

# HOW TO MYSTERY

A Mystery Game is an innovative teaching method that engages students by challenging them to solve a puzzle and delve deeper into a topic. It promotes critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and teamwork, while also making lessons more dynamic and engaging.

With careful planning and creativity, you can design a Mystery Game that is both educational and entertaining. The approach centers around solving or developing a solution to a complex puzzle, much like unraveling the details of a crime case. The key lies in identifying connections and drawing conclusions.

This versatile method can be applied across various themes in the classroom, whether at the beginning of a lesson unit to spark curiosity or as a concluding activity to reinforce knowledge.

## HOW THE MYSTERY WORKS:

1. Choose an attractive starting point for the mystery! These can be invented or real situations, stories or reports that raise a provocative research question, which the learners should solve with the help of (background) information. Learners should be able to identify with it and relate it to everyday life.
2. Learners receive information cards for processing:
  - Cards have summarised information in a few lines of text.
  - Further contextual material, e.g. maps, photos or statistics, to address all learners and all forms of information.
  - More complex background information should be explored in a preliminary development phase or in a research phase afterwards.
3. The Class Plenum discuss the results.  
The outcome of a mystery can be open, there might not be one "right" solution to answer the central question. Rather, the decisive factor is how the group agrees on an answer and presents and defends it to the other groups.

## IMPLEMENTATION:

1. **Introduction:** teacher introduces the method and task and hands out the information cards (approx. 12-30).
2. **Group work:** In groups of three to four learners, they work on the key question and the reconstruction of the case.
  - Learners organise and structure the information.
  - They can create a cause-and-effect structure, e.g. on a flipchart, so that the information can be visually linked and supplemented with comments.
  - Learners then establish the connections between the information, check hypotheses and thus develop cause-and-effect relationships.
  - If necessary, the teachers can provide individual support.
3. **Presentation of results and discussion:** As in the case of scientific research, all groups present their solution, explain the connections and answer questions if necessary.
4. **Metacognitive Reflexion:** The learners deal with the problem-solving strategy, whereby the following questions can be helpful:
  - How did we proceed?
  - How did we analyse the case?
  - What was the basis for our value judgements?
  - What learning effects were achieved and what general problem-solving strategies were practised?

## DIFFERENTIATION OPTION:

- The level of difficulty can be changed by the number of information cards. With more cards, the learners have to filter more which information is relevant for their strategy.
- Not only text, but also audios, videos, maps, photos, diagrams, tables...
- Illustrations of the text cards help with recognition and organisation!
- The complexity of the text can be adapted according to the level.
- The choice of information material and contextual information can be adapted to the age group and can also be supplemented with video or audio files.

## IMPORTANT! AND OFTEN THE MOST DIFFICULT PART FOR TEACHERS:

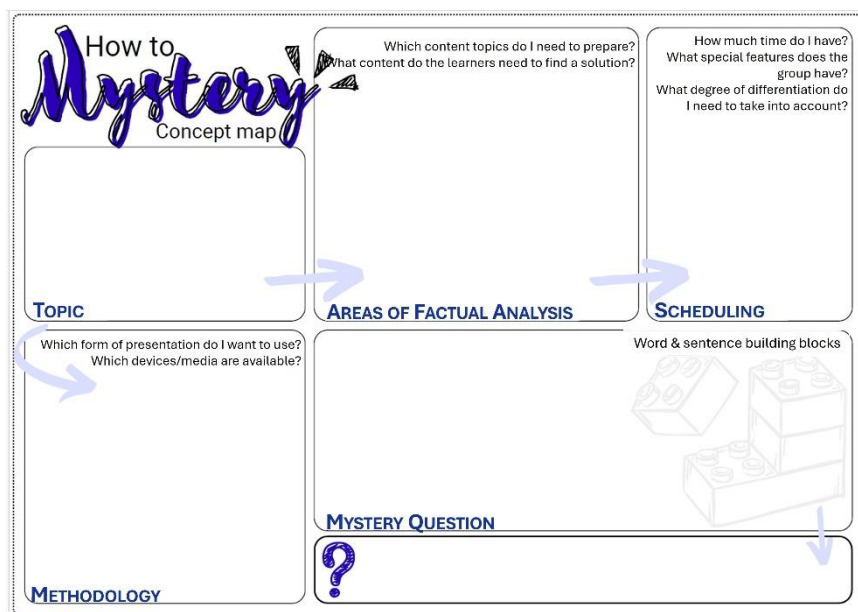
- The information cards are not intended to provide explanations and correlations! The learners want to work this out for themselves! This is important for fun and self-efficacy.
- By incorporating irrelevant and ambivalent information (for the question), learners are encouraged to weigh it up independently and learn how to deal with uncertainties.

## MATERIAL

- An introductory story (e.g. a newspaper article) or provocative question
- Information cards (paper or digital)
- Context materials (e.g. graphs, photos)
- "Crime board": posters or flipcharts on which the information can be organised
- Material to sort the information on the "crime board":
  - Markers and pens
  - Glue sticks and sticky notes / drawing pins on corkboard / Magnets on magnetic board
  - Sticky notes

## HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR MYSTERY

The most difficult part of the mystery can be finding the question. To do this, I need to understand the topic well, have my learning objectives in mind and know how to draw the information from the given sources of information. This is where the How To MYSTERY Concept Map helps.



Download: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zbCMG4SUA8NW1HDhtwOFbvsW1yJ9TL05/view?usp=drive\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zbCMG4SUA8NW1HDhtwOFbvsW1yJ9TL05/view?usp=drive_link)