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Juvenile Fiction

Kids Make Magic! The Complete Guide to Becoming an Amazing Magician
Ron Burgess
Unknown $12.95 (64pp)
978-1-885593-87-0
(July 2003)

“Magic is making people believe you can do the impossible.” Aspiring magicians of any age will be able to astound their audiences after learning some of the secrets of the magician’s craft, easily explained in this Kids Can! title. It isn’t enough to know how to do the trick, though—a magician must project showmanship and stage presence. Learn the three basic rules of magic and the words that make magic happen, whether it’s the traditional “Abracadabra” or the silly “Shazam.” Being able to focus the attention of the audience through patter, a running commentary, or misdirecting their attention with a comment, look, or sudden noise is a part of the show that is explained to readers.

The tricks—more than thirty of them—use magic wands, crayons, rubber bands, coins, playing cards, rope, scarves, forks, spoons, drinking glasses, and props such as the big magic box. Some of the tricks are amazingly simple, but they do require practice. The number one rule of magicians is never to tell how a trick is done, so no secrets will be revealed in this review. However, for the curious reader who has always wanted to know how to make a magic wand float, or how to shuffle a deck of cards from hand to hand without dropping them, or where the magician’s assistant disappears to when she’s in the magic box—this is the book to read.

The author has previously written books about clowning and yo-yo techniques, as well as a volume for teachers about incorporating humor into the classroom. Here, he offers advice about putting together a total magic act. It’s about developing a stage personality, planning a variety of tricks that keep the audience interested, organizing props for ease of use, knowing where to perform, and dealing with stage fright and mistakes during performances.

Props, and directions for making them if necessary, are listed for all the tricks. Burgess also includes step-by-step directions with patter, illustrations that show the magician how to set the trick up, and descriptions of what the audience should be seeing. Tips called “The Master Magician Says” are found throughout, and offer practical advice, such as keeping props clean

and wrinkle-free, and practicing in front of a mirror to look convincing and smooth. Finally, a Magician's Resource Guide is included, recommending Internet resources, magic books, magazines, clubs, camps, and supply stores.

So, dust off (or make) a magic wand and top hat, and get ready to delight audiences. Youth leaders and teachers will appreciate the variety of tricks and simple directions. Hocus Pocus, Allakazam-watch this title magically disappear from the shelves!