



High School Science Virtual Learning

Forensic Science

Decomposition

April 24, 2020



High School Forensic Science

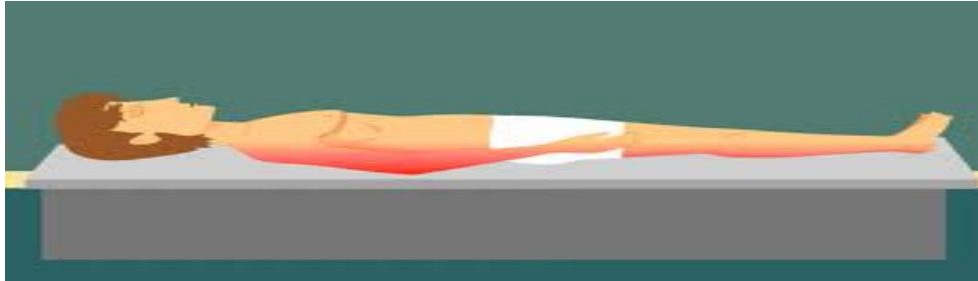
Lesson: April 24, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

Students will be able to identify Decomposition and how it relates to the time of death

On your own sheet of paper answer the following:

1. What are the three parts of death within the first 24 hours?



2. Do hair and nails grow after the body dies?



1. Algor, Rigor, and Livor Mortis

2. No, the skin around your hands and head dries and pulls back from the hair and nail.



Lesson Activity:

Directions: You will be watching this Infographics video over the stages of decomposition. Then to review over the stages you will use this article to help pinpoint the stages. You will want to take notes to help answer questions later. For example:

Stages	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Names				
What happens				

Link(s): [Infographic video on decomposition](#) [Stages article](#)



Practice

You will use the information from the activity on slide 5 to answer the following questions.



Practice Questions

1. What happens during the first hour after death?
2. What are some factors that determine how long a person stays stiff between hours 7 to 12?
3. After how long will it take for all muscles to relax (because they start to decay)?
4. If a body is left out exposed at a crime scene, what will happen after a few days?
5. What are some of the last parts of a body that remain in decomposition?



Answer Key

Once you have completed the practice questions check with the work.

1. Primary flaccidity, pallor mortis, body cools down, and release of feces and urine
2. Age, physical condition, gender, air temperature, and other external factors
3. 48 hours is the usual time for even the most stiff to relax.
4. The body will bloat and insects will begin to lay eggs.
5. Bone, hair, cartilage, and other hard areas.



More Practice

You will use the information from your notes the activity on slide 5 to answer the following questions.



More Practice Questions

1. When does the decomposition process begin?
2. What are the three names for the first stage?
3. Why is there an odor during the bloat stage?
4. What is the difference between active and advanced decay?
5. If left in an environment at consistent 50 degrees fahrenheit, how long will it take for a body to fully decompose?



Answer Key

Once you have completed the practice questions check with the work.

1. 4 minutes after a person dies.
2. Autolysis, Fresh stage, or self-digestion
3. Bacteria produce excess gases while feeding on the body.
4. Active decay is the stage when most of the body loses the fluids inside and is decomposed by maggots at a rapid rate. Advanced decay is the slow down of decay due to the lack of leftover cadaveric materials & fluids.
5. It will take only 4 months for a body to fully decompose into nothing but skeleton.



Additional Practice

If you would like to learn more about how we know the stages of decomposition you can [Ask a mortician about body farms](#)

Or you can read this quick article on a [Short history on body farms](#)