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## Forensics-philes

Special program allows children to investigate mock crime scenes

BY **SETH ROY** • ADVOCATE REPORTER • JUNE 25, 2010

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NEWARK -- A crew of 7- and 8-year-old forensic scientists evaluated a hit-and-run crime scene Thursday morning at The Works.



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From left, Thomas Strefelt, 8, Abbie Phillips, 8, Caden Elwell, 8, and Joshua Riggleman, 8, investigate around the body at a mock hit-and-run crash Thursday during a forensics camp at The Works in Newark. (Photos by Matthew Berry, The Advocate)

**Tim Lehman**  
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"Somebody drove in, and somebody hit a guy," said Matthew Doty, 7, of Granville, explaining the scene behind The Works' sawmill. "We have maybe a huge amount of blood samples."

The children have spent every morning this week learning the ins and outs of forensic science, culminating in the evaluation of an "accident" and the presentation of evidence to their parents Thursday morning.

"It kind of gets them excited about science," said Lisa Sharpe, Works STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) education coordinator.

The program requires students to use applied thinking skills while also learning about science and math. Thursday's crime scene had the students measuring skid mark size and proximity of evidence to the body.

Thomas Strefelt, 8, of Reynoldsburg, was confident his forensic team would be able to find the driver of the vehicle.

"They are missing a piece of their truck," said Thomas, who hopes to become an FBI agent because "it looks real cool."

Thomas and Matthew both said they enjoyed learning how to make the fingerprint powder, even if it's a bit tedious.

"It takes a lot of patience," Matthew said.

Students have been working in teams of four throughout the week, comparing their notes with



Thomas Strefelt, 8, left, and Matthew Doty, 7, collect blood samples at a mock hit-and-run crash Thursday during a forensics camp.

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each other Thursday morning about the evidence.

The scene was presented as true-to-life as possible -- the victim lay in the middle of a grassy area with a

broken headlight, taillight and fender from the vehicle lying around and splattered with blood.

A Newark police officer also responded to the scene.

"They know that the first on the scene is usually the police officer," Sharpe said.

The Works is hosting another weeklong Forensic Capers camp for children ages 9 to 11. The week of July 19. Interested families may sign up through the website or by calling The Works, [www.attheworks.org](http://www.attheworks.org).

"We'll ramp it up a little bit more technically," Sharpe said.

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