

When You Investigate A Crime....

This is a hack of Dungeon World to bring the GUMSHOE principles of core clues that are always gained in an investigation story, and non-core clues that are gained as a "bonus" or extra for doing something cool.

Custom Move: Investigate Evidence

When you use your abilities to investigate a crime scene, ask the GM a specific question that could be answered this way and roll to reveal clues. If you do it:

- by interrogating a recalcitrant witness or suspect, roll +Str
- by meticulously walking through the crime, step by step, roll +Dex
- by self-administering evidence, roll +Con
- by carefully searching the area for evidence, roll +Wis
- by researching a piece of evidence and connecting it to what happened, roll +Int
- by talking with witnesses and people who may know something about the event, roll +Cha

On a 10+, you uncover information that is relevant to the solving the mystery and pick two from the list. On a 7-9, you uncover information that is relevant to solving the mystery and pick one:

- You uncover the information in a particularly clever way. The GM may ask you how you find it-- tell the truth now.
- You find more than one clue, of which at least one is key to solving the mystery.
- Your actions do not raise the suspicions of the real culprit.

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DM Principles

Caveat: Investigation stories, by their nature, tend to rely less on the “play to find out” than Dungeon World really should. In a pure “play to find out” system, the GM does not know who the culprit is until the players make a move.

At its core, an investigation story in Dungeon World is one in which the very dangerous world has a culprit, similar to a Front, which has done something bad (the starting clue) and is progressing towards doing something even worse.

The DM Principle in this hack is: Reveal clues that lead to solving the crime and uncovering the culprit.

As you play to find out how that “something worse” can come about, you will build scenes in which clues are revealed that point to the culprit and what really happened. You might do this on the fly, as players start scenes where they push for an investigation. You might plan some clues ahead of time-- if you do this, they should be presented in the Front for the culprit.

Clues and evidence in a scene fall into three broad categories: interpersonal, forensic, and academic. Interpersonal clues are gained by Str and Cha. Forensic through Dex and Wis. And Academic through Con and Int. For each investigation scene, develop 1-3 clues, including one “Core Clue” that will always be revealed in the scene.

Not all scenes have a clue in them. Some scenes exist as action sequences, a “B-plot,” or otherwise exist to add variety to the adventure.

Core Clues are always revealed in an investigation move. On a hit, the PC has the option to uncover the clue in a non-suspicious manner, in a particularly impressive manner (ask the player to describe it), or with additional information (usually non-core clues).

On a 6-, the core clue is *still* revealed, and you make a GM move, which could include the culprit making a move as the investigators are closing in. If the players do not choose to avoid detection, or on a player miss, the culprit takes a +1 hold which it can spend in the inevitable confrontation with the PCs. This represents the culprit learning of the investigation and making preparations to confront the PCs.

If the PCs make a spout lore, discern realities, or parlay move in a scene before or instead of using an investigation move, they also get the clue as if they had made an investigation move.

If for some reason your PCs enter an investigation scene and do not attempt to collect evidence or solve the mystery, make a GM move to shift the story into a different direction. Your players may not be all that interested in the mystery after all.