# Pescadero Middle School Teacher: Randy Vail

# **History Mystery**

## International Investigative Journalism in the Past

**Assignment:** You are an investigative journalist looking into the past. Identify and research a mystery of history, then write an article for the Pescadero Post.

**Theme/Purpose:** Historians are investigators, sleuths, detectives. They search for evidence and make guesses. There are many things that we know for sure about history, some that we’re pretty sure about, and others that are still a mystery. Why and how we don’t know the whole story is what you should write about. Treat history like a cold case investigator, and most importantly, make some educated guesses. You may also look for lies, question the standard story, challenge existing historical interpretations, and rewrite history based on your research.

**Components:** First, you will research possible topics. Then you will sign-up and fill out a 3x5 index card for a grade. Next, you will continue researching and write a draft of your article, also for a grade. You should have at least three different sources of information which you cite in your writing. Then, you will revise and rewrite your article for the last grade of this assignment. Finally, we will publish all competent articles in the Pescadero Post.

**Suggestion:** Due the varied nature of the possible topics there is not a prescribed list of information which you must present. However, use these guidelines in organizing your paper: Answer all the basic questions: what, who, where, when, why, how? “Why” may have more than one answer, and “how” will probably have something to do with the mystery of history. Also, consider cause and effect.

**Warning:** Some of these History Mysteries are known by the general public, some are not. Internet research will lead you to websites of questionable repute. All answers should lead to other questions. Be careful about what you believe. Be careful about what sources of information you use. Search for credibility, remain a skeptic, be objective, avoid bias, and try to investigate alternative perspectives.

**Possible Topics:**

* What happened to the Neanderthals?
* Where is Cleopatra’s tomb?
* Assassinations of Roman Emperors
* What happened to the Mayans?
* How was Moctezuma defeated?
* What happened to the Roanoke Colony?
* Explorers who disappeared?
* The descendants of The Bounty?
* Sacred Sites – and Why?
* Siberian meteor?
* The Lost City of Atlantis?
* The story of the Bermuda Triangle?
* The Voynich Manuscript?
* Where is Amelia Earhart?
* What is the Bimini Road?
* What happened to D.B. Cooper?
* Who was Jack the Ripper?
* What is the Shroud of Turin?
* Were there really Sea Monsters?
* Where is Jimmy Hoffa?
* Captain Kidd’s Buried Treasure?
* What are the Dead Sea Scrolls?
* What is the Ark of the Covenant?
* The Hanging Gardens of Babylon?
* What was Jesus really like?
* What was Moses really like?
* What was Buddha really like?
* What was Mohammed really like?
* What were Adam & Eve really like?
* Who was Joseph Smith?
* What are the Nazca Lines?
* What happened to the NW Indians?
* The people of Easter Island?
* What is Rongorongo?
* Was Kontiki accurate?
* What are the Bog Bodies
* What happened to the Minoans?
* Where is the City of Helike?
* What are the Carnac Stones?
* Who was Robin Hood?
* Put some light on the Dark Ages!
* Who are the Tarim Mummies?
* Lost Tombs other than Tut?
* Who built Angkor Wat?
* What happened to the Indus Valley Civilization?
* What happened to the Lost Tribes of Israel?
* What happened to the Sahara Desert?
* Lost Gods, lost religions?
* Who were the Aryans?
* What happened to the Mary Celeste?
* What happened to Malaysia Airlines Flight 370?
* What happened to the Anasazi?
* Abominable Snow Man, Yeti, Sasquatch, Big Foot?
* What happened to Rasputin?
* Escape from Alcatraz?
* What happened to York (Lewis & Clark)?
* Largest empires in history?
* The Columbian Exchange?
* Deadliest Wars, Deadliest Battles?
* Spelling mistakes in historical documents?
* Interesting family relations?
* The Inventions of Sports?
* Human history before writing?
* What happened to the Chinese Dynasties?
* Hamilton vs. Aaron Burr?
* Unsolved murders in history?
* Famous shipwrecks?
* Lost treasures?
* Newly found cities/civilizations?
* What is the Sphinx?
* Pyramid connections?
* Who is Piltdown Man?
* Chartres Cathedral?
* Who were the Druids?
* Secret Societies?
* Weird stuff!
* Lies my teacher told me?
* Unexpected truths, unknown facts?
* Ancient Wonders of the World?
* Language families.
* Etc. Etc. Etc.

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**Student Name Topic**

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