

## Toxicology: The Poisoner's Handbook

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Period: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many New York City residents died of poison in 1922?

### CYANIDE

2. What happened to the first couple, the Jacksons mentioned in the opening mystery of the Poisoner's Handbook?
3. The chief medical examiner in New York City was tasked with investigating suspicious deaths. What were the qualifications of coroners in this era?
4. What went wrong in the coroner's office?
5. Where did Norris get his training as a medical examiner?
6. The Mayor of New York did not like Norris. Why?
7. Who is Dr. Alexander Gettler and what does he do?

8. Gettler is investigating the Jackson couples' death in the Toxicology lab.  
What physical evidence is seen in the corpses of the couple? What poison is suspected in this case?
9. How does Gettler look for the poison?
10. What is Gettler's background?
11. Was cyanide found in the Jackson's stomach?
12. What was the poison that killed the Jacksons and how was it delivered?
13. What evidence comes to light?
14. What do they do next?
15. What is the criminal charge?
16. What does the defense lawyer infer?

17. What is the outcome of the trial?

18. How does Gettler deal with this?

19. The 1920's was the beginning of industrial chemical production. How does this affect the conduct of WWI?

20. What chemical products existed and what type of safeguards existed to protect the public against chemicals?

#### ARSENIC

21. Fanny Creighton and Charles, her brother, are living in Newark N. J. when something strange happens. What is it?

22. What alerts the police to this case?

23. What happens next? What is the damaging evidence? What is the poison?

24. What is Fanny's story?

25. What else then happens?

26. How does Gettler get involved?

27. What complication does he find? What chemical becomes involved then?

28. How does Gettler explain the difference between his result and Dr. Adl's ?

29. What does the jury decide? Do you think he was correct?

#### ALCOHOL

30. What was going on nationally in 1923 that caused a lot of social disruption?

31. What did Gettler and Norris think about Prohibition?

32. What do people produce accidentally while attempting to distill alcohols?

33. How does the body react to methanol?

34. How many people were dying from poisoned alcohol in 1923 in NYC?

## LEAD

35. The Medical Examiners office next deals with an industrial poison. What was the poison and symptoms?

36. What was the company and purpose of this chemical?

37. What was oldest documented lead poisoning case?

38. How do Standard Oil and GM deal with the fallout of the poisoning?

39. What does the medical examiner need to link the deaths and the source?

40. How much lead is in the brain of the victims?

41. Where else is the lead found in the body? How was the lead coming into the body?

42. What does Norris recommend on the basis of the worker poisoning?

43. Who was President at the time and what did he do in response?

44. What happens to the inventor who washed his hands in the tetra ethyl lead?

#### CARBON MONOXIDE (CO)

45. Who is new Mayor of New York?

46. What does Medical Examiner say about the case of the woman cut in half?

47. What is the evidence against the suspect?

48. What is the Medical Examiner explaining as the Cause of Death?

49. Who is the Accused?

50. What are symptoms of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning? How was this gas used at the time?

51. What does Norris ask Gettler to determine?

52. What happened to Anna Fredrickson? What was source of the CO?

53. What does Jury decide?

## ALCOHOL

54. What happened on Christmas Eve 1926?
55. What does the Government do to Industrial Alcohol to make it “undrinkable”?
56. What is found in the alcohol? Who was putting the poison into the alcohol?
57. What is the position of the Pro Prohibition forces in order to stop illicit drinking?
58. What does Norris liken Prohibition to?

## RADIUM

59. Who discovers the element Radium?
60. What uses are made for Radium?
61. Radium paint was used to illuminate the hands of the clock and numbers. What happens to the young women who paint the clocks with radium?
62. What was the companies response?
63. How long did it take for Radium to act?

64. How do Norris and Gettler respond to the poisonings?

65. What does Gettler see on the XRAY paper derived from the autopsy? What did the company president say in response?

66. How many dial painters were affected? How did they get exposed?

67. Why did Radium cause greatest damage to the bones?

68. Was there any treatment?

69. What is the public response?

#### ALCOHOL

70. What did the Pro Prohibitionist promise?

71. What amendment is repealed and what has to happen to end prohibition?

72. What happens to Mike Malloy? What is the motive?



73. What doesn't kill Malloy?

74. What finally kills him?

75. What is there mistake?

76. Methanol Deaths drop to what level in 1933 after prohibition ends?

#### THALIUM

77. Fredrick Gross is a book keeper with a large family and his salary is reduced.  
What happens to deal with the situation?

78. What are clues to determine type of poison and how was this poison use  
legally?

79. What is wrong with the case against Gross?

80. What does Gross do to test theory of poisoning?

81. What chemical test is used to confirm Thalium? What is this spectrum compared to in Forensics?

82. What does Gettler prove about the Cocoa?

83. What explains the deaths?

84. What is the Obituary on Dr. Norris?

#### ARSENIC

85. What does the anonymous letter say and who is involved?

86. What is the conclusion of the Autopsy?

87. What does Fanny now say about her past? Where does the arsenic come from and what was its' intended use?

88. What keeps Fanny from being prosecuted due to this confession?

89. What else is Fanny doing?

90. What role does Gettler play in Fanny's life?

91. What do defense attorney's say about Gettler? What happens to Fanny?  
How have things changed since 1918?

92. How does Science influence Criminal Cases?

93. What happens to the poisoning murders in NYC by 1958?

94. What is the larger goal of Gettler and Norris?

95. What Federal agency is brought into being as a result of their work?

What is the motto of the Medical Examiners office?