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**A mathematical private eye.**

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Summary: This article proposes an instructional idea where students can figure out an individual's secret personal information using the power of mathematics, particularly the power of algebraic thinking. The proposed examples in this article start with a personalized context that other people do not know and end up with generalized patterns of solutions. The ultimate goal of this activity is to assist students with understanding the link between arithmetic and algebra. (ERIC)

*Classification:* H33 A23 D43

*Keywords:* equations; number puzzle; recreational mathematics; problem solving; arithmetic; elementary algebra; teaching methods; lower secondary; mathematical logic