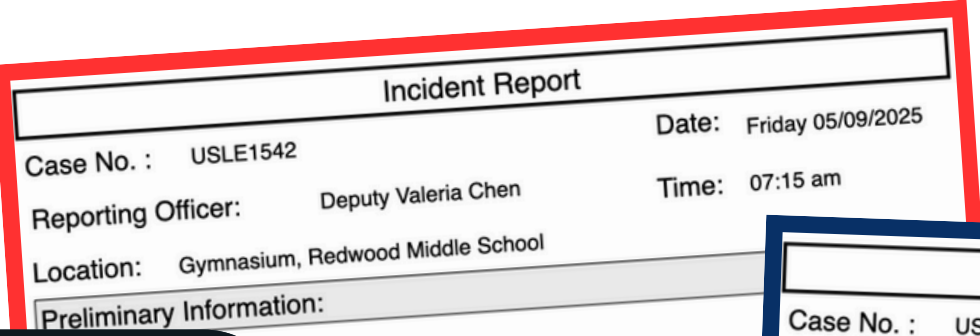
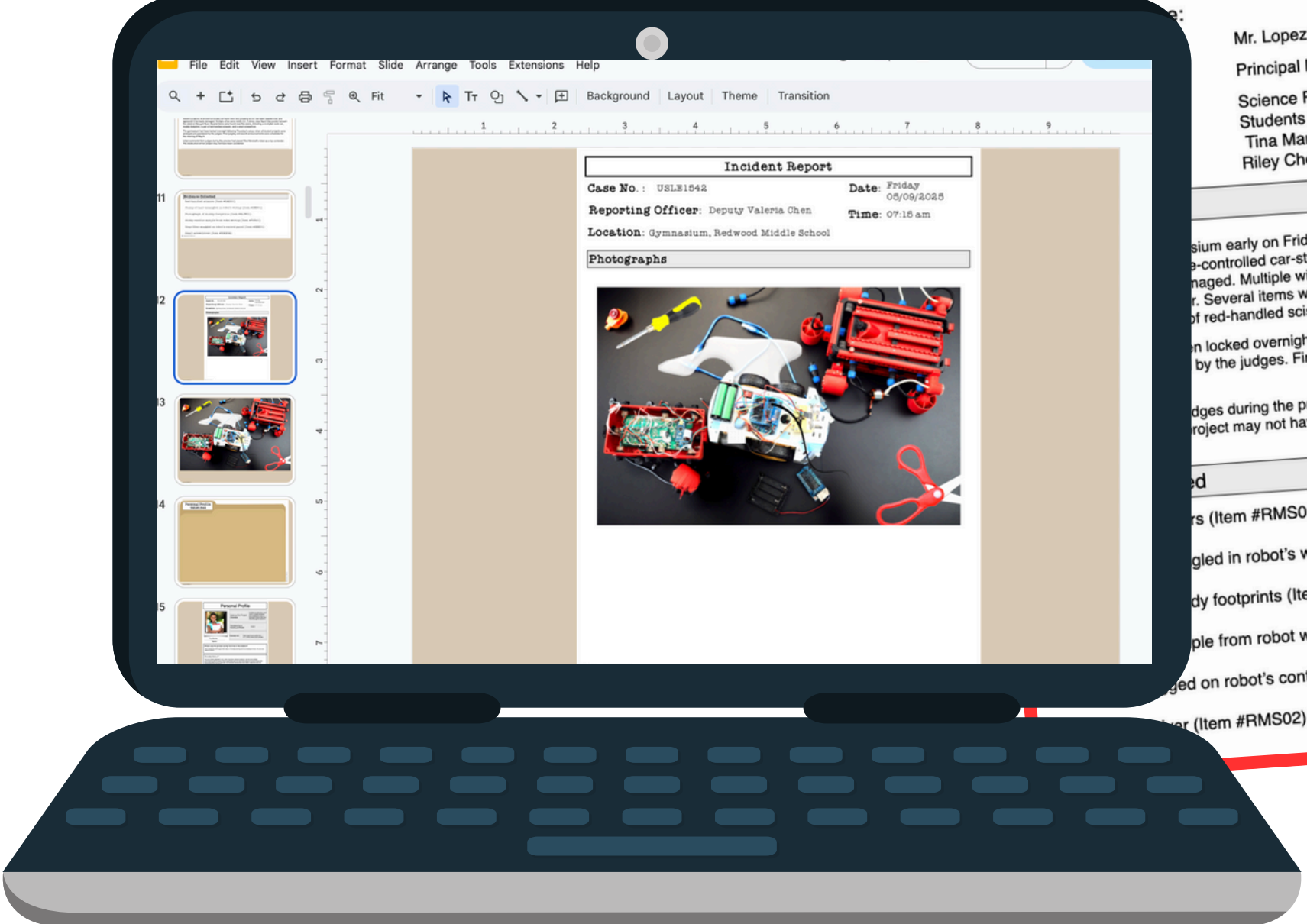
Fingerprint, footprint, DNA, Chemical Analysis, fabric analysis

- ✓ Organizing their thoughts
- ✓ Answering the question as to what happened using claim, evidence, reasoning

Introduce the Case and have students go through the police reports

 **Student journal**

 **Police reports**



Mr. Lopez – Janitor (discovered damage)
Principal Daniels
Science Fair Judges (arriving later that morning)
Students arriving later that morning:
Tina Marshall, Jayden Scott, Lena Gomez
Riley Chen, Omar Patel

...sium early on Friday morning, the janitor discovered the
e-controlled car-style robot with gripping arms, had been
amaged. Multiple wires were visibly cut. A sticky, clear li
r. Several items were found near the scene, including
of red-handled scissors, and a small screwdriver.

...n locked overnight following Thursday's setup, when
by the judges. Final judging and award announceme

...dges during the preview had placed Tina Marshall's r
project may not have been accidental.

...ed

...rs (Item #RMS01)

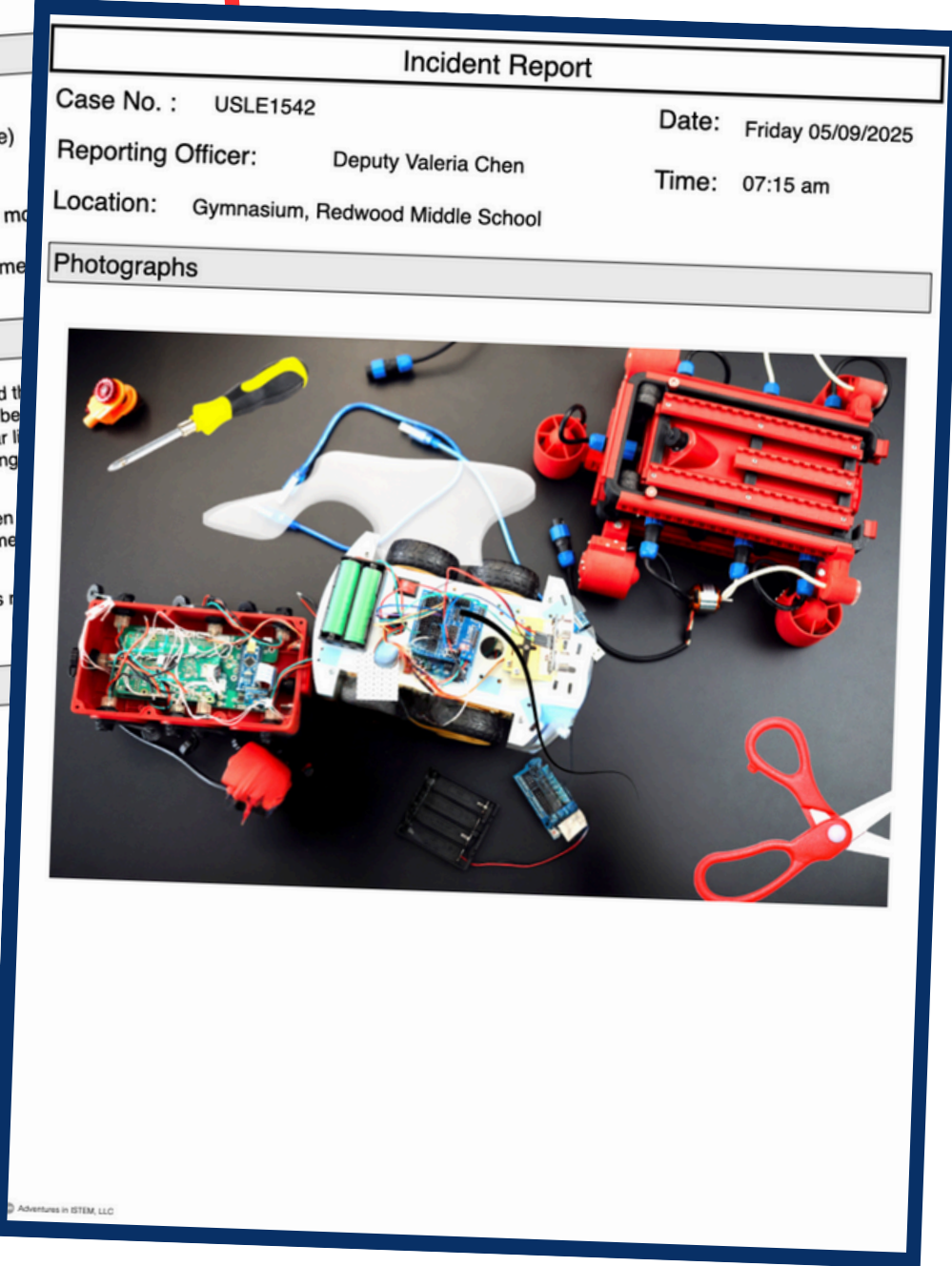
...gled in robot's wiring (Item #DEB01)

...dy footprints (Item #MJW01)

...ple from robot wiring (Item #FGR01)


...ged on robot's control panel (Item #SBK01)

...or (Item #RMS02)



Next, have them look at the different profiles of the suspects

Personal Profile



Name: Tina Marshal

Science Fair Project Overview: [Text partially obscured]

Relationship to Destroyed Robot: [Text partially obscured]


Descriptors: [Text partially obscured]

Where was the person during the time of the incident?
She claimed she left the gym after setup on Sunday and returned to her room there to confirm.

Potential Motive?
Tina was widely expected to win, which may have led to confrontations with her peers. Some classmates noted her being disqualified the previous year. Her frustration during the project space was disturbed.

Additional information?
Tina argued with Riley during setup. Riley felt that Tina's behavior was disrespectful. She asked Riley to move the robot, leading to a brief confrontation. Eventually, she could adjust part of his project. Through the incident, it was clear that winning this year's science fair was important to her.

Personal Profile



Name: Lena Gomez

Science Fair Project Overview: [Text partially obscured]

Relationship to Destroyed Robot: [Text partially obscured]


Descriptors: Hispanic, dark hair, 5'6", blue eyes

Where was the person during the time of the incident?
Returned home late and wet from the rain. Parents confirmed her return, but she was not seen during the incident.

Potential Motive?
Lena was removed from Tina's project team shortly before the fair. She reported to friends she had put in a lot of early work that wouldn't be recognized. She was unusually quiet during setup and didn't enter her own project.

Additional information?
Lena spent most of Sunday moving between tables and talking to classmates, but she was not seen during the incident. Several students noted that she looked withdrawn and frustrated. When asked where they started, she mentioned she had "put in enough work already" and that she was angry about the robot team.

Personal Profile



Name: Jayden Scott

Science Fair Project Overview: [Text partially obscured]

Relationship to Destroyed Robot: [Text partially obscured]


Descriptors: [Text partially obscured]

Where was the person during the time of the incident?
He said he was playing video games at his cousin's house during the time of the incident.

Potential Motive?
Jayden's robot was similar in appearance to Tina's but was not as well-developed. He was negatively impacted when judges and classmates praised Tina's project over his. He argued with Tina and appeared frustrated afterward.

Additional information?
Jayden clashed with Tina after borrowing her scissors. The incident led to a tense moment between them. He spent most of the day occasionally glancing toward Tina's robot. According to several judges, they praised her work. He was also overheard saying "I'm going to win this year."

Personal Profile



Name: Marco Yates

Science Fair Project Overview: [Text partially obscured]

Relationship to Destroyed Robot: [Text partially obscured]


Descriptors: Black, short hair, glasses

Where was the person during the time of the incident?
Parents say he was home watching a movie on the night of the sabotage.

Potential Motive?
Marco didn't appear to take the competition seriously and was overheard making fun of several projects, including Tina's. Some students said he seemed annoyed that he wasn't drawing attention.

Additional information?
Marco spent much of the setup joking with other students and was heard making fun of Tina's robot, calling it "creepy" and "trying too hard." He joked more than he should "knock it over before it wins everything." Several classmates saw him running away from the gym 30 minutes after the incident. He claimed he had returned to retrieve a folder he had forgotten. Although he didn't seem focused on winning, his project received little attention, which may have annoyed him.

Personal Profile



Name: Omar Patel

Science Fair Project Overview: [Text partially obscured]

Relationship to Destroyed Robot: [Text partially obscured]

Descriptors: [Text partially obscured]

Where was the person during the time of the incident?
He was seen leaving school late, after the gym was already locked.

Potential Motive?
Omar's demo didn't go as planned, and he seemed discouraged. He made negative remarks about how others had more "showy" projects and was frustrated.

Additional information?
Omar appeared increasingly frustrated throughout the setup. He kept to himself, trying to fix his code and make his robot work properly. He kept to himself, trying to fix his code and make his robot work properly. He borrowed a screwdriver from Tina earlier in the day and spent most of the day. A few students noted that he muttered about how projects that were simple were better than even if the tech behind them is simple.

Personal Profile



Name: Riley Chen

Science Fair Project Overview: [Text partially obscured]

Relationship to Destroyed Robot: [Text partially obscured]

Descriptors: Asian, medium-length straight black hair, 5'1" 105 lbs, wears size 5 walking sneakers

Where was the person during the time of the incident?
She claimed she was at a sleepover and left early. Friends confirm the visit, but not the exact departure time.


Potential Motive?
Riley was clearly frustrated that Tina's large robot display blocked the visibility of her drone project. She was observed adjusting the robot's position, which led to a tense verbal exchange between her and Tina.

Additional information?
Riley became frustrated during setup when she realized Tina's robot display was partially blocking the view of her drone project. She tried to move it slightly, which led to a heated exchange between the two. She later complained to a teacher that her project was being unfairly placed and overshadowed. Other students said Riley seemed more tense than usual and was heavily focused on how the judges were perceiving her project.

Then, have them review the various forensic evidence: They will match the fingerprints, footprints, DNA, and fabric of the suspects to those found at the crime scene, and match the liquid at the crime scene to the liquids they were drinking.

Evidence Report

DETAILED REPORT:
Item No. : RMS01
Case No. : USLE1542
Date of Collection: 05/09/2025
Collected by: Officer Valeria Chen
Location of Collection:
Gymnasium, Redwood Middle School
1025 Pine St.
Ferndale, CA 48069



DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE:
Fingerprints found on the scissors next to the destroyed robot

CHAIN OF CUSTODY:
Received From: Officer Valeria Chen
Received By: Darik Smith
Date Processed: 05/25/2025

Evidence Report


DETAILED REPORT:
Item No. : DEB02
Case No. : USLE1542
Date of Collection: 05/09/2025
Collected by: Officer Valeria Chen
Location of Collection:
Gymnasium, Redwood Middle School
1025 Pine St.
Ferndale, CA 48069

DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE:
Hair sample of Tina Marshal

CHAIN OF CUSTODY:
Received From: Officer Valeria Chen
Received By: Darik Smith
Date Processed: 05/25/2025

Evidence Report

DETAILED REPORT:
Item No. : FGR02
Case No. : USLE1542
Date of Collection: 05/09/2025
Collected by: Officer Valeria Chen
Location of Collection:
Gymnasium, Redwood Middle School
1025 Pine St.
Ferndale, CA 48069




DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE:
Sample of drink found on the table of Tina Marshal. The drink was as orange soda.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY:
Received From: Officer Valeria Chen
Received By: Darik Smith
Date Processed: 05/25/2025

Evidence Report

DETAILED REPORT:
Item No. : MJW01
Case No. : USLE1542
Date of Collection: 05/09/2025
Collected by: Officer Valeria Chen
Location of Collection:
Gymnasium, Redwood Middle School
1025 Pine St.
Ferndale, CA 48069




DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE:
Photograph of a muddy footprint found on the gym floor from the entrance door with the destroyed robot.

CHAIN OF CUSTODY:
Received From: Officer Valeria Chen
Received By: Darik Smith
Date Processed: 05/25/2025

Evidence Report

DETAILED REPORT:
Item No. : SBK03
Case No. : USLE1542
Date of Collection: 05/09/2025
Collected by: Officer Valeria Chen
Location of Collection:
Gymnasium, Redwood Middle School
1025 Pine St.
Ferndale, CA 48069



DESCRIPTION OF EVIDENCE:
Fabric swatch of Lena Gomez

CHAIN OF CUSTODY:
Received From: Officer Valeria Chen
Received By: Darik Smith
Date Processed: 05/25/2025

Students will put all of their findings and state what happened using a claim, evidence, reasoning paragraph

Investigation Notebook

Person of Interest:
 Connection to destroyed robot:
 Location during crime:
 Motivation:
 Other key information:

Personal Profiles

Person of Interest:
 Connection to destroyed robot:
 Location during crime:
 Motivation:
 Other key information:

Investigation Notebook

Fingerprint analysis - scissors:
 Fingerprint analysis - screwdriver:
 DNA analysis - hair sample:
 Chemical analysis - sticky liquid sample:
 Footprint analysis:
 Fabric analysis:

Evidence Reports

Evidence

Reasoning

Investigation Note

Question: Who sabotaged the robot?

Claim:

Evidence (include only the important details from your evidence):

Reasoning (explain the evidence and draw your conclusion):

Claim, Evidence, and Reasoning

Claim
 The claim answers the question. It states what you think. It is written in a scientific sentence using academic language. There should be no "I" in the statement.

Some sentence frames to help you write your claim statement

- The robot was sabotaged by...
- _____ was the person who destroyed the robot.

Evidence
 The evidence is the actual observations and forensic evidence from the lab.

Some sentence frames to help you write your evidence statements

- The forensic evidence showed _____.
- According to the _____ report _____.
- During the crime investigation, _____.
- It was discovered that _____.
- Furthermore, ...
- Additionally, ...

Reasoning
 The reasoning explains why the evidence supports the claim. It uses knowledge that is already known from science class and real world knowledge to link the evidence to the claim.

Some sentence frames to help you write your reasoning statement

- This indicates _____.
- This supports the claim because _____.
- This is important because _____.
- This suggests that _____.
- I know _____.
- Therefore, I can conclude _____.

HOW TO USE THE RESOURCE IN

3 simple steps

1 Print the PDF version, make copies, and hand out to students

2 Use the digital version by clicking the titles in the RED BOX to make your own copy (found at the end of the PDF)

3 Share the resource with your students using your favorite LMS (Google Classroom, Powerschool (schoolology), Canva...)

Student CER self-assessment

Claim

- Includes the names of the chemicals in the experiment
- States if a chemical reaction occurred or not
- States the answer to the question

Evidence

- States where the information comes from (according to the data, during the experiment..)
- Includes observations found in the data table
- Includes actual numbers when appropriate

Reasoning

- Explains how the evidence supports the claim
- States why the evidence is important
- Includes a concluding sentence

Mechanics

- No spelling errors
- No grammar errors
- Easy to read
- Includes transition words or sentences

CSI INVESTIGATION

CER Practice

Student CER self-assessment

Claim

Includes the keywords from the question

States the answer to the question

Evidence

According to the data,

graph

SCIENTIFIC EXPLANATION

Grading Rubric

	4	3	2	1	0
Claim	Claim is clear, answers the question, and is supported by evidence.	Claim answers the question, and is supported by evidence.	Claim is clear, answers the question, but is not supported by evidence.	Claim answers the question, but is not supported by evidence.	No claim is stated.
Evidence	Provides appropriate and sufficient evidence that includes measurements or observations that have been analyzed and interpreted to support the claim.	Provides appropriate and sufficient evidence to support the claim.	Provides appropriate but insufficient evidence to support the claim or also includes inappropriate evidence.	Provides inappropriate evidence that does not support the claim.	No evidence is given to support the claim.
Reasoning	Explains correctly, using scientific principles, why the evidence is included and how it supports the claim.	Explains correctly why the evidence is included or how it supports the claim, but both are missing.	Explains why the evidence is included or how it supports the claim, but one is missing.	Explains why the evidence is included or how it supports the claim, but one is missing.	No explanation is given.
Mechanics	The writing is easy to follow, using academic language and details. Contains no grammar or spelling errors.	The writing is easy to follow, using academic language and details. Contains a few grammar or spelling errors.	The writing is easy to follow, using academic language and details. Contains a few grammar or spelling errors.	The writing is easy to follow, using academic language and details. Contains a few grammar or spelling errors.	The writing is difficult to follow, using informal language and lacks details. Contains many grammar or spelling errors.

Comments:

Check out what teachers just like you have said about products like this:



I have to give my students multiple opportunities to write argument essays over the school year. I always love having new ways to explain this process. This was a fun activity that really helped my students understand what to do.- Megan

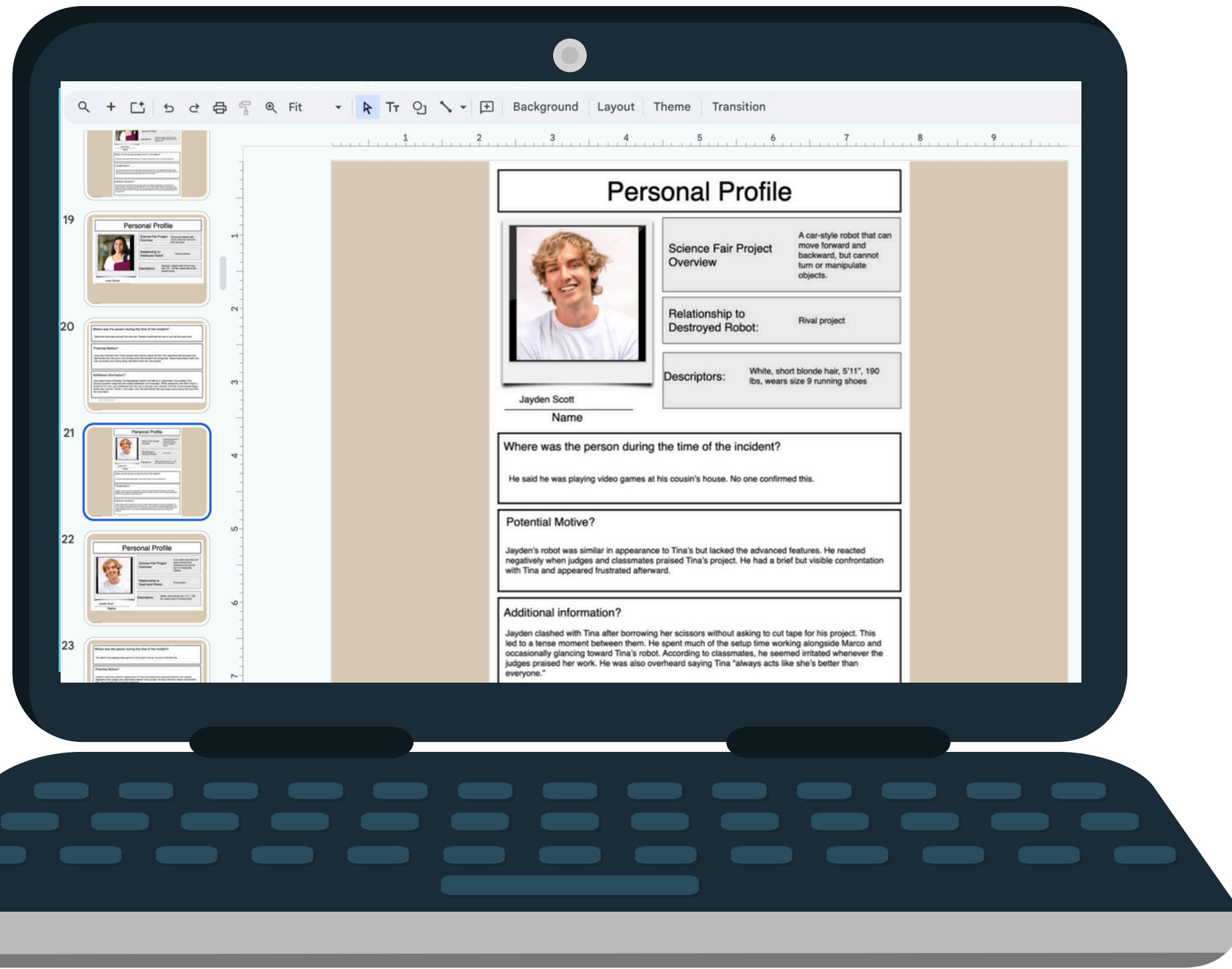


This was a fantastic way of reviewing CER with my students! They were engaged from the get-go! This year, my students are all about crimes and solving mysteries. This resource allowed them to get into the crime and use their CER skills to determine who might have committed the crime. I kept it open-ended, if they had solid evidence to prove someone's guilt, then they got the points. I was amazed at how creative they got with the evidence, and how invested they were in solving the crime! Thank you so much for creating this resource, it was amazing!- Heather



My students loved this activity so much! They were so into solving the "crime" that they didn't even realize the work they were putting in! An excellent way for them to practice CER in little steps and then allow them to put it all together!- Brea

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Add one to cart

2. Check out securely

3. Download right away

Download

4. Use with your class

5. Leave a review on your My Purchases page to get reward points to spend on new resources!

Leave a review

Get a FULL YEAR of CER Practice Problems

Included in this FULL YEAR of claim evidence reasoning CER practice problems:

- ✓ Introduction to writing claim evidence reasoning paragraphs with sentence choices for each part to guide them.
- ✓ Introduction to CER Forensic science CSI investigation to use as a fun introduction activity for writing their own CER paragraphs
- ✓ 36 experiments and studies to analyze
- ✓ Simple one-page background information sheet to explain the topics
- ✓ Four different scientific explanation summary templates
- ✓ Grading rubric
- ✓ Student Self-assessment checklist
- ✓ Graphic organizers
- ✓ Sentence frames for those who need extra support
- ✓ BONUS: Teacher guided presentation to help students go through and answer the practice questions ONLY available if you buy the bundle

“ Fabulous resource! My students learned a ton & perfectly aligned with NGSS standards ”

CER Activity

Language Support

PPT & Rubric

Digital and Print

Full Year

Practice Problems

Adventures in ISTEM



Adventures in ISTEM

Thank You for taking the time to visit my store and downloading one of my products. I am excited to be a part of your teaching journey.



Giving Back



Cancer affects not only the person but everyone they know. A portion of the proceeds of this product goes to the LLS organization, which helps fund treatments and find a cure.



Be sure to follow me on TPT for updates on products and notification of similar products

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