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ONTARIO **SCIENCE** CENTRE



Exhibit Inquiry  
**Science  
Investigators**

An agency of the Government of Ontario

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# Science Investigators

Have students look for the following exhibits related to exploring, observing, and sorting during their visit to the Ontario Science Centre:

## Follow the Feet!

Where to go:

KidSpark (Level 4)  
*Animal Tracks*



What it's about:

We can identify animals and discover where they have been by looking at their tracks. The animal tracks on the smooth tiles can be identified in How Do You Measure Up?

What to say and do:

- Can you identify these animals by their tracks?
- How big do you think this animal is?
- In what direction are they headed? Can you follow their trail?

## Making a Good Impression

Where to go:

KidSpark (Level 4)  
*Pinwall*



What it's about:

Children can use their hands and feet to make their own tracks in the soft pin wall.

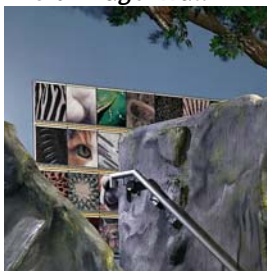
What to say and do:

- Can you make a hand print? Foot print? Face print?
- Have other children make prints and see if you can tell them apart from each other? Why or why not?
- Where else would you find footprints? (*on the beach, on the ground, in snow*)

## Eye Spy

Where to go:

KidSpark (Level 4)  
above the cave  
*Micro-Image Wall*



What it's about:

Identify animals or plants by only seeing a small piece of them. Flip up the image to see the whole picture!

What to say and do:

- What plant or animal are you looking at? Can you think of another plant or animal that has the same pattern?
- Where on earth would that animal or plant live? Have you seen any of these in real life before?
- How big do you think that plant or animal would be in real life?

# Investigators

Where to go:

KidSpark (Level 4)  
*Window and Birdfeeder*



## Bird Alert

What it's about:

The window is a great place for young detectives to practice their observation skills.

What to say and do:

- Look at the different birds visiting the feeder. What size, colour, and shape are they? Do they eat the seeds from the feeder or on the ground?
- What other animals can you see out the window (*e.g. chipmunks, squirrels, raccoons, butterflies, hawk*)?
- What kind of plants do you notice? (*e.g. trees, shrubs, flowers*) Do the trees have leaves?
- What is the weather like?

## Magnified Materials

What it's about:

A camera microscope shows things 240 times larger than normal.

What to say and do:

- Take a close up view of hair, skin, clothing or coins by pressing the object against the microscope.
- Can you describe what the object looks like when magnified? (*a smooth cotton sleeve can look spiky and rough*)
- Take a coin and place it against the microscope. By looking only at the screen, can you find out what year was this coin made?
- Can you guess what object is being magnified by looking only at the screen?

Where to go:

KidSpark (Level 4)  
*Time for a Checkup?*



## Rain Forest Detectives

What it's about:

The rain forest is full of many species and can support a wide range of plants and animals.

What to say and do:

- Can you find the Poison Dart Frogs in their display? Use your detective skills and observe their colours. (*yellow, black, green, blue etc.*)
- Look at the different plants and trees in the rainforest. Compare the leaves and trunks of different trees and plants. (*Look for differences in size, shape, texture, colour, etc.*)
- Use your other senses besides sight. Describe what it feels like in the rain forest (*hot, humid, moist*). Describe the smell.
- Compare this rain forest to a forest that you have been to. What kinds of plants and animals do you see in that forest? How are they the same or different than the plants and animals in the rain forest?

Where to go:

*Rain Forest* (Level 6)



## Resources

# Science Investigators

### Vocabulary

<b>Detective</b>	A person who looks for evidence and information to solve a mystery.
<b>Discover</b>	To see, get knowledge of, learn, find, or find out.
<b>Experiment</b>	Try something new to gain experience or to test an idea.
<b>Explore</b>	To look closely or examine something.
<b>Fingerprints</b>	Impressions made by the ridges you find on your fingertips.
<b>Investigation</b>	A way to get an answer to a science problem.
<b>Magnifying Glass</b>	A lens that makes an object look bigger.
<b>Soil Sample</b>	A small amount of soil to be examined.
<b>Suspect</b>	A person who might have committed a crime.

### Internet Links

Science News for Kids  
<http://www.sciencenewsforkids.org>  
Cyberbee  
<http://www.cyberbee.com/whodunnit/crime.html>

### Books

Crime Science – How to use science to track down the bad guys.  
Vivien Bowers and Martha Newbigging (Demco Media 1997)  
Nature Detective Handbook  
Barbara Taylor (Miles Kelly Publishing Ltd. 2005)

**PLEASE NOTE:** Programs and exhibits are subject to change without notice.