Eyewitness Basics

What is testimonial evidence?

Testimonial evidence includes _______ or _______ statements given to police as well as testimony in court by people who witnessed an event.

Eyewitness accounts can be a useful tool in helping investigators with analyzing crime scenes, but are not viewed to be highly _______. In addition, eyewitness identifications (right or wrong) can have a big influence on the outcome of an investigation or trial.

Memory Challenge

How many items do you remember? List them below.

Witness Factors

______ may play a role in the accuracy of an eyewitness’ statement or identification of a suspect.

The Cross Race Effect (______) is a phenomenon in which people are better at recognizing faces of their own race rather than those of other races.

The use of ______ can alter a person’s ability to recall the events of a crime even after they are no longer under the influence.

A person’s _______ of an event can be influenced by other witnesses, investigators, and/or the media. Investigators use open-ended questioning and procedures to limit their influence on a witness’ memory of an event or identification of a suspect.

Crime Scene Challenge

Write the answers for each question in the space below.

1. _______________________
2. _______________________
3. _______________________
4. _______________________
5. _______________________
6. _______________________
7. _______________________
8. _______________________
9. _______________________
10. _______________________

Crime Scene & Suspect Factors

A crime that is extremely _______ may affect a witness’ recall of the event. For example, a witness confronted with a weapon tends to focus on the weapon rather than the perpetrator’s face.

Someone who is able to _______ on a perpetrator’s face for a minute or longer will tend to have a more accurate memory than someone who saw the person for only a few seconds.

_______ that are either highly attractive/unattractive or distinctive are more likely to be accurately recognized. Simple disguises can interfere with accurate eyewitness identification, but piercings and tattoos increases the likelihood of an accurate identification.

The ________ of day in which the crime occurred and a person’s _______ of the scene may affect what a he/she is able to see and remember.

Facial Composites

Investigators work with sketch artists and eyewitnesses to create _______ _________, or sketches of a person’s face. Today many police departments are using facial reconstruction software to help them with this task.

The composite may be used internally to assist officers in identifying the suspect or used externally through local media (radio, TV, and newspaper) to solicit leads from citizens.

_______ is a software program that offers many options to recreate a person’s facial features.

Did you know? Eyewitness misidentification is the single greatest cause of wrongful convictions nationwide, playing a role in more than 75% of convictions overturned through DNA testing. (The Innocence Project, 2008)
CSI ONLINE: EYEWITNESS BASICS

Go to http://sciencespot.net/ and click the icon for the Kid Zone. Choose Forensic Science to find the links for this assignment.

► SITE #1: THE ART OF CRIME DETECTION

Part A: Read the information provided and answer these questions.
1. What are the two halves of the brain? ____________________________
2. The left brain sees and interprets the world as _____________ and _____________.
3. The right brain sees and interprets the world as _____________ and _____________.
4. Visual artists train themselves to “turn off” the _____________brain and use just the _____________ brain to draw and sketch.
5. Just as your left brain learns more vocabulary the more you _____________, your right brain learns more images and how to draw those images the more you _____________. This becomes sort of like a “visual vocabulary”.
6. A police sketch artist has the special ability to use both their visual vocabulary and descriptive words to produce _____________.

Part B: Click the link to begin your first assignment. Read the directions provided to learn how to use the software and then try to create a composite.

After you have finished all THREE activities, rate yourself on your efforts. 😊 😞 😞

► SITE #2: SPOT THE DIFFERENCES

Compare the two photographs and click on the differences you see. Can you find all 5? List them below.
1 - __________________________ 2 - __________________________ 3 - __________________________
4 - __________________________ 5 - __________________________

► SITE #3: POWERS OF OBSERVATION

Watch the video and then answer the questions.
1. How many times was the basketball passed? ________
2. What was the answer to the second question? __________________________

► SITE #4: FBI CONCENTRATION

Try the concentration game at least 4 times. Record your number of tries for each time in the space below.

1st Try = _____ 2nd Try = _____ 3rd Try = _____ 4th Try = _____

Done? You may visit any of the sites listed on the Forensic Science page of the Kid Zone.