

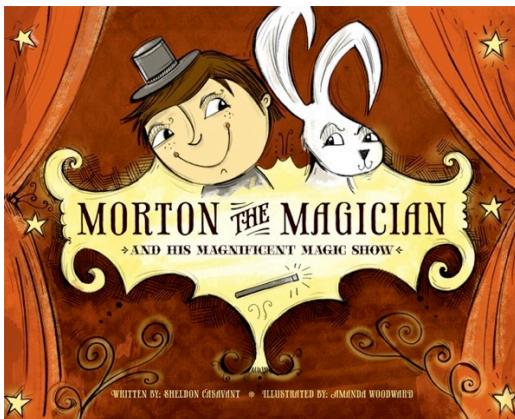
SHELDON CASAVANT

MAGICIAN

STUDY GUIDE

Sheldon Casavant's interest in magic began after seeing a magic show, when he was eight years old. He started by performing at private parties and community events, and quickly generated attention as a new talent on the rise. Sheldon has developed into one of Canada's most promising performers in the field of magic and illusion, and was nominated as *Entertainer of the Year* in 2009 and 2010 by the Canadian Events Industry Awards. In 2014, Sheldon was named one of *Avenue Magazine's Top 40 Under 40*, which honours exceptional young community leaders in the Edmonton Region.

From intimate gatherings to audiences in excess of 25,000 people, Sheldon's contemporary style of magic has been appreciated around the world. Sheldon has entertained across Canada, the United States, Mexico, Panama, China, and has performed over 630 shows in Japan.



In 2010, Sheldon wrote the illustrated children's book, *Morton the Magician and His Magnificent Magic Show*, which was shortlisted for an Alberta Children's Literature Award.

Sheldon believes that magic is more than trickery and deception. Magic is an art, and nothing thrills him more than the reactions of his audience.



sheldoncasavant.com



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PRODUCTIONS



ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Show Details:

Show: Exploring the Impossible

Length: Approximately 45 minutes + Q&A

Sheldon's magic show is light-hearted and highly interactive. It is appropriate for all ages

The show features a fast-paced display of sleight of hand magic that has taken Sheldon over 10 years to perfect. Throughout the performance, some students and teachers are invited on stage to experience the magic in their own hands and to become the stars of the show.



Over the course of 45 minutes, objects appear, disappear, and even float in the air. Magic is traditionally passed on from magician to magician, so Sheldon even shares the secret of a magic trick with the students so that they can amaze their family at home.

During the show, Sheldon shares his personal story of how he discovered the secrets of magic tucked away in his local library. Growing up, magic gave Sheldon the special feeling of being able to do something that his family or friends could not do and this developed self-confidence along the way. Sheldon shares with the students that with a little bit of curiosity, some hard work and a lot of imagination, anything is possible.

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 or shout answers when prompted. 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.

For more information on Sheldon's performance, please visit:
www.sheldoncasavant.com

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?
- What are some questions you would like to ask Sheldon after the show?

Some Things to Watch for During the Performance

- What magic did you see?
- What life lessons were in the show?
- What was your favourite trick?
- How does watching magic make you feel?

Show Themes

Adversity
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.

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 (Primary)

- During the show, Sheldon talks about how he learned most of his magic by reading books. Magic was his favourite topic to read about. Discuss what type of books and subjects you enjoy reading about.
- 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.
- During the performance, Sheldon teaches the "Torn and Restored Napkin" trick. Practice this trick individually and then perform it for 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.

Post-Show Activities (Junior / Intermediate)

- 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.
- During the magic performance, Sheldon shared that, 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.

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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TEACHER RESOURCE

Harry Houdini:

Harry Houdini (1874-1926) was an American magician and escape artist. He captured the imaginations of the public with his incredible escapes. Houdini started his career by performing in dime museums and side shows. He soon realized that the part of his act that people liked the best was the part where he would escape from any restraint. People would create state-of-the-art handcuffs and jail cells for him to escape out of, and he would free himself with ease. Nothing on earth could hold Houdini a prisoner. He became known as “Harry Houdini – The Handcuff King.”



Escape Artists:

An escape artist entertains an audience by escaping from impossible restraints such as handcuffs, padlocks and straitjackets. Harry Houdini is the person credited with making escapology a respected form of entertainment. Houdini was an expert in the technical skills and contortions required to escape from anything.

Straitjacket:

A straitjacket is a garment with oversized sleeves. The jacket is worn backwards with the sleeves wrapped tightly around the body, making it nearly impossible to escape. The escape from a straitjacket for entertainment purposes was popularized by Harry Houdini. He would often escape while hanging upside-down from a crane, capturing the attention of the massive crowds that would gather below.

Sleight of Hand:

Sleight of hand is the use of secret techniques to manipulate objects such as playing cards and coins. By using sleight of hand, a magician can cause objects to appear, disappear, and create amazing effects. Sleight of hand magic is considered to be the most difficult type of magic since it requires years of study and practice before performing it for an audience.

Harry Houdini mastered sleight of hand magic with playing cards, and became known as the “King of Cards.”



Misdirection:

A skill used by magicians to direct the audience's attention away from the secret move. It is the principle of controlling the audience's focus and attention to successfully accomplish the magic trick.