

How Magic Tricks Work

Small Group Reading

Before reading

Point out the front cover. Ask students what they already know about magic. Have they ever learned how to do a magic trick?

Discuss what the term *magic* means; are magicians really magic or are they very clever at tricking people? Preview and discuss Reading vocabulary.

During reading

Ask students the following questions as you read the text together.

MAGIC (page 4)

- What is one way of making your magic show more interesting to others? (literal)

THE HOUDINI FILES (page 8)

- What was Houdini's most famous trick? (literal)

KINGS IN A HURRY (page 14)

- What sort of clothes should you wear to perform the "Kings in a Hurry" trick? (inferential)

VENTRILOQUISTS (page 20)

- How do ventriloquists make you believe the puppets are alive? (inferential)

X-RAY (page 22)

- Would you like to have x-ray vision? Why? (personal response)
- Which trick in the book do you think would be the most difficult to perform? Why? (personal response)
- Would you recommend the text to others? Why or why not? (personal response)
- What type of person do you think would like the text? (response)

After reading

Have students complete BLMs 1 and 2 after you provide instructions for each activity.

Understanding author's purpose

Discuss with students the author's purpose in writing the text. Remind students that books are usually written to inform, to persuade, or simply as entertainment. For which reason do they think this text was written? Then discuss the tone of the text. Is it formal or informal? Why? Explain that the target audience determines how a book is written. Ask *What words in the book make the tone informal?*

Spelling Point out to students the use of contractions on BLM 1. Ask how this makes the text less formal sounding. Have students convert the words at the bottom of the page to contractions. **(BLM 1)**

Using graphic organizers Have students poll their classmates and design a graph to indicate the favorite trick in the text. Tell students to use a number line to indicate how many students liked each trick and explain their results. **(BLM 2)**

Grammar Remind students that adverbs are words that tell how, when, or where something happens. Ask students to pick out the adverbs in the following.

"Slowly push the tray into the box . . ."

"Once he flew high above the audience . . ."

"Unicorns were impossible to catch because they moved so fast."

Fluency Have students vote on their favorite trick from the book. Have the group read aloud chorally the steps involved in the trick.

➔ Magic tricks

What do you think the author's purpose was in writing the text? Was it to inform the reader? Or persuade the reader to think a certain way? Or was it written simply as entertainment?

The author has written in an informal way by writing in the **first person** and by using the word *you* a lot. He has also used **contractions** instead of writing out full words.

Find and circle examples of these in the paragraphs below. Can you see any other ways the author makes the text informal?

There are many ways to make your magic show more fun. Why not dress up as a magician or pretend to be an alien with magic powers? Use your imagination to think of outfits you could wear. You could even make a magician's hat out of cardboard or a colorful cape out of a sheet.

Don't worry if some of the tricks don't work very well the first time. Just keep practicing!



➔ Contractions

See if you can write these words in their shortened form.

Full words	Contraction
Can not	
I will	
Do not	
We have	
Is not	
Should not	

➔ Design a graph

Poll your classmates to find out their favorite tricks in the book. Then design a bar graph to show the results. Remember to give the graph a title and label both the horizontal and vertical lines of the graph.



What was the most popular trick?

What was the least popular trick?

What was the difference between the most popular and least popular tricks?

What other information can you find by looking at your graph?
