

MORTON THE MAGICIAN

IN

TADA!



STUDY GUIDE

TA DA!

featuring

MORTON THE MAGICIAN

casavant
PRODUCTIONS

Sometimes you come across a show so magical you have to drag the whole family to see it. This is just such a show. Pack up granny, round up the kids and run, don't walk, to see TA DA!

~ Edmonton Journal

Every once in a while you stumble into a show that is pure magic. This time around it's TA DA!, a dreamy family show that takes you back to the innocence of childhood.

~ St. Albert Gazette



The Character: **Morton the Magician**

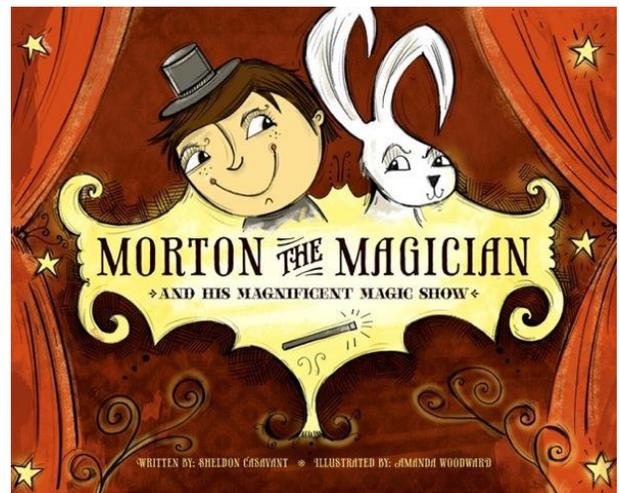
Morton is a young boy who has always dreamed of being a magician. Throughout the performance, he discovers the courage and confidence he needs to put on his first magic show.

The character of Morton has jumped straight from the pages of the illustrated children's book, *Morton the Magician and His Magnificent Magic Show*, which was shortlisted for an Alberta Children's Literature Award.

The Author & Show Creator: **Sheldon Casavant**

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.



For more information on Morton's performance, please visit:
www.mortonthemagician.com

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Show Details:

Show: TA DA!

Length: Approximately 45 minutes + Q&A

Morton is brought to life by a professional actor who utilizes magic, mask, music, and physical theatre to interact with the audience. Morton is a silent character, yet adeptly communicates with his magic.

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. After a few small successes, Morton's courage begins to grow. With his wand, top hat and red satin cape, Morton slowly transforms into a confident performer. He overcomes his fears to put on a truly magnificent magic show. After rising to the challenge, Morton now considers himself a real magician.

Audience Expectations:

The audience will be expected to stay seated for the duration for the show. The audience should feel free to applaud and laugh openly 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.
Children are to sit on the floor (no chairs).

Technical needs: 2 standard power outlets near performance space.
Access to staff washroom / change room.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Pre-Show Discussion

- What is magic?
- Have you watched a magic show before?
- Why do people like magic?
- If you were a magician and anything was possible, what would you do?

Some Things to Watch for During the Performance

- What magic did you see?
- What was your favourite trick?
- How does watching magic make you feel?
- What did Morton learn from Harry?
- How did Morton feel before, during, and after the talent show?
- Why did Morton's talent show performance go so well?

Show Themes

Adversity
Anxiety
Creativity
Dreams / Goals
Imagination
Perseverance
Practice
Problem-solving
Self-confidence
Self-study

Curriculum Connections

The Arts

- Experience integrated learning which will allow students to handle, explore, and experiment with familiar materials in a safe, secure and inviting learning environment.
- Participate in arts activities that help develop the ability to listen and observe, and enable students to become more self-aware and self-confident.

Language Arts

- Develop and organize ideas by researching, documenting, and editing information.
- Use listening and speaking skills and strategies to communicate appropriately, and to reflect on and identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Use non-verbal communication in effective ways.

Character Education

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

Post-Show Activities

- 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.
- Do you have an existing skill in magic? Perform the trick you already know for the rest of the class.
- Learn the "*The Static Pencil*" (attached) and take turns performing it in front of the class.
- Learn additional magic tricks and put on a group magic show.
- 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?

- Magic has a long history dating back thousands of years. As a class, discuss why the study of this history is important to magicians.
- 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

- 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.
- Learn “*The Number Prediction*” (attached) and take turns performing it in front of the class.
- 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.
- 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.

Tips for Becoming a Magician

Secrecy:

- Keep the magic secrets from family and friends. Even if they ask!
- Once the secrets of magic are known, the real method may be disappointing to some people. Remember the feeling you first felt when you saw the trick for the first time. This is the feeling you are sharing with your audience.

Practice:

- Practice is repetition without any fear of failure.
- No one is a master magician when they start out, but practice and perseverance makes you better with every performance.
- Nervousness will go away if you have practiced enough and if you have confidence in what you are doing.

Ways to Practice:

- Use a mirror to watch what the audience sees.
- Videotape yourself practicing.
- Practice in a room where no one is watching or listening to you.

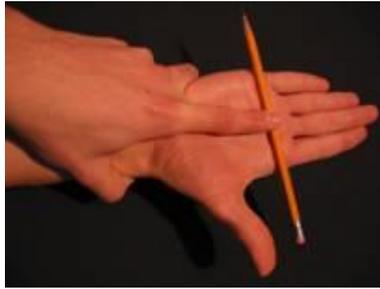
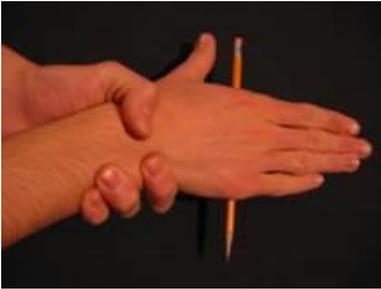
Performance:

- Do not tell the audience what you are going to do before you do it.
- Never repeat a trick for the same audience (the surprise is gone and they may see how it is done the second time).

MAGIC TRICK: *THE STATIC PENCIL* (PRIMARY)

Effect:

A pencil magically sticks to your hand.



Materials:

Two pencils
A watch or elastic band around your wrist

Performance:

Say to your audience:

"I have discovered a way to make this pencil do amazing things - using static electricity!"

To go along with the story that you tell your audience, you rub the pencil between your hands to create a 'static charge.'

Place the pencil in your hand. Grab onto the wrist of the hand that the pencil is in, then secretly extend your pointer finger to press the pencil against your palm.

Show only the back of your hand to the audience. You can now shake your hand up and down and the pencil will not fall.

Second Method:

Once you amaze your audience with the above method, secretly place the extra pencil on the inside of your arm under your watch.

You can use the same storyline as in the first version. Instead of using your finger to press the pencil against your palm, you will use the pencil extending from under your watch. From the front it looks like magic. Make sure your audience doesn't see it from behind.

Additional easy magic tricks can be found in the school/public library or online at:
www.sheldoncasavant.com/category/learn-magic/

MAGIC TRICK: ***THE NUMBER PREDICTION*** (JUNIOR / INTERMEDIATE)

Effect:

Predict the number that a volunteer will create after a few simple calculations.

Requirements:

Paper
Pen or pencil

Secret Setup:

Secretly write down your secret prediction of 1089 on a piece of paper and fold it so your audience can't see what you wrote.



Performance:

Ask a volunteer to write down a three-digit number. Ask that all three digits be different and that the first and last digits differ by 2 or more.

Get the volunteer to do the following math:

1. Flip around the chosen number (e.g. 789 becomes 987)
2. Subtract the small number from the big number (e.g. $987 - 789 = 198$)
3. Flip around the chosen answer (e.g. 198 becomes 891)
4. Add the two numbers together (e.g. $891 + 198 = 1089$)

Then ask your volunteer to say their answer, as you show them your prediction - it is a match!

The neat thing is that no matter what their original number, it will always total 1089 (as long as it is a 3 digit number where all of the numbers are different and the first and last digits differ by 2).

Do not perform this trick more than once for the same audience because they will realize that the prediction is always 1089.

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