

Morton the Magician



About the Artist



www.mortonthemagician.com

About the Character:

Morton the Magician has jumped straight from the pages of Sheldon Casavant's illustrated children's book, *Morton the Magician and His Magnificent Magic Show*. Morton is a young boy who dreams of becoming a magician and learns one of magic's greatest secrets - to believe in himself.

About the Author

As a professional magician, Sheldon Casavant was nominated as *Entertainer of the Year* in 2009 and 2010 by the Canadian Events Industry. He has entertained across Canada, the United States, Mexico, Panama, China, and has performed over 630 shows in Japan. In 2014, Sheldon was named one of *Avenue Magazine's Top 40 Under 40*, which honours exceptional young community leaders in the Edmonton Region.

About the Performance

Show Details:

Morton the Magician

Length: Approximately 45 minutes + Q&A

Throughout TA DA!, the audience follows Morton on his journey to perform in front of an audience for the first time. With his school talent show fast approaching, butterflies fill his stomach and stage fright fills his thoughts. Harry – a stuffed rabbit, an imaginary friend, and mentor – helps Morton face his self-doubts head-on and transform into a confident magician.

Morton is brought to life by a professional actor who utilizes magic, mask, and theatre to capture the imaginations of both the young and the young at heart.

Show Themes:

- Adversity, Creativity, Goals, Imagination, Perseverance, Practice, Problem-solving, Self-confidence, and Self-study

Audience Expectations:

The audience will be expected to stay seated for the duration for the show (unless asked to assist on stage). They are encouraged to raise their hands when prompted and are free to applaud and laugh throughout the show.

Technical Requirements:

Set-up time:

60 minutes prior to the audience arriving for show.

Students must not be in the gym during set-up and tear-down.

Tear-down time:

30 minutes following the audience leaving.

Stage requirements:

Gym floor with a performance space of 20' wide x 12' deep.

Students are to sit on the floor (no chairs).

Technical needs:

2 standard power outlets near performance space.

Access to staff washroom / change room.

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About the Art Form

Magic:

- Magic is a performing art that uses tricks and illusions to entertain an audience.

Mask:

- Using a mask to influence and express a character through movement on stage, creating visual theatre.

Physical Theatre:

- A form of storytelling through physical means which challenges the standard performer/audience dynamic.

Links to Curriculum

The Arts:

- Understand, appreciate, and analyse literature through the connection of the illustrated children’s book, “Morton the Magician and His Magnificent Magic Show.”
- Participate in arts activities that help develop the ability to listen and observe, and enable students to become more self-aware and self-confident.
- Experiencing and reflecting upon a performance comprised of non-verbal communication to explore emotions, intentions, and character subtleties.

Character Education:

- Overcome obstacles through initiative, perseverance, and self-discipline to achieve personal goals.
- Identify the character traits of a successful person, and make links between these and their own experiences.

Pre-Performance Discussion Questions

- What is magic? / What is magic to you? / How would you define magic?
- Have you ever watched a magic show before? What are your memories of that show?
- If you were a magician and anything was possible, what amazing feats would you perform?

Post-Performance Activities

All Grade Levels:

- Visit the author’s website (<http://sheldoncasavant.com/category/learn-magic/>) for performance advice and online magic lessons using everyday objects. Select and practice your favourite routine and perform it in front of the class.
- Read the illustrated children’s book, Morton the Magician and His Magnificent Magic Show. Discuss the similarities and differences of the character traits between Morton in the book and Morton on stage.

Primary:

- Create a poster with you as the magician performing a specific magic trick. Be sure to write your ‘stage name’ on the picture. Explain the picture and the trick to the class.
- Learn and practice a magic trick and then perform it for another student and then for the entire class.

Junior:

- There have been many magicians, past and present, who have affected the magic of today. In groups, research famous magicians. Prepare a chart listing the following information for each magician:
 - Stage Name / Birth Name / When they Lived / Where they Lived / Famous Tricks / Impact on Magic
- Research individually (or as a class) other easy magic tricks using everyday objects, and then perform them for the class. Document the effect, materials, secret setup, and script.

Post-Performance Discussion Questions

Primary:

- Magic is Morton’s hobby and creative passion. Discuss what activities and subjects you learning about.

Junior:

- Discuss the themes explored in the show. What character traits are needed to become a successful magician? How do these same traits apply to your life?
- Magicians do not reveal the secrets and methods of their magic tricks. Should the methods of magic be kept secret? Discuss and prepare a list of the pros and cons.
- Magic has a long history dating back thousands of years. As a class, discuss why the study of this history is important to magicians.
- By thinking like a magician, the impossible seems possible. What are some challenges that feel impossible to achieve? How can they become possible? How do you plan to overcome these challenges? After reflection, write the answers to these questions and share with the class, if appropriate.

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