



## **DETECTIVE'S HANDBOOK**

(Mystery Unit/Expository Writing Project)

The Detective's Handbook is the book extension for the mystery you are reading. Not only will you read a self-selected book, but you will also read short mysteries in class and watch some mystery vignettes so that you can go through all of the steps in the handbook as a class before you are required to do them on your own. The book extension is worth \_\_\_\_\_ **points**, but additional points will be awarded along the way for related assignments. **GET ALL OF YOUR DRAFTS IN ON TIME OR YOU WILL FIND YOURSELF OVERWHELMED WITH WORK TOWARDS THE END OF THE PROJECT, AS WELL AS WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE TEACHER OR PEER EDITORS.**

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

#### **1. Handbook Cover**

- Your name, title of book, author of book
- Illustrate or decorate cover *using specific symbols* from the mystery you are reading.

#### **2. Foreword**

Your foreword must show that you have a comprehensive understanding about the plot of the self-selected mystery you read. The first paragraph summarizes the mystery without giving away its solution. In the second paragraph you will dedicate your handbook to a particular person, explain why you have chosen that person, and discuss what you have learned, enjoyed, or not enjoyed about expository writing in the context of detective fiction and the Detective's Handbook.

#### **3. Table of Contents**

#### **4. Handbook Entry #1 (Expository)**

How do your sleuth's character traits contribute to his/her strengths and weaknesses as a detective?

#### **5. Handbook Entry #2 (Expository)**

What kind of mystery is your sleuth trying to solve? How does your sleuth get involved?

#### **6. Handbook Entry #3 (Descriptive)**

Describe the crime scene. Action verbs, in the present tense, drive this mode of writing in order to "show," not "tell." Include sensory detail – what does the sleuth taste, smell, touch, see, and hear? DO NOT use any personal pronouns in order to increase descriptive quality. Also, do not simply string adjectives together to form description. Put the reader at the scene of the crime by writing as if you are the detective on-site surveying the scene.

**7. Handbook Entry #4 (Expository)**

Write a character sketch about the sidekick(s) in your story, either person(s), or animal(s). How does the sidekick contribute to detection during the mystery?

**8. "Wanted" Poster of Villain – Handbook Entry #5**

Create a poster that includes the following: illustration of villain, description of character traits, physical appearance, strengths, and weaknesses. Be sure to answer these questions: What was the crime? Where was it committed? Where was the villain last seen? What does the villain value most and why? Of what should the public be aware? Reward?

**9. Handbook Entry #8 (Detective's Log)**

Create a detective's log that follows your sleuth through the most exciting of his or her 18-24 hours on the case.

**10. Handbook Entry #9 (Expository)**

This is a "how to" paragraph that takes the reader step-by-step through the process by which the sleuth solved the mystery.

**11. Handbook Entry #10 (Persuasive)**

This is a persuasive letter to the local Chief of Police convincing him/her who should be arrested and why.

**General Regulations**

- ◆ Use detective fiction vocabulary words to enhance your writing.
- ◆ All entries into your Detective's Handbook must have been through the writing process. That is: prewrite, write, edit, revise, rewrite. We will do a lot of peer editing in class. Paragraph and sentence structure, as well as spelling, grammar, mechanics, and punctuation count!
- ◆ All rough drafts are due the day the handbook is turned in, but **do not** bind the rough drafts into the final handbook. Instead, use a binder clip to hold them all together, and file them in your writing portfolio.

Happy Sleuthing!

**HANDBOOK DUE  
DATE: TBA**

**TAPING DATE: TBA**