

## Mysterious Crimes with Sarah Rubin & Katherine Woodfine

Introduce your class to the detective genre as two top kids crime novelists talk about how to create riveting mystery stories



**This resource is great for:**

Getting your class thinking about the detective genre, having fun plotting stories and writing their own detective characters.

**Summary:**

Watch a filmed interview with kids crime authors Sarah Rubin and Katherine Woodfine and hear about their latest books and how they create riveting mystery stories. Then, use our creative writing prompts to get your class writing their own mystery stories.

---

**Introduction:**

Sarah Rubin and Katherine Woodfine are two top detective writers, but how do they plot the perfect crime, what makes a fascinating young detective character and just how gruesome can mysteries be for second level pupils? Our young

reporters Nathan and Sheena put on their detective hats and got asking some questions!

Watch the video interview at the link below and then use our creative writing prompts to get writing your own mystery stories:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oOkAagxOtKM&t=1s>

---

## Activities - Creative Writing Prompts

### Part One

Sarah Rubin talks about how, when she's writing, she thinks back to when she was 11 or 12 years old - what was happening to her, who her friends were...

Take something which has happened to you over the last couple of days. It could be something as normal as walking to school, having lunch or taking a test. Write a description of that event but try to use the style of a mystery story, building tension and perhaps giving emphasis to things which could later on be clues (or red herrings - clues which don't go anywhere or lead you on the wrong path!)

### Part Two

Sarah and Katherine talk about how a lot of fictional detectives have a special skill, which gives them a different perspective for their investigations. For example, Alice Jones is a great mathematician and Sherlock Holmes has a photographic memory.

If you were a detective, what would be your special skill? How would it help you to solve crimes?

Think of a mystery which you could solve using your special skill, or use a mystery from an existing story or the one you created in activity one. Then, write a story featuring yourself as a detective, explaining how you use your special skill to crack the case.

### Part Three

Have fun designing the perfect crime!

Imagine you're an evil international villain. Get creative and have fun putting yourself in their shoes and imagining what kind of crime you could commit.

Be devious and think big. Would you steal all the kittens in the world so you could cuddle them all day? Would you hide all the pencils and jotters so no children would ever have to do homework again? Be sure that there are no flaws in your plans - you don't want to be caught!

Once you've had time to develop your character, present yourself as the villain to the rest of your class - describing how you would commit the perfect crime.

---

#### **Further information:**

You can find out more about Sarah Rubin, Katherine Woodfine and their books on their websites:

<https://sarahrubinbooks.com/>

<http://katherinewoodfine.co.uk/>

Young reporters Nathan and Sheena are part of What's Your Story?, Scottish Book Trust's development programme for teenage writers and illustrators. Find out more at [www.thestoryis.co.uk](http://www.thestoryis.co.uk)