



MESA DAY CONTEST RULES

2022-2023

(DRAFT)

Crime Scene Science (Pilot Competition)

LEVEL:	Middle School (MS)
DIVISION(S):	Grades 6-8 (combined)
COMPOSITION OF TEAM:	2-3 students per team
NUMBER OF TEAMS:	Preliminary – Determined by your local MESA center Regional – NO regional event
SPONSORS:	University of Southern California MESA College Prep Fresno State MESA College Prep

OVERVIEW: Are you interested in science and solving mysteries? Are you able to showcase your knowledge of life science? This is your opportunity! Your team is invited to collaborate using your knowledge of science to solve this new mystery working your way through a crime scene using your knowledge of punnett squares and plant cells including designing and constructing a model microscope that tests your science skills! **Participation logistics, limits, and competition facilities may vary by host site. Advisors and students are responsible for verifying this information with their local MESA center. This competition will be in-person and will continue to be a pilot for 2022-2023, depending on your local MESA center. These competition rules are designed for an in-person event.**

A science journal is a required component of this competition. The purpose of the Science Journal is not only to help guide students through some of the information surrounding the competition but also aligns with the process that scientists follow while completing research. MESA projects are not designed to be completed in a single class period or day, but to be the result of thoughtful research, planning, analysis and evaluation. Keeping a science journal throughout the process will help to keep a designer on track, using a logical progression of planning, in order to develop their project efficiently.

MATERIALS: For the Science Journal, **electronic submissions will be required.** Teams should use an electronic portal/application such as Google Docs to keep and maintain a science journal. Access and permission to the science journal is then given to MESA Day staff and judges OR science journal is submitted electronically (e.g.,

PDF file) for review. **Please check with your local MESA center for the deadline and submission platform to submit your team's science journal for local events.**

The Host Center will provide the following:

- Answer Sheet
- A series of questions will be given to each team
- Pencils
- Any materials/tools required by the challenge
- Stop watch
- Microscope
- Table

GENERAL RULES:

- 1) Each team members' full name, school name, and MESA center must be completely filled out on the answer sheet. If any of the above items are incomplete, the team will receive a penalty of 10%.
- 2) Teams must consist of 2 to 3 students. Teams consisting of 1 student will not be allowed to compete.
- 3) Teams will be allotted 20 minutes to solve the crime.
- 4) Answer sheets will be placed on a table in front of judges; teams must return to the answer sheet after every question and write answers in front of judges.
 - a. Students may NOT change answers once submitted.
- 5) Each clue must be answered before moving on to the next question and receiving the next clue in the case.
- 6) Only answers submitted in the designated format or location will be scored.
- 7) The clues will be based on the ones provided by the host and vary from punnett squares, genotypes, phenotypes, and types of plant or animal cells.
- 8) Scratch paper is not allowed as each clue is printed on a separate sheet of paper. Teams may use both sides of the clue sheet to solve the problem if needed. Any additional work done on the blank part of the answer sheet or clue sheet will NOT be used for scoring purposes.
 - a. Only answers written on the final answer sheet are evaluated for scoring purposes.
- 9) Books, notes, or other resource materials may not be used on the day of the competition.
- 10) Cell phones, laptops, ipads, smart watches, or any other electronic devices are strictly prohibited.
- 11) Teams will be required to submit a science journal with the following requirements **(an incomplete science journal with 1 or 2 missing requirements will receive a 20% penalty/deduction from total score and one missing 3 or more requirements or not submitted will receive a 50% penalty/deduction from the total score):**
 - a. The students' full name, grade level, school name and MESA center must be clearly labeled/identified in the Science Journal. A 10% penalty in the score will be assessed for failing to properly label.
 - b. Using one to two sentences, answer the following questions:
 - i. How many genes do humans have?
 - ii. What is a chromosome?
 - iii. Are children identical to their parents? Why or why not?
 - c. Sketch of DNA with labeled parts (sketches can be hand drawn or computer generated):
 - i. Adenine
 - ii. Thymine

- iii. Guanine
- iv. Cytosine
- v. Sugar phosphate backbone
- d. Define the scientific terms and provide **ONE (1) example** for each of the following:
 - i. Phenotype
 - ii. Genotype
 - iii. Punnett squares - Please use parents Xx and Yy for your example (this counts as your example, no need to create another)
- e. Using two to three sentences, what are the differences between animal and plant cells?
 - i. Please include a sketch of an animal and plant cells and label all parts and highlight the differences between them (sketches can be hand drawn or computer generated).
- f. Sketch of Microscope with labeled parts (sketches can be hand drawn or computer generated):
 - i. Arm
 - ii. Head
 - iii. Ocular Lens/Eyepiece
 - iv. Objective Lens
 - v. Slide Holder Clips
 - vi. Focus adjustment knob
 - vii. On/Off Switch
 - viii. Illuminator/Light Source
 - ix. Base
 - x. Stage

JUDGING:

- 1) Lead contest judge will assemble all teams and review the event guidelines and judging criteria.
- 2) Teams will be assigned a random number to determine the order teams will compete in.
- 3) Teams will be asked to wait outside of the room. One team will enter the room for competition (centers may choose to have more than one team to compete at a time).
- 4) A table will be placed in front of the room where an answer sheet will be placed for each individual team.
- 5) Microscope and materials needed for competition will be placed on another table for competing teams.
- 6) Each team will receive details about the crime scene and Question #1 in a sealed envelope. When the team has the answer, they must go to the table where the answer sheet is and enter their answer. Once they enter an answer, they will receive the next question envelope; **even if the previous answer is incorrect they will proceed to the next question.**
- 7) Once the lead judge has signaled the beginning of the competition, teams may open the envelope and begin solving the first question.
- 8) Teams will have 20 minutes to complete the investigation. Once the 20 minutes are over, teams will be asked to stop and to place materials down and will not be allowed to enter answers on the answer sheet.
- 9) Proctors will record the time for completion (i.e., the total time the team used to complete all of the clues); this recorded time will be used in the tie-breaker process.

SCORING:

- 1) Science Journal = up to 55 points
- 2) Crime Clues = up to 100 points
- 3) Tiebreaker: recorded time where the team who completed the questions faster (in the least amount of time with more time left) will place ahead of the other.

AWARDS:

- Ribbons will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.
- This Pilot competition concludes at preliminary events and will not move on to regional events.

ATTACHMENTS/APPENDIX:

- Next Generation Science Standard
- Science Concept Resources
- Suggested Microscope and Slides
- Score Sheet for Crime Scene Science

Next Generation Science Standard

The specific Next Generation Science Standard link this competition covers is below:

- [MS-LS3-2 Heredity: Inheritance and Variation of Traits](#)
 - **Develop and use a model to describe why asexual reproduction results in offspring with identical genetic information and sexual reproduction results in offspring with genetic variation.** [Clarification Statement: Emphasis is on using models such as Punnett squares, diagrams, and simulations to describe the cause and effect relationship of gene transmission from parent(s) to offspring and resulting genetic variation.]

Science Concept Resources

The following science concepts can be used in any variation in the challenges:

- Microscope: identification of parts and how to use it.
- Types of cells including animal and plant.
- Pattern identification.
- Phenotype
- Genotype
- Punnett squares
- Parts of the cell: both animal and plant.

Vocabulary:

- Hereditary
- Genes
- Recessive
- Genotype
- Phenotype
- Punnett square
- Homozygous
- Heterozygous

Suggested Microscope and Slides

- [Microscope](#)
- [Slides](#)

SCORE SHEET FOR CRIME SCENE SCIENCE

Middle School - Grades 6-8

Copies of this score sheet will be provided by the MESA Day Host Center.

Student Names:

SCHOOL: _____ MS CENTER: _____

SCIENCE JOURNAL						TOTAL
Genes, Chromosome, Parents and Children: ____/5	Sketch of DNA with correctly labeled parts: ____/10	Phenotype Definition & Example: ____/4	Genotype Definition & Example: ____/4	Punnett Square Definition & Example: ____/8	Plant v.s. animal cell written differences: ____/4	____/55
Plant cell sketch with correct labels: ____/5	Animal cell sketch with correct labels: ____/5	Sketch of microscope with correctly labeled parts: ____/10				
QUESTION SET RUBRIC						
Intro 1:			/ 8 pts			
Intro 2:			/ 10 pts			
Clue # 1:			/ 5 pts			
Clue # 2:			/ 5 pts			
Clue # 3a:			/ 16 pts			
Clue # 3b:			/ 12 pts			
Clue # 4:			/ 10 pts			
Clue # 5:			/ 14 pts			

Final Location and Suspect:	/ 20 pts	
Recorded Time:		
TOTAL Question Set (max of 100 pts)		
OVERALL SCORE		
SCIENCE JOURNAL TOTAL(X/55): ___/55		
QUESTION SET TOTAL(X/100 POINTS): ____/100		
LABELING DEDUCTION(-10%): YES/NO:		
20% or 50% DEDUCTION FOR SCIENCE JOURNAL* : YES/NO		
OVERALL SCORE(X/155 POINTS): ____/155		

* Science Journal Penalty

- Incomplete = missing 1 or 2 specified criteria = 20% penalty
- Missing = not submitted or missing 3 or more specified criteria = 50% (not eligible to place)