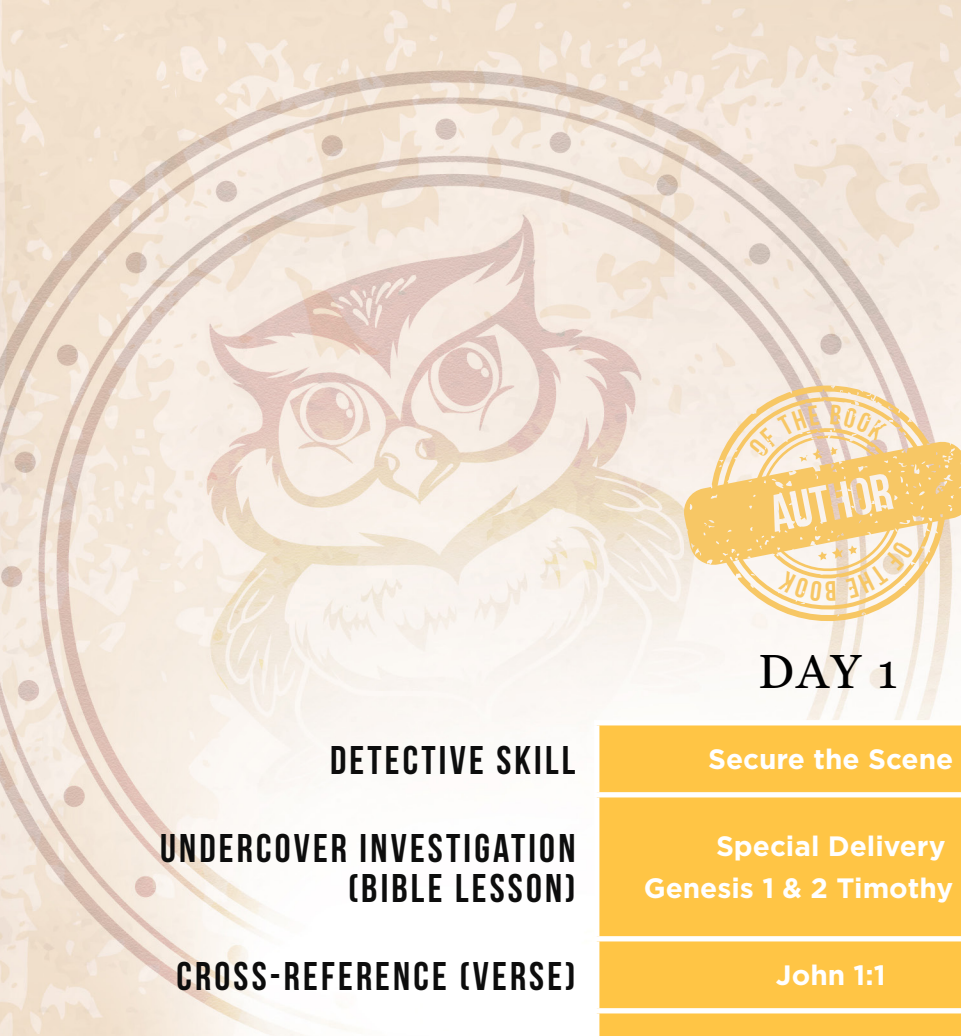


— MYSTERY OF THE BOOK —  
**TRUTH SLEUTH**  
ACADEMY  
A MET VBS ADVENTURE



**GUMSHOE**  
GAMES MANUAL

# EVIDENCE



DAY 1



DAY 2

<b>DETECTIVE SKILL</b>	Secure the Scene	Collect the Clues
<b>UNDERCOVER INVESTIGATION (BIBLE LESSON)</b>	Special Delivery Genesis 1 & 2 Timothy 3:16	A Bold Plan & Word Pictures Judges 7 & Matthew 13
<b>CROSS-REFERENCE (VERSE)</b>	John 1:1	Ephesians 6:19
<b>TRUTH VERSUS LIE</b>	<p><b>TRUTH:</b> God created all things. He designed me before I was even born and He has a special purpose for my life.</p> <p><b>LIE:</b> The world and everything in it just happened by chance. I am just an accident.</p>	<p><b>TRUTH:</b> The Bible shows me who I am and gives meaning to my life.</p> <p><b>LIE:</b> The Bible doesn't apply to me. It isn't important for my life.</p>
<b>CHARACTER TRAIT</b>	Alertness	Boldness
<b>FINGERPRINT LAB (CRAFTS)</b>	Top Secret Fingerprint Files	Exhibit #119 Lanterns
<b>GUMSHOE GAMES</b>	"The Game's Afoot!"	Puzzling Pieces
<b>WHODUNIT DINER (SNACKS)</b>	Truth Sleuths on the Trail & Donut Magnifying Glasses	Book Stacks & Carrots
<b>WHOO'S CLUES (DAILY DUTY)</b>	I.D. Tag	Bible Character Dress Up

This evidence board gives an overall view of the major themes and events;

*Thy*

*Word*

# BOARD



DAY 3



DAY 4



DAY 5

Examine the Evidence	Interview the Eyewitnesses	Crack the Case
The Lost Law 2 Kings 22-23	Jesus—The Way, Truth, and Life Various NT Passages	Faithful to the End The Books of John
2 Timothy 2:15	John 8:32	Isaiah 40:8
<p><b>TRUTH:</b> The Bible tells me what is right and wrong. I am accountable for my actions, whether good or bad.</p> <p><b>LIE:</b> There is no right or wrong. I make my own rules.</p>	<p><b>TRUTH:</b> Jesus is the only Way to Heaven.</p> <p><b>LIE:</b> There are many ways to Heaven. I can choose my own destiny.</p>	<p><b>TRUTH:</b> Everything God has said in the past either has come true or will come true. Since the Bible comes from God, I know that the Bible is true.</p> <p><b>LIE:</b> The Bible is just a book of fairy tales. I can't trust what it says.</p>
Forgiveness	Truthfulness	Faithfulness
Scrolls of Evidence	Morse Code Keychains	TSA Case Notebooks
Scribe Shuffle	TSA Targets	Sleuths & Suspects
Scrumptious Scrolls & Grapes	Mystery Cupcakes & Oranges	Snoop Scoops & Fruit Kabobs
Make an Owl	Team Color	Decorate a Bookmark

however, due to circumstances, facilities, and timing, some items may change slightly.

*Is*

*Truth."*

*John 17:17*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS



## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW ..... 5**

Why This Program? .....	5
Truth Sleuth Academy Courses .....	6
Truth Sleuth Academy Terms .....	7

## **PERSONAL PREPARATION ... 8**

Your Role .....	8
Plan Ahead .....	8
Keys for Success.....	9
Final Considerations.....	10

## **GAME INSTRUCTIONS..... 11**

DAY 1: “The Game’s Afoot!” .....	11
Day 2: Puzzling Pieces—Older Teams .....	13
Day 2: Puzzling Pieces—Younger Teams .....	14
Day 3: Scribe Shuffle.....	15
Day 4: TSA Targets .....	16
Day 5: Sleuths and Suspects.....	17

## **ADDITIONAL GAMES ..... 18**

Get Rid of the Evidence.....	18
Target Practice .....	18
Paws and Claws .....	19
Newspaper Capers .....	19
Gumshoe (Box) Slide.....	19

## **GAME TEMPLATES..... 20**

Bible Divisions .....	20
Scribe Card .....	21

## **GAMES MANUAL**

© 2021 Merrill Ministries. All rights reserved.  
Not for resale.

For more information, contact  
Randy Merrill at [randymet8@gmail.com](mailto:randymet8@gmail.com).

Project Coordinator: Randy Merrill  
Writers: Miranda Peets and Randy Merrill  
Editors: Tricia Merrill and Dave Peets  
Cover and Interior Design: Malchijah Merrill  
Images and Graphics: Malchijah Merrill  
and Vecteezy.com

# PERSONAL PREPARATION

## YOUR ROLE

As the Leader at Gumshoe Games, you have the special opportunity to encourage Truth Sleuths to use their God-given energy in positive ways.

**Physical Growth:** Games strengthen children's bodies and help them develop large and fine motor skills.

**Social Growth:** Games that require teamwork and social interaction help children develop communication and problem-solving skills. It's fun to make new friends!

**Emotional Growth:** While some children excel in physical activities, others have difficulty keeping up with their peers. Sadly, many children know the pain of being bullied or humiliated all too well. Offering a word of encouragement or genuine praise can uplift the spirit of a hurting child.

Remember, games aren't just about running around and having fun—although those are key elements. Games are a way you can reach out and demonstrate the love of Jesus to these Truth Sleuths while encouraging physical activity.

Thank you in advance for your hard work, preparation, and willingness to serve. We appreciate you and are praying for you!

*Thank you!*



## PLAN AHEAD

Reading this manual carefully in advance will help reduce many last-minute emergencies or mishaps. If you have any questions, please contact your VBS Director as soon as possible.

Feel free to adapt the following games according to your facilities, supplies, or particular age group needs. If you choose to create your own games, please try to coordinate them with the daily or weekly theme.

## PREPARE YOUR HEART

A good detective makes sure he or she has the right gear to be prepared for any situation. Don't let poor planning or dull Christianity hinder your ministry. Immerse yourself in God's Word. Ask God for insight and a tender heart.

Amazing things happen when God's people pray. Please pray for your workers and potential VBS attendees. Pray fervently for souls to be saved and lives to be changed. Investigate and remove any sin that would hinder your ministry.

# GAME INSTRUCTIONS

## DAY 1: “THE GAME’S AFOOT!”

### TRUTH SLEUTH TIP

Today we’re learning that God had a special plan for you before you were even born! From the top of your head to the tip of your toes, He designed each of you according to His special plan!

Detectives used to say, “The game’s afoot!” when something exciting was about to happen. Today, we are giving a double meaning to the phrase by adding our specially-made feet to the fun!

### OBJECTIVE

Your field assignment today, Truth Sleuths, is to complete the obstacle course before the other team!

### EQUIPMENT

Choose several items from the following list to create your obstacle course. Make sure you make each event big enough for 2 players to go through it at a time.

### Gumshoe Gallop

*To Make:* We recommend using open shoe boxes so kids can stand inside the shoebox and slide across the floor/grass. To use closed shoe boxes, tape the lid tightly closed and cut a hole in the center that is large enough for kids to fit their feet inside.

*Goal:* Run/slide to the finish line or next event.

❑ 4 large shoeboxes per team (This gives you an extra set so kids don’t have to wait for the shoeboxes to be returned to the event start line.)

### Ground Inspection

*To Make:* Set up two 6 ft. or 8 ft. tables for kids to crawl underneath. Tape several balloons under the tabletop.

*Goal:* Crawl under the tables without touching the balloons.

❑ 2 tables (6 ft. or 8 ft.)

❑ Balloons



1. READ THE TRUTH SLEUTH TIP TO THE STUDENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF GAME TIME.

2. YOU MAY NEED TO MAKE MODIFICATIONS TO THE COURSE OR REMOVE EVENTS FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN.

### Laser Course

*To Make:* Tape red yarn from wall to wall (or a room divider) to create a laser course.

*Goal:* Get through the course without touching the “lasers” (red yarn).

- Red yarn
- Painter’s tape
- Hallway (or a wall and tall room divider to use as an opposing wall)

### Mine Field

*To Make:* Fill a box or kiddie pool with inflated black balloons.

*Goal:* Get through the mine field without exploding any mines (popping a balloon).

- Black balloons
- Long, large box (like a refrigerator box) or tall-sided kiddie pool

### Look Before You Leap

*To Make:* Set several pool noodles on the ground in sets of 2. Space each set of noodles about 18 inches apart, leaving a larger space between each set.

*Goal:* Take large jumps over the pool noodles to the next empty space.

- 6-8 pool noodles

### Tip-Toe Test

*To Make:* Place several diving rings or old tires on the ground in a zig-zag pattern.

*Goal:* Tip-toe from one ring to the next.

- 10 or more diving (or similarly-sized) rings

### Feet by the Foot

*Goal:* Balance a shoe on a ruler from one place to the next.

- 2 shoes per team
- 2 rulers per team

## PREPARATION

1. Gather necessary equipment.
2. Determine your starting and finish lines.
3. Create your obstacle course.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide the group into 2 teams behind the starting line (1 person can go twice if the teams are uneven).

2. Explain the objective and rules.
3. When you give the “Go!” signal, have 1 player from each team begin the course. When he or she finishes the first event, start the next person in line.
4. The first team to have all their players complete the course wins!

