

DETECTIVE LAB

SECTION 1: A TALKING PICTURE

From *Science in a Nutshell*



Westminster College

OBJECTIVE:

To create a talking picture of yourself.

MATERIALS:

camera
Identification Sheets
Journal Page for Activity 1
tape measure

BACKGROUND:

A *talking picture* is a method of identifying people. Over one hundred years ago, police used this method to identify criminals.

In this activity, you will take several body measurements and make a talking picture of yourself and of several friends.

EXPERIMENT:

1. Stand in front of a mirror and carefully examine the features of your face. On an Identification Sheet, fill in as much information about yourself as you can.
2. Ask your partner to use a tape measure to take your body measurements. Record these measurements on your Identification Sheet.
3. Remove another sheet from the pad of Identification Sheets. Now take your partner's measurements and record the information requested on the sheet. Be sure to enter your partner's name at the top.
4. Remove eight sheets from the pad of Identification Sheets. Take and record the measurements of four people and ask your partner to measure and record the information from four other people.
5. If possible, take a photograph of yourself and the other people and attach the photo to each Identification sheet.
6. Try to identify each person by looking only at the information written on the sheet. Working with one identification Sheet at a time, cover the name and try to identify the person. Take body measurements again, if necessary.
7. An agency of the United States' government photographs the ear of each foreigner living in the U.S. Add a drawing of the right ear of each person to the identification sheet for that person.



8. Can you correctly identify each person using only the drawing of the ear? Try it.
9. On your Journal page for Activity 1, list any other measurements or features that can be used to identify a person. Also record any features or measurements that can be changed.

IDENTIFICATION SHEET	
Name _____	Male or Female: _____
Complexion (pale, brown, freckled): _____	Hair Color: _____
Shape of Face (round, square): _____	Eye Color: _____
Shape of Nose (pointed, pug, crooked): _____	Height ____ ft. ____ in.
Special Features (birthmarks, scars, tattoos): _____	
Circumference of Head (distance around head in inches): _____	
Arm Span (arms spread apart in inches): _____	
Arm Length: Right Arm (in.): _____	Drawing of Right Ear:
Left Arm (in.): _____	
Foot Length: Right Foot (in.): _____	
Left Foot (in.): _____	

IN A NUTSHELL:

The odds of two people having the same body measurements are almost 300,000 to 1.

CRACKING THE NUT:

Which of the descriptions and body measurements on the Identification Sheets can be changed by an individual? Which cannot be changed? Record your ideas in the journal.