

# Class vs Individual Evidence

Discussion topics



- Crime Scene #1 The Case of the Transcendental Torn Tee
- A torn tee shirt is found in the back of a suspect's car. Two pieces of a similar cloth were found at the scene of a crime. Briefly explain if the suspect's **tee shirt** would be considered **individual or class** evidence. What other types of evidence might be found on the suspect's shirt?

# Possible answers

- T-shirt is class (color, texture, fabric)
- T-shirt could be identified as individual IF the torn edges could be matched.
- Other evidence could include: hair, fiber, sweat, skin cells, blood, make-up, body spray, other stains



- **Crime Scene #2 The Case of Shattered Shards of Something Ceramic**

Several small, shattered fragments of a brittle object, possible pottery or ceramic was found near the crime scene. Outline the procedure you would use to determine if these pieces **found nearby** can be **matched** to similar objects **at the crime scene**

# Possible answers

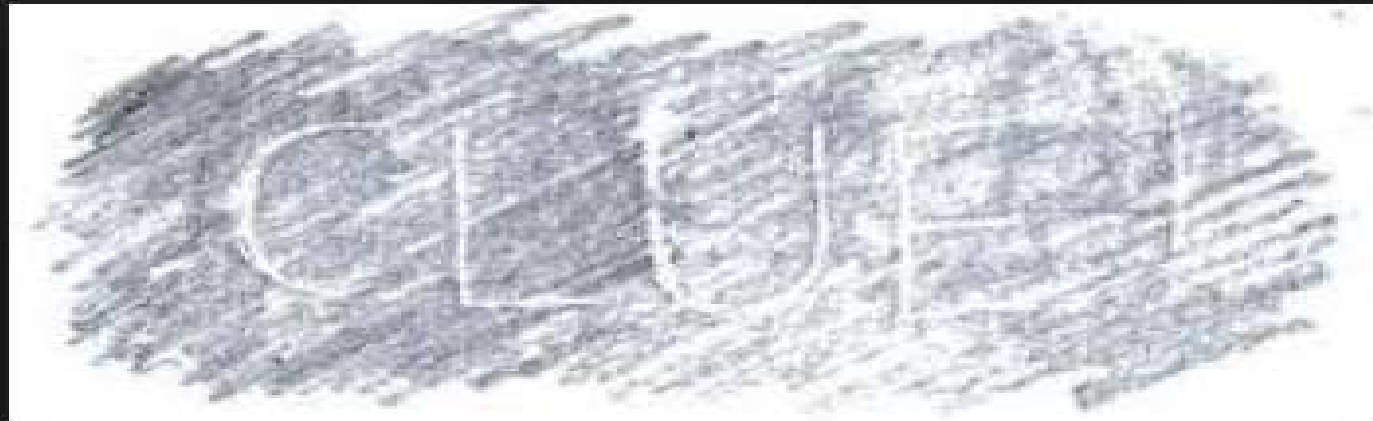
- Compare jagged edges to see if they matched up(individual)
- Compare color and texture, paint, design(class)
- Try to reconstruct object to see if any pieces are missing(individual)



- **Crime Scene #3 The Case of the Notorious Note Indicates a Nitwit?**
- A note handed to the bank's employee was taken into evidence. A notepad with a similar type paper was found in the desk of the suspect's home. Describe at least two ways in which you would try to **link** the **crime scene note** to the **notepad**.

# Possible Answers

- Match the torn edges of ripped out paper
- Look for INDENTATIONS on the paper left in the notebook





- **Crime Scene #4 The Tedious Task of Tabulating Tabs**
- A **soda can** was **found at the scene** of a crime with small traces of evidence that can be linked to our suspect. As an investigator, you decided to search through the garbage at the suspect's home. Explain **what you are looking for** and if this evidence would be consider class or individual.



# Possible Answers

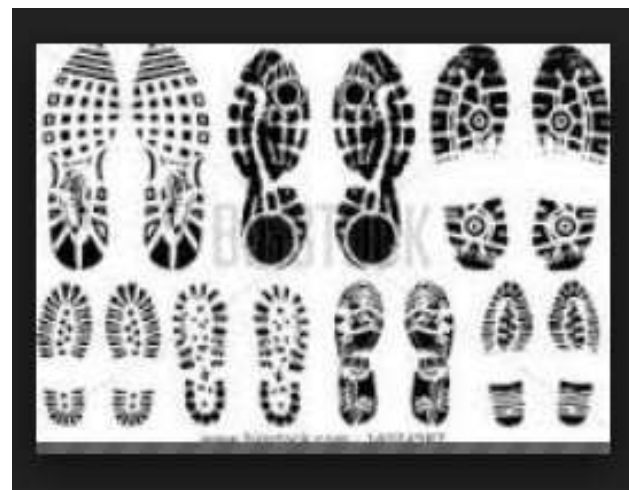
- Looking for tabs from coke can
- Looking for lip prints from can and tabs
- Collecting DNA from tab and can
- CLASS evidence unless tab and can MATCH exactly



- **Crime Scene #5 The Case of Someone Slipped Up on a Sole Search**
- A shoe impression was found near the scene of a hit and run accident. How would you use this imprint to narrow your search for suspects? Describe at least two ways in which a shoe print could be classified as individual evidence.

# Possible Answers

- Narrow your search by shoe size and type of sole
- Stride pattern might indicate height (weight)
- A unique sole mark could individualize the print. (cut or worn tread)





- **Crime Scene #6 The Case of the Speculation of Sports Section Smoking Gun**
- The **front page** of the Houston Chronicle, dated Sept 9, 2012 was **found at a crime scene**. The **Sports Section** of the Houston Chronicle, dated Sept 9, 2012 was **found in the home of the suspect**. Explain if the sports sections would be considered class or individual evidence. As an investigator, what other type evidence might you look for on the crime scene paper that would help you link the two sections of the paper?

# Possible Answers

- Newspaper sections are considered class evidence. Too many people have the same paper from the same vendor
- To match the two pages-hair, fiber, blood, sweat, unique crease patterns



- **Crime Scene #7 The Case of A Pocket Full of Perplexing Powder**
- A small plastic bag containing an unknown powder was found in a suspect's pocket. Interestingly, a similar plastic bag containing an unknown powder was found in the pocket of the victim. Can the suspect's powder be individualized to the victim's powder? In other words, can these two powders be proven to be identical in chemical composition? Could you also prove that these two powders came from the exact same source?

# Possible Answers

- It would be easy to determine if the powders were similar, but not easy to confirm they were from the same batch. (homogeneous)
- Coco powder is made in large vats, then transferred to individual containers, therefore, many containers could be chemically identical.



- **Crime Scene #8 The Case of Malicious Misuse of Missing Matches**
- A **single match** was found just outside of a suspicious **house fire**. A suspect was found carrying a book of matches and you noticed that several matches were missing. Explain the process by which would you try and link the individual match with the suspect's book of matches.



# Possible Answers

- Starting with class characteristics- you would match color, size, materials
- To prove consistency, you would need to match the tear pattern of the match to the book of matches



- Crime Scene # 9 The Case of Perfectly Perforated Plain Paper
- While processing the crime scene, you collect and bag as evidence 4 pieces of white paper cut neatly into 4 pieces. Would you classify these pieces of paper as class or individual evidence? Support your hypothesis.

# Possible Answers

- White paper is such a common material, it would be difficult to classify as individual unless there was a unique tear pattern or identifying mark.

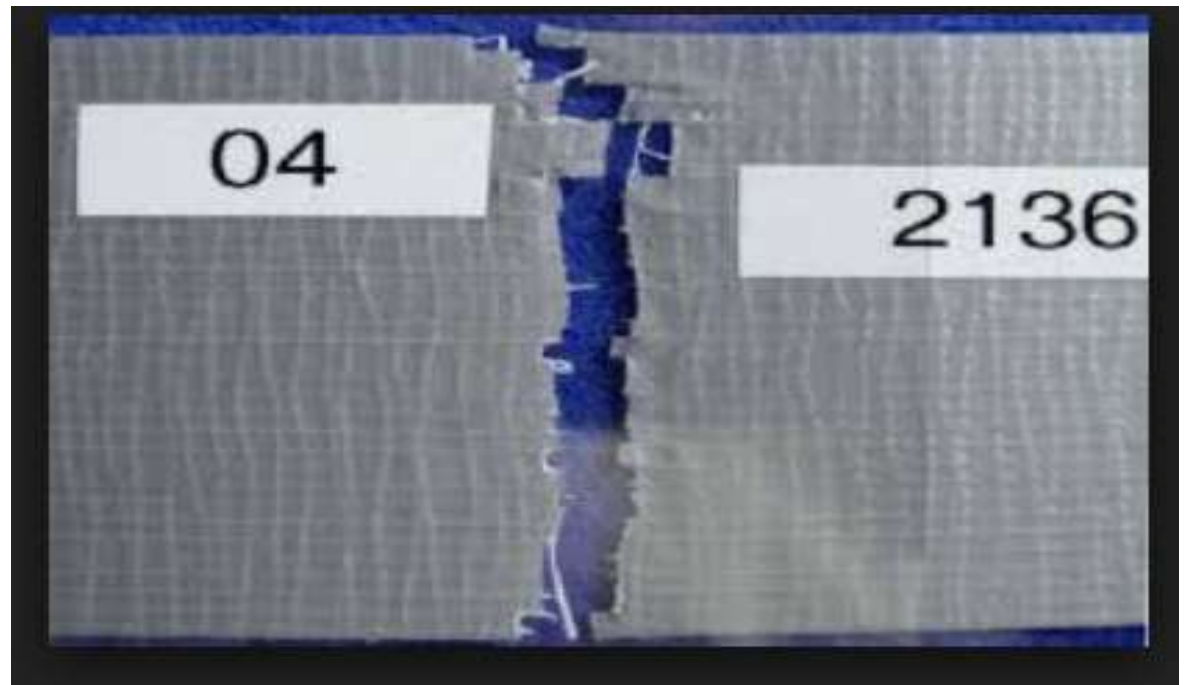




- **Crime Scene #10 The Case of the Deceptive Duct Tape (AKA The Case of Duct Tape Can Fix That)**
- A **piece of duct tape** was removed from the hands of a victim of a B & E (breaking and entering). **A similar roll** of the same brand of duct tape was found in the suspect's trunk. How would you individualize the piece used to bind the victim with the roll found in the trunk of a car?

# Possible Answers

- Everyone owns duct tape! To make a match, the torn ends would have to match exactly.





- **Crime Scene #11 The Case of Looks Like Lethal Latex**
- A **pair of latex** gloves were found at the scene of a home invasion. **A box** of the same brand of latex gloves was found at the apartment of the prime suspect. Explain how these gloves would be classified as either class or individual evidence. Keep in mind that there was no trace evidence found on either the pair of gloves or the box found at the suspect's apartment.

# Possible Answers

- Class evidence all the way! Gloves are mass produced !



- **Crime Scene #12 The Case of Seemingly Sinister Spatter**
- You are called in to help with a homicide. You are told that blood from the crime scene was sent to the Forensic Lab for blood typing. After reading the report, you know that the blood found at the scene was Type A and Type O. You know that the victim has Type A blood. You have 4 suspects:
  - Suspect 1 has Type A blood
  - Suspect 2 has Type O blood
  - Suspect 3 has Type O blood
  - Suspect 4 has Type AB blood
- Explain which suspect(s) you detain for questioning and which one(s) do you release.
- Explain why blood can be both individual and class evidence



# Possible Answers

- Blood types A and O are important. ANYONE with A or O should be considered a suspect. There could have been more than one suspect...
- Blood TYPE is class, because people share blood types. (A B AB O)
- DNA from blood is individual evidence