

The Missing Microscope

A fictional, nonviolent crime scene challenge. Your job is to decide what the evidence supports, not to accuse a real person.

Scene	Your role
At 4:55 p.m., a digital microscope was reported missing from the locked biomedical prep room. The door and cabinet showed no damage. Three event volunteers were nearby during cleanup. All people, times, and evidence in this case are simulated.	You are on the evidence review team. Decide which explanation is best supported: Person A removed it, Person B removed it, Person C removed it, or the evidence is insufficient to identify one person.

REFERENCE RECORD

Person	Clothing during cleanup	Shoe record	Statement
A	Navy wool jacket	28.0 cm, herringbone outsole	Entered to return goggles, then left empty-handed.
B	Royal-blue polyester hoodie	27.0 cm, diamond outsole	Walked past the prep room while carrying a sports bag.
C	Gray polyester jacket	29.0 cm, herringbone outsole	Moved a projector case from the prep room to a media cart.

EVIDENCE CARDS

E1 DOOR LOG	Observation: At 4:42 p.m., the door opened using the code assigned to Person A. Limit: The code was shared with the cleanup team during setup.
E2 SHOE PRINT	Observation: A dusty partial print beside the empty cabinet is about 28.0 +/- 0.5 cm long with a herringbone pattern. Limit: Size and tread are class characteristics. Many shoes can share them.
E3 FIBERS	Observation: Two royal-blue polyester fibers were recovered from the cabinet latch. They match Person B's hoodie in color and fiber type. Limit: A fiber can transfer directly or through another object.
E4 HALL CAMERA	Observation: At 4:47 p.m., a person in a dark top carried a black rectangular case away from the hallway. Limit: The face and height are not visible. Camera color is unreliable.
E5 WORK ORDER	Observation: A signed work order tells Person C to move a black projector case from the prep room at 4:50 p.m. Limit: The order explains a case movement, but does not show what was inside.
E6 CABINET CHECK	Observation: The microscope's black hard case is missing from its shelf. The latch print is smudged and cannot be compared reliably. Limit: The missing case fits the camera observation, but does not identify the carrier.

CER response prompt: Which explanation is best supported by the evidence: Person A removed the microscope, Person B removed it, Person C removed it, or there is not enough evidence to identify one person? Write one claim. Support it with at least three evidence items by ID, then explain how the evidence supports your claim. Address one limitation or conflicting clue. Use *most supported*, not *proved guilty*.