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Activity: Media

Fingerprints

Learning objective

At the end of this activity you should be able to:

- understand how fingerprints are used as evidence in criminal cases.

A. Using the link below, complete questions 1 to 9 that follow.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fd8reN4uoBM&feature=emb_logo

1. According to the forensic science expert, why are fingerprints important for crime scene investigators?
2. Note the two ways in which investigators find fingerprints.
3. What are the three key features of fingerprints that allow them to be linked to a suspect?
4. Why are fingerprints so useful in identifying suspects?
5. Explain the ACE-V process used to identify fingerprints.
6. What proportion of fingerprint matches give a false positive?
7. Using the case of Brandon Mayfield, explain how fingerprint analysis may be affected by other factors associated with a suspect.
8. What were the four downfalls of fingerprinting highlighted in the report on the Mayfield case?
9. Why does fingerprint analysis remain, despite the flaws in this method?

B. How accurate do you think fingerprints are in identifying offenders?