Making Finger Prints and Thumb Prints

Explain that police detectives often look for evidence of fingerprints and thumbprints to solve crimes. As nature detectives, they will look at their own thumbprints and fingerprints to learn more about themselves.

Demonstrate how to make a thumbprint by rolling your thumb on an inkpad and then printing it on a piece of paper. You may want to demonstrate this a couple times. When making the prints, roll your thumb or fingers slowly from one side to the other while pressing gently.

Now have the detectives make their own thumbprints on page 3 of the Math Clue Book. You will need to monitor them closely during this activity to ensure that the prints show as many details as possible. If they push too hard or roll too quickly, the prints may look like a blob of ink.

While waiting for the thumbprints to dry, have the students clean their hands with baby wipes. Allow students to walk around the room and compare their thumbprints with their classmates’ prints.

Ask students some of the following questions:

? What do they notice about each others’ thumbprints?
? How do they compare?
? Are any of them alike?
? What are some of the differences?

Now have the detectives make two fingerprints on page 2 in their clue books. While waiting for the fingerprints to dry, have them clean their hands with baby wipes.

When finished, ask some of these questions:

? How do their fingerprints and thumbprints compare?
? How do their fingerprints compare with a neighbor’s fingerprints?

MATERIALS:
* Math Clue Books
* Washable inkpads
* Baby wipes

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