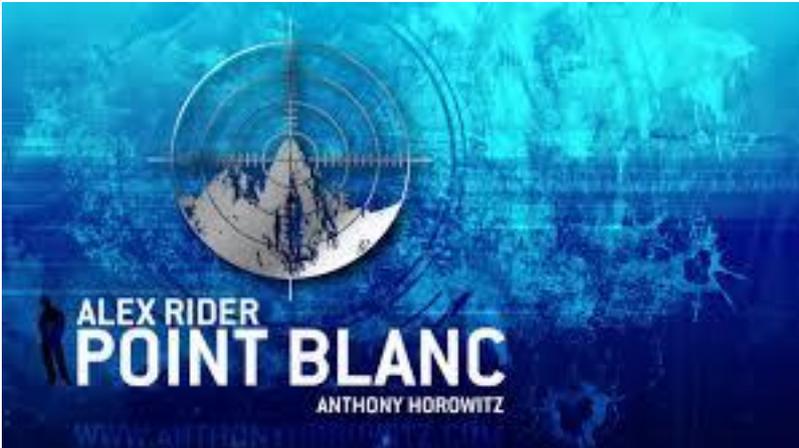


Spy School 101 - Dactyloscopy



[Alex Rider](#) is a 14-year-old British secret agent and the star of a series of books by Anthony Horowitz. Mr Horowitz has kindly given us permission to explore Alex's mission "[Point Blanc](#)" so that we may learn how to be spies, too.

Does a career at MI6 await you?

To hear the first chapter, click [here](#). It is also available to buy [here](#).

In chapter 1, a murder victim accesses a lift using a fingertip scanner.

Mission 1

Look at your fingertips. Are they all the same, or different? Look at the fingertips of your family. Are they the same as yours?



Did you know? Everyone has different fingerprints - even identical twins!

Mission 2

Can you make an impression of your fingertips?

You could try doing this using modelling clay, ink or paint. You could even use flour, cocoa or baby powder on your fingertips and then use some tape to lift the print. Alternatively, rub a pencil on your paper and then roll your fingertip on the paper and press your finger onto a clean area of paper.

Look at your fingerprint impressions using a magnifying glass or the zoom on a phone camera. Do they have mainly loops, arches or whirls? How many lines? How close together are they?



LOOP



ARCH



WHORL

Mission 3

Why might a fingerprint scanner could be used to access something secret? Do you know anyone with a mobile phone that unlocks using a thumb print? Fingerprint



analysis can be used by forensics teams to identify criminals. As a trainee spy, can you lift a fingerprint to compare with one you made in the last mission? Try holding a glass, then dusting the glass with some powder, using a paint brush or other soft bristled brush, if possible. Next, take some clear tape and place it over the print and gently lift it up. Where

else might you be able to lift a print from in your house? Could you use it to solve the mystery of who took the last chocolate biscuit?