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About This book

This book offers a collection of fun, easy-to-use detective mysteries for Grades 4 – 12+. That is a wide grade range, but anyone who can carefully read these mysteries and is willing to study the evidence can solve them. They are not solved through tricky logic or advanced math concepts.

Some mysteries may be more challenging for younger students, but teachers and parents can always provide hints if absolutely needed. The mysteries develop critical thinking skills by requiring students to read carefully and analyze and synthesize information to guide their decision-making. The mysteries also develop observation skills, reading comprehension, deductive and inductive thinking skills. The ability to identify and evaluate evidence is the very heart of critical thinking.

For a more lesson-based approach to teach critical thinking, we recommend *The Basics of Critical Thinking* (Grades 4 – 9) and *Practical Critical Thinking* (Grades 9 – 12+).

Read the mystery below to find evidence to identify the innocent and guilty suspects. Remember, the story and suspects' statements are true.

The Bath Robe Thief

¹Today, police in the City of Bandon arrested one of the four men shown below for stealing a bath robe from a clothing store. ²The theft took place on Saturday, June 15, between 4 p.m. and 5 p.m. ³All four suspects visited the store during that time. ⁴The owner said he waited on and sold items to Baker and Giss. ⁵Giss said he didn't see any socks in the store with a good price. ⁶O'Bryan said he was not the last suspect to leave the store. ⁷One witness saw the thief stuff the robe under his clothing. ⁸The witness also told police that he didn't see the thief's face, but he was short. ⁹Another witness to the theft said the thief wore glasses. ¹⁰The arrest of the suspect, and his later confession, happened in the early evening the day of the theft. ¹¹The blue and white robe was found in his apartment and returned to the store.



Michael Baker

¹²I bought a robe and some pants at the store. ¹³I left with those items in a bag they gave me.



Darin O'Bryan

¹⁴The owner of the store and I are friends, and the stolen robe was never in my apartment.



John Nicolaus

¹⁵I left the store with only two items. ¹⁶Both items were partly green.



Steve Giss

¹⁷I stopped at the store to buy some socks on the way to my house.

The Innocent

Use complete sentences and sentence numbers to describe the best evidence for your conclusions.

_____ (suspect name)

_____ (suspect name)

_____ (suspect name)

The Bath Robe Thief

_____ (suspect name)

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