



# Where the bodies are buried

Enquiry-Based Learning for Forensics Students



# The group

- First years from two courses
- Forensic Archaeology and Anthropology
  - Very keen, very focussed. Difficult to divert from their core interests!
  - Many international students
  - Cohesive group
- Forensic and Medical Sciences
  - Much more diverse group
  - Mixed abilities and interests
  - Taught by many areas across the university, usually in much larger cohorts
  - Course struggles with cohesion and identity
  - Don't like to be lectured!
- Common ground
  - Neither group like transferrable skills!
  - Shared interest in dead people
  - Me too!





# The module

- Previously taught transferrable skills in multiple modules
  - Coverage patchy
  - Inconsistencies
- New module: Independent study for forensic scientists.
  - Led by Julia Beaumont, the Bradford Tooth Fairy!
  - Range of transferrable skills from referencing to time management
  - Assessed by group presentation, portfolio and essay (I second-marked all of these)
  - Linked 10+10 ensuring continuity
- Feedback told us we needed to provide socialising opportunities
- Needed to keep some subject content to maintain student interest



# The principle

- A spoonful of sugar makes the medicine go down!
- Or in this case, a spoonful of dead people..
- Try to teach the necessary skills without it being particularly obvious that we're doing it.
- Keep enough subject content to keep it interesting





## Starting point: Archaeology sessions

- Induction powerpoint
- Library tour / Paper skills audit
- Evaluation of sources
- Library catalogue / books
- Summon / journals
- Referencing / plagiarism avoidance
- Digital mapping
- EBL site evaluation





## ~~Starting point: Archaeology sessions~~

- Decided most of this was terribly boring so re-wrote most of it
- Evaluation of sources and referencing stayed pretty much the same
  - Referencing still pretty poor!
- Need to do something different next year!





# Induction

- Kept the generic powerpoint but trimmed it drastically
- Replaced a lot of the content with a Padlet challenge
- Series of tasks to find eg how to issue books, what kind of food is allowed.
- Can upload text or pictures as answers, working in groups
- Example at [https://padlet.com/s\\_george/Forensic\\_Science\\_2016](https://padlet.com/s_george/Forensic_Science_2016)
  - The socialising aspect didn't work well!
  - The archaeologists love it!  
[https://padlet.com/s\\_george/2015\\_iron](https://padlet.com/s_george/2015_iron)



# Library tour

- Replaced the library tour with a treasure hunt
- Paper-based, working in groups
- Treasure hunt (paper-based). Questions on:
  - Summon (journal articles)
  - Books (had to go and fetch books from the shelves and find information)
  - Library collections (not particularly relevant, just to get them moving,!)
  - My subject coverage (handy for vowels!)
- The first letter of each answer spells out their prize (sweeties!)
- Good for iterative reasoning – they get a pretty good idea of the answer by part-way through so can see where they've made mistakes
  - Except the group who thought they'd won "foffees"
- Looking for 7 letter sweets that could be spelled by the answers is pretty tricky!

## Library treasure hunt: Group 5

Answer each of the questions and write your answers in the boxes beneath. The first letter of each answer spells out your prize!

The help sheet tells you how to answer each question, and there is additional help in Blackboard. Dr Beaumont and Sarah will be based in room 1.7 to help you. Please do not disturb anyone using the library!

1. Use **Summon** to find a journal article called *New investigations into the Uluburun resin cargo* (published in 2014). What is the surname of the first author?

| First letter | Answer |
|--------------|--------|
|              |        |

2. Go to the lift lobby on floor 1 of the library and find the sign that tells you what is on that floor. What is the full name of the first room named on that sign?

| First letter | Answer |
|--------------|--------|
|              |        |

3. Go to Sarah's office (room 1.8). What is the first subject listed on the notice on her door?

| First letter | Answer |
|--------------|--------|
|              |        |





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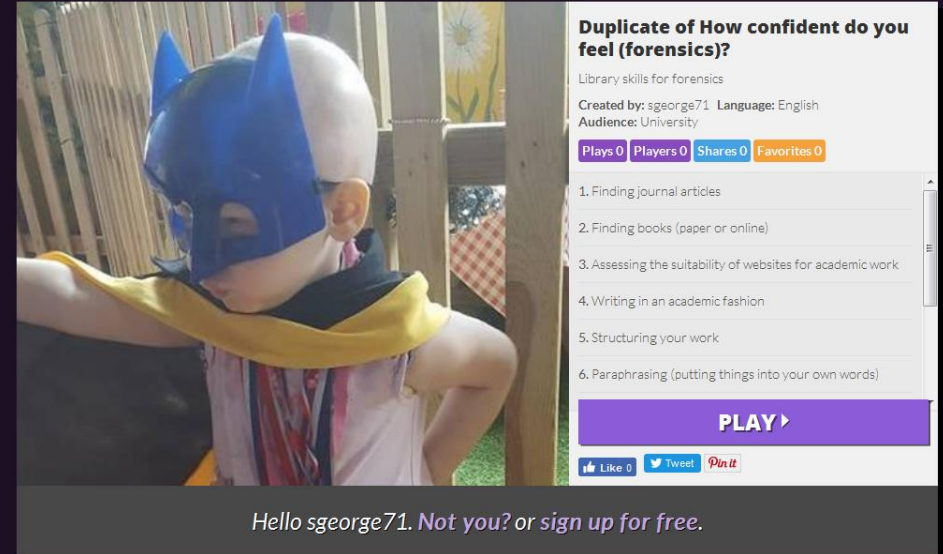
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# Confidence sheet / skills audit

- Formerly paper survey on confidence using library resources etc
- Replaced with phone poll
  - <https://play.kahoot.it/#/k/39a64534-2a54-4444-bdd8-3fdad7f51fa5>
- Quick, fun, can run several times to monitor progress
  - Presenter can veto rude nicknames!
- Diagnostics, fun, can erase naughty nicknames
- Makes a nice change from telling them to put their phones away!



**Duplicate of How confident do you feel (forensics)?**  
Library skills for forensics  
Created by: sgeorge71 Language: English  
Audience: University

Plays 0 Players 0 Shares 0 Favorites 0

1. Finding journal articles
2. Finding books (paper or online)
3. Assessing the suitability of websites for academic work
4. Writing in an academic fashion
5. Structuring your work
6. Paraphrasing (putting things into your own words)

PLAY ▶

Like 0 Tweet Pin it

Hello sgeorge71. Not you? or sign up for free.

## Journal club



- Students work in groups to find journal articles then present to class
- Session 1: articles on a classic case
  - Find authoritative information
  - Synthesize
- Session 2: articles on a technique
  - Given an article, must locate it
  - Critique article and find other information on the subject





# Crime Scene Scenario: where the bodies are buried

- Teaching Digital mapping (covertly!)
- Students work in groups to find out about the site where a body is concealed
  - What is on the site now?
  - What was on the site previously?
  - What hazards might the investigators encounter?
  - Can they find any other clues to help the investigators find the body?
- Given a list of websites to search and help with Digimap
- Sites listed in Blackboard, mockup and handouts at [https://padlet.com/s\\_george/USTLG](https://padlet.com/s_george/USTLG)
- Findings presented to rest of group



# Student findings



<http://www.walkingbritain.co.uk/walk-photo-261103>

- Clues! - Body could be in mine shaft
- interference with body due to dangerous predator activity- sheep



# What went well?

The group work, we had a chance to socialise

Very informative and very useful

It was fun

Yea, it was OK, would have liked to have been a hands on experience instead of digital

Group work, working in groups to find out the information

Group working, using Digimaps software, researching old case files

Interesting cases in the past

Top Bants

Everything, enjoyed it

Sarah's personality. Light and interactive sessions

Worked ourselves, mix of people, send loud people outside

Socialising with other students. Learning how to use Summon effectively

Yes, I enjoyed the jokes

They were interactive and I enjoyed doing the group work

Productive. Practical. Helped with current coursework issues eg sourcing academic info



# What went badly?

Not contributing as much

Some sessions repetitive. And not relevant to the course

Referencing 1000 times

Sitting down for too long

It was too early sometimes

It's 2 hours

Repetition of how to find sources and references. Portfolio

Stress and time maybe a little short

Nothing

The presentations in front of the class (not strongest trait)

Takes me longer so easier to do computer work at home

Searching for articles / books as it is good practice

Too much essay and learning types sessions. Too many and too close together

Being forced into group work

They are lengthy sessions, some sessions seem a little irrelevant to the skills actually required. The tasks are vague and most of the time I don't understand what to do. The e-portfolio was a little vague to fill in





# What could we do differently?

Include more practical activities!

More Sarah!

Ensure simple information and step by step instructions put on Blackboard to follow

More computers

More dead body stuff :)

Longer time to complete tasks

Nothing

Make it one hour

Less statistics :)

Mini assignments to learn how to reference

More independent work

Make sure there are more learning resources (computers, books) eg more chance to use the library

More useful informations

Talk more and smile more

More brief presentations at the end of the sessions

More guidance on academic writing, structuring, frameworks, more support with e-portfolio

Have more journal and practical sessions. Also probably just do the essay and no portfolio - otherwise it's just a feedback overload

practical sessions Nothing Make computer activities step just

time Ensure smile e-portfolio frameworks Sarah sure Talk simple writing work structuring complete Little hour Mini books overload end

guidance support tasks one overload end

resources probably otherwise presentations portfolio library

instructions brief body reference Room statistics assignments Blackboard learning use information learn independent academic follow

put Room longer Longer journal Involve dead Also

useful prepare feedback chance Include chance essay stuff information Involve Less

