

Name: _____

Date: _____

Write On!
A Lab on Document Forgery

Objective: You will analyze handwriting on a questioned document to determine the author of the document.

Background Information:

Royston Textiles called the state bureau of investigation last week to report a problem with one of their canceled checks. This check was made out to their consultant, Julian Harston. It had been mailed to him more than a month ago. However, Mr. Harston reported that he never received the check. Yet, the canceled check was in Royston Textiles' bank statement this month. It had been endorsed.

Mr. Harston feels that someone in his neighborhood took the check from his mailbox and forged his name on the back. Today you are provided with copies of Julian Harston's signature written by people in his neighborhood. Your job is to decide which signature most closely matches the one on the check. This decision will help you determine if the check endorsement was forged.

Materials:

- Hand lens
- Document in question
- Set of requested writing samples
- Ruler

Procedure:

1. Examine the document (check) in question. Describe at least three features of the handwriting based on the 12 main points of handwriting analysis.

2. Together with your lab partners, compare the document in question to the set of requested writing samples. Determine which individual committed the forgery.
3. Answer the post-lab questions.

Post-Lab Questions:

1. In your opinion, who forged the check?

2. Identify and describe the main points, according to the 12 criteria, that helped you make this determination.

3. List one other check that looked similar to the document in question. What helped you rule out this check?

4. Are you so confident of your decision that you would testify in court? Why or Why not?
