



## ENGAGE YOUR STUDENTS WITH MAGIC!

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I am amazed (and it's no easy thing to amaze a magician!) that most teachers do not include a little magic in their teaching toolkit. Ditto for school counselors and administrators. But I hope to help you change that, at least in your own office or classroom. I'm going to teach you a fantastic magic routine that can be tied into an almost unlimited variety of subject matter, although you can also use it simply as entertainment.

But before I do that, I want you to be aware of why magic is such an effective communication tool. Understanding everything magic has to offer you in the classroom or counseling office, both online and in person, will help you exploit its full potential and help you imagine creative ways of using it.

With that goal in mind, let me lay out for you ten ways in which magic will benefit your students and help you in your teaching and counseling efforts.

## TEN BENEFITS

**F**irst, magic is universally loved by all ages, races, genders, and nationalities. It transcends cultural barriers. The United States has sent magicians to China, and Chinese magicians have visited America – and each are amazed by the other! Cultural differences actually become an enhancement, not a barrier. The magic itself is universal. If you have a diverse classroom and you're looking for a way to create a common experience that will unify everyone in a healthy, positive way, you can't do better than magic. An effective trick done at the right place and time can be very powerful.

**S**econd, magic is a visual art, but most magic also incorporates speaking. This means that you will be engaging both eyes and ears; more than engaging – with a good trick and presentation, you'll be *riveting* those eyes and ears. You won't have to worry about a kid watching you while secretly listening to rap music through hidden earbuds, or listening to you but barely taking it in because their eyes are engaged elsewhere. I remember how in my boring tenth-grade geometry class I used to hide small paperback books behind the cover of my huge geometry textbook so I could read novels in class. (Well, at least I was reading literature: *Catcher In The Rye*, *Brave New World*, and *Animal Farm* were a few.) Today technology has provided kids with much sneakier ways of checking out; but you can be sure of one thing – when you're using magic, you'll have the undivided attention of almost everyone.

**T**hird, magic is *non-technological*. A magic trick amazes precisely because of the extraordinary things that happen to ordinary objects. This makes magic an accessible tool to you as a teacher or counselor. No need for complicated and expensive equipment or software; just reach into a drawer and pull out a couple of rubber bands, a paper cup, a deck of cards, or other basic items. This makes it easy – and cheap! –while at the same time the very ordinariness of the props makes the magic seem even more amazing. We are impressed by technological special effects, but we aren't amazed by them. That's because we know, at least in a general way, the nature of what's "under the hood." We know there's a scientific explanation and that everything is operating according to the laws of nature. But magic appears to break with the laws of nature. When magic happens with ordinary objects and you know it's not a matter of software, coding, or special effects, the mind cannot even fathom the *nature* of what's happening, much less *how* it's happening – it just simply feels impossible. And that can be a profound experience.

So don't think for a moment that you can't impress students with magic unless you have some huge box to push around a stage, or doves and tigers to magically produce. On the contrary, you'll find that tricks with small, simple, everyday objects pack the most powerful wallop of amazement!

**F**ourth, magic of the close-up variety creates an intimate environment that fosters an intimate connection with your audience. Yes, there may be times when you want to use magic to command the attention of an entire room (and I have lots of those to share with you as well!). But don't neglect the power of magic to establish rapport and connection with just one student, or a small group. You will be smiling with them, laughing with them, and then – if you wish – you can use the opening created by that emotional bond to get across your point, your guidance, or your teaching.

Actually, a person armed with a good magic trick can walk up to strangers almost anywhere – a park bench, a restaurant, a library, a line at the post office – and say something like, “How are you? You know, I just learned this really amazing magic trick if you'd like to see it.” And unless that person is in a hurry or deep into a book or conversation, they'll probably say yes. You see, ever since David Blaine began doing television magic specials in which he did magic in the streets, people have been seeing videos on YouTube and elsewhere of people reacting to close-up magic. Every single one of your students will be familiar with videos of this sort. The idea of being approached by a stranger wanting to show you a magic trick has become a cultural meme in our society. So, yes, you could actually approach a stranger to show them magic and they won't think you're a nut. I've done it countless times.

Of course, I'm not suggesting that you'll actually want to show magic tricks to strangers (although you certainly could use magic to break the ice with the new kid at school). I'm just illustrating how powerful close-up magic is in our culture. If I can use it to establish connection and rapport with complete strangers on the street, you'll have no problem using it to create rapport with your students.

**F**ifth, there are lots of tricks which *involve* the audience, requiring some kind of participation. Sometimes you don't want involvement because you're using the trick as a metaphor or analogy for a teaching-point, and you want attention to be tightly directed to the trick itself. But often you will want to generate involvement, because involvement means engagement. When students are engaged, that means they're *invested*, intellectually and emotionally.

There are many ways to involve students in the magic. For example, you can do a trick with something a student lends to you. That will automatically increase interest, not only for the student who lent the object, but for everyone else as well. *Everyone* gets interested because they want to know what's going to happen to the student's item. Thus you've begun to draw them in before even starting the trick!

If you *really* want to generate interest, tell your class that you will be doing a magic trick the next day, and request that someone bring a deck of cards to class (or whatever the item is). The anticipation will build, and you'll probably find that many students show up with the requested item – and they'll all want you to use theirs! They'll be on the edge of their seats to find out what you're going to do with it.

**S**ixth, magic with larger props such as rope or newspaper that can be seen by a bigger audience will give you a way to quiet down even the noisiest group and get them focused. I remember many times being at a school to do an assembly program, when the principal or teacher in charge would try to quiet down four hundred kids or more in order to introduce me. They would just ask the kids over and over to quiet down, waiting for a response that came only gradually. It would take several minutes, and the kids still weren't completely quiet when the show started.

Or, the opposite, the principle would yell at the kids and threaten to kick them out of the assembly if they didn't sit quietly. Those students would quiet down instantly; but when I was introduced, the audience was cold as ice and it was a challenge to get them to react!

Magic can help you avoid both these extremes when you need to quiet down a room, no matter how large the audience. I discovered just how true this is early in my career doing school assembly programs. At first, I used to think I had to shout louder than the audience when I had an inattentive group. Then one time on stage it occurred to me that instead of raising my voice I should make myself barely audible while performing a trick. I trusted that the appeal of magic is so strong that if kids think they're missing it they'll quiet down on their own. And it worked! All I had to do was continue speaking very quietly with the prop in my hand. The promise of something magical about to happen was enough to make the kids quiet down on their own – some kids would even scold other kids! Within about fifteen seconds I can quiet an entire auditorium of middle school students using this technique!

This works because of the intense appeal of magic. When you can do a trick you have a powerful tool! And there is no reason a principal, teacher, or counselor can't use a trick in exactly the same way to quiet down an auditorium full of kids, without having to plead or yell or scold.

**S**eventh, magic can be used as a reward and inducement! You probably already know the power of a reward system for modifying behavior. But my guess is that you have overlooked magic. Especially effective for elementary and middle school teachers is to offer a special end-of-week magic trick as a reward for whatever behavioral goal you've set. Make a cool magic poster to put on the classroom wall to stimulate anticipation. This will become something the kids will look forward to.

You can also offer to *teach* them a trick. Now, that's *really* powerful! Every kid wants to learn a trick. They'll go home and show it to their parents and siblings. In addition to being a powerful reward, teaching your class a trick will also give you other benefits: shared fun, bonding, student engagement, and the benefits of kids working together and helping each other out to learn the trick.

**E**ighth, magic can shift moods and transform relationships. Let's say you're a counselor, and you have a child in your office who is moody, hard to reach, non-communicative, or has an attitude. And you say, "Hi Ryan! Before we start, can I show you something?" Then do a trick and watch the mood shift. Seriously, you have no idea how powerful this can be if you've never tried it. In two minutes or less you can bring a smile or a look of amazement to even the most reluctant face. You don't need a huge reaction (though you may well get one!); all you need is a small energy shift.

But that's not all. Once you have that shift, if you have the time and feel the need to gain even more rapport, you have the option of teaching the student how to do the trick. Now you've become co-conspirators. You're privileging that child by sharing highly seductive "secret knowledge." Depending on the nature of the trick, you'll have the opportunity to work closely with the student, showing them how to move their hands, how to hold the object, how to present it – and then you let the student perform the trick for you. Imagine the position you'll be in by the time you actually get down to the business at hand!

But that's still not all. Many tricks are amenable to a story-type presentation. With a little thought and creativity, you can present the trick using a story that is relevant to the student's situation or the message you want to communicate.

**N**inth, magic can be used at specific points in a long presentation where attention and energy is likely to drop. *Pacing* is a key element in any kind of presentation, whether it's a verbal lecture, a PowerPoint presentation, a performance, or other. You have to be aware of when attention is flagging. Even better is to think this through in advance and plan for it. One method is to plan on some comic relief. Another method is simply to modulate your voice. No one likes to listen to a one-tone drone for 45 minutes. Be loud, then whisper. Modulate your voice with various shades of emotion whenever possible. Speak rapidly, then slowly. Of course, there are many other ways to sustain interest and energy, such as playing games, using audio-visual aids, and so on. Adding magic to your toolkit will give you one of the most effective methods. It's easy to check out mentally during an audio-visual presentation, but I promise you that most kids will perk up when you introduce magic. It's a real energy shifter!

**T**enth, and perhaps most importantly of all, in addition to all its other advantages, a magic trick can be used to illustrate what you want to teach or communicate – sometimes directly, and sometimes metaphorically. You stand in front of the class and cut a rope: and suddenly you're talking about broken relationships, or political division, or disrupted ecosystem, or trauma, or analogue vs. digital signals, or surgery during the Civil War, or alienation, disconnection, the separation of church and state . . . it goes on and on and on. Get the idea?

Then you amaze the class by restoring the rope. Now you can open a discussion about how relationships or political divisions can be healed, or the environment tended for, or how far we've come in our medical knowledge since the Civil War.

The possibilities are endless. Not all tricks lend themselves obviously to this kind of metaphorical presentation, but many do; and those that don't will often lend themselves to a story-type presentation. Combining magic with storytelling has long been a technique used by magicians, and it opens up a whole world of possibility for driving home your point. Stories are powerful in and of themselves, aren't they? When you combine that with the power of magic you become an irresistible attention-magnet, and the message is going to hit home with more force.

Well, as you can hopefully see, there are a ton of benefits to be gained from including magic in your teacher/counselor toolkit, and I hope I've given you some ideas.

Now I want to teach you a magic routine. Because I don't know what grade levels you deal with, I'm giving you something that will work for almost all ages. I'll also throw out some suggestions on how you can use and present this routine.

## TRICK: THE FINAL OBJECT

First of all, I want you to understand that what I am giving you here is something magicians have paid good money for over the years. I really am offering this to you as a gift. You can use this in *many* different ways, and relate it to almost any subject. You can also do this in an online environment. You can use it for counseling purposes as well.

Please give this the attention and the small bit of practice it deserves. It is *not* hard to do: you just have to remember a few principles. But be sure to run through it a few times before you show it to anyone. (That, of course, is true of all magic tricks, no matter how easy and "self-working" they may be.)

### The Effect

You have several objects on your desk. You and a student (or several students) take turns eliminating objects until just one is left. Then you reveal that you have *predicted* the final object!

Later on, I'll show you *so* many ways to customize this routine in case you want to integrate it into a subject. You can use it as a way to review Spanish or other language words, for example, or mathematical notation – the list is endless. So, please, read on . . . .

## The Method

Start by gathering as many objects as you wish, but about a dozen items is perfect. You want enough objects to make your ability to predict the outcome feel amazing, but not so many as to make the process boring, or give students a chance to figure out what you're really doing.

The elimination process looks like this: A student picks up any *two* items and allows the teacher to eliminate *one* of them. The eliminated item is placed aside. The item that was not eliminated is placed back on the table with the other objects. Now the roles are reversed: it's the teacher's turn to pick up two items and display them, and the student's turn to make the eliminating choice. Whichever item the student selects for elimination is placed aside, and the other item goes back to join the remaining items on the table. Now the roles reverse again: it's the student's turn to pick up two items, and the teacher's turn to eliminate one . . . and this game continues until there is only one item left on the table.

The procedure is: I pick two, and you eliminate one. Then you pick two, and I eliminate one. And so on, back and forth, until there is only one item left – which turns out to be the predicted item.

The method is based upon three simple principles:

1. If there is an even number of items, the student chooses first; if there is an odd number of items, the teacher or counselor chooses first. (Don't forget this!)
2. Whenever it's your turn to choose two items, *always pick up any two items that are **not** the predicted item*. Allow the student to eliminate one of them, then place the not-chosen item back on the table.
3. Whenever it's your turn to eliminate one of the two items a student has picked up, if one of those items happens to be the predicted item, *never eliminate it!* Always eliminate the *other* item. (Quite often *neither* of the items presented for elimination will be the predicted item, in which case it doesn't matter which of them you choose to eliminate. You only need to be concerned if one of the two items is the predicted item, in which case *eliminate the other item*.)

That's it! That's the entire method; and when you have run through the procedure a few times so you don't have to hesitate, it will come quite naturally.

If you are the one who will make the first elimination, tell the student, "Okay, pick up any two objects and I'll eliminate one of them. You can pick *any* two objects, totally free choice, it doesn't matter." ***Always stress the freedom of their choices.*** That misdirects their attention away from the fact that you are also making choices. Their attention will be focused, instead, on the genuinely free choice they have to pick up any two objects.

## James Warren's MAGIC FOR EDUCATORS

Likewise, when *you* are the one picking up two objects, always put the accent on *the student's freedom of choice in eliminating either one of them*. This is what makes the effect so powerful for the audience: whether the student is picking up the two objects, or making the choice of which object will be eliminated, in either case they really are making totally free choices – and they'll know that in their gut. So keep directing their attention to *their* freedom of choice.

A bit of acting will help you here. Act nonchalant about your elimination choices. Sometimes you can say, "Hmmm . . . I don't know . . . I think that one." Other times you just quickly say, "That one!" The goal is to make it seem like your choices are random. Observe and mirror the attitude of the student(s) you are playing with. Pretend that you have no more investment in your choices than they do, and that your choices are as arbitrary as theirs. You want them to project their own subjective experience of free choice onto you. You want them to think that you are playing the same game they are.

But don't worry – the acting bit is just polish on the apple. Even if you suck at acting this is going to work anyway, and they'll be amazed.

Eventually, there will be only two objects left on the table, and one of them will be the predicted object, *and it will be your turn to eliminate one of them*. Obviously, eliminate the non-predicted object. (The prediction item will *always* be one of the two final objects on the table, and you will *always* have the final choice as long as you remembered the first rule: If you're using an even number of objects, the student chooses first; if you're using an odd number of objects, *you* choose first.

### To End:

Say something like, "Wow, that was a lot of choosing and eliminating! Now there's only one object left. Before you came into the classroom today, I taped an envelope under your desk chair. Would you find that envelope and open it, please? Inside is a note that I'd like you to read to the class."

And the note says: *Today, Ms. Staumbaugh has predicted the future. The final object left on the table will be the salt shaker!*"

This effect incorporates just about all ten of the benefits of using magic in the classroom or counseling office. It's the kind of effect that *engages* students because it requires their participation. And realize: *more than one student can join in making choices*. Different students can be called upon to pick up two objects and/or make the eliminating choice. This routine is capable of involving the entire class. In elementary and middle school classrooms, kids will be raising their hands like crazy wanting you to pick them to be the next one to make a choice! (This is also a great routine for engaging high school students as well; it's just that they won't volunteer as readily as the younger kids. When you need a high schooler to help you – don't ask, just pick someone!)

Realize also that *you don't have to do this with small items*. You could line up large items along the edge of the auditorium stage, or at the foot of the bleachers in a gym. Everyone will be able to see. This is a versatile routine!

And, finally, you can do this ONLINE as well. The only difference is that the students will not be able to physically pick up the items; but that's no problem, they just need to be able to see them, so make sure the items are clearly visible on the screen. When it's a student's turn to choose two items, just have them call out the items and you can pick them up yourself and display them.

## ENDLESS FORMS MOST BEAUTIFUL: CUSTOMIZATION

This effect is *such* a goldmine for a teacher or counselor because it can be customized in hundreds of different ways to suit your purposes. For example, just off the top of my head I can think of lots of possibilities:

**You're teaching geology** and want to introduce gemstones in a fun way: all the objects are gems. You could make the final gem be the one you want to talk about in class today.

**You're teaching Spanish** and the items are flashcards. You predict the final word after all the others have been eliminated. (You can make it a word you particularly want the class to remember or focus on.)

**NOTE:** Using flashcards as items, you can customize this routine for virtually any subject, even math! Just write different names, words, symbols, phrases, and so on, on each flashcard, and use those as the items.

**You're a counselor** and you have a student in your office who hasn't been making very good choices lately. You want to provoke thought and self-reflection without coming across heavy. Ask the student if he or she would like to see something amazing, and do this routine. Stress the freedom of the choices being made. At the end, when the student's mouth falls open with amazement, you can say something like, "I predicted that. What would you predict about the outcome of the choices you've been making lately?"

There are dozens of ways to frame this. Just think about the situation and what you want to say. Maybe you want to communicate to a student that, "It's pretty easy to predict the outcome if you keep following the crowd you've been following."

**You're facing an auditorium full of restless kids for a school assembly** that will introduce a magazine-sales fundraiser. Start the assembly by doing this routine using various magazines as the items. You'll have instant interest and involvement. And after displaying your prediction, you say, "I also predict that you guys will do a *great job* raising money for our school!"

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**You're teaching elementary students the basics of money** and you want to use this routine as a way of introducing the theme. You can collect a dozen items easily: use a penny, nickel, dime, quarter, fifty-cent piece, silver dollar, \$1 bill, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100. Right there you have a dozen items. (Just make sure you don't lose that \$100!)

**You're teaching literature** – use books as items, or pictures of books. Or portraits of the authors. Before you begin the actual magic routine, you can introduce each book and talk a bit about it and the author. Because you've promised to show them some amazing magic using these books, they'll listen to your presentation because they won't know when the "lecture" has ended and the trick begun. (Note: I use this technique all the time in my school assembly programs: If I hold a piece of rope in my hands, for example, it's amazing how long the students will listen to me talk, because they're anticipating the moment when I'm going to do a trick with the rope. They're listening because they're not sure when and how I'm going to transition into the trick, and they don't want to miss it!)

So don't forget, no matter what subject you teach, if you select objects that relate in some way to the lesson, you can discuss those items before you start the actual trick and the kids will pay attention because they're anticipating the magic.

**You're teaching American history** and the objects are pictures of the historical characters related to the subject.

I'm sure you're starting to get the picture.

Remember, in addition to all this message-customization potential, *you also have the choice to present this simply as entertainment*. Remember: **magic is an incredible inducement**. You can promise the kids magic every Friday afternoon if they achieve certain goals. Don't worry about a message, just make it a magical reward. If you're having a particularly difficult time holding attention one morning, promise them a trick at the end of the day if they behave. This can help keep them in line throughout the day if you keep reminding them of your promise. It's also a great way to keep kids quiet if you're a study hall monitor.

## BONUS IDEA

Here's one more idea you can try as an effective presentation for *The Final Object*. Maybe the topic you want to present doesn't lend itself particularly well to a variety of items. No problem: *you can do this routine with all the same items*. How? Let's say you're using paper cups. On the bottom of one of them write: **This will be the final object!** Write with a felt-marker so it's easy to see when revealed. Now mark the cup in a way that will not be noticeable to the student(s), but easy for you to spot. For example, nick the bottom rim with your fingernail, or make a pencil mark somewhere on the cup. Don't worry, no one will be looking for such a mark and no one will see it – they'll be much too involved in the whole elimination process. Now do the routine exactly as described, and at the end turn the cup over to reveal the prediction written on the bottom! Show that none of the other cups have the prediction written on the bottom. (If you're

doing this online, write big numbers on the cups so the students can call out the numbers of the cups they wish to choose.)

You could also do this, for example, using balled-up paper. Open up the final paper ball to reveal the written prediction, then let the kids open the other balls to prove that they are all blank inside. There are thousands of items that could be used this way – just use your imagination.

Well, I've done what I can to show you why you should be using some magic with your students and how it can benefit both you and them. Now it's up to you. You need to *test* it. You need to learn the routine I've gifted you with and try it out at least several times. Each time you will improve, and you'll get new ideas about how to improve your presentation every time you do it.

## SPECIAL OFFER!

I hope you will find what I've shared with you in this booklet helpful. I hope you can see how the right magic at the right time can be a powerful aid to your teaching and counseling.

The good news is that I have prepared a **6-PART VIDEO & PDF SERIES** in which I teach you over a **DOZEN** routines using a wide variety of materials and themes.

I've filtered my vast knowledge of magic to look for just the right routines that you can use for all kinds of classroom and counseling scenarios, both online and in person, and applicable to *all grade levels (excluding kindergarten)* – all the way to high school (and even college, for that matter!).

If you've ever read a magic book, you know that not every trick is a gem. Far from it! And not every trick is practical: one trick requires exotic and expensive props, another can only be done for one person who has be standing directly in front of you, still another requires special lighting . . . and so on.

Don't worry! **I'VE DONE ALL THE SIFTING AND SORTING FOR YOU!** I've hand-picked tricks that will work especially well for teachers and counselors working with high school, middle school, and elementary school students.

PLUS, I've picked tricks that –

- Use only simple items readily available.
- Can be done for one student or many.
- Can be used not just for entertainment (although you *can* use them for that purpose), but for delivering messages and themes. I'll help you think about the various ways you can customize the tricks for your classroom or counseling session – even how to use tricks as metaphors and illustrations.
- Are EASY FOR YOU TO LEARN AND PERFORM, requiring no difficult sleight-of-hand.

## James Warren's MAGIC FOR EDUCATORS

The magic routines I will teach you are **NOT** the basic beginner's magic easily found on the internet. I wanted to make sure that the kids will not be able to say, "Oh, I've seen that a hundred times on YouTube. I know how it's done."

PLUS, you'll learn not only the tricks but **ways to apply them** and **tons of ideas for presentation**.

EVEN BETTER YET . . . I've recorded **VIDEO SESSIONS** so you can actually to see me do the routines. That makes it so much easier to learn. I'll cover each trick in great detail, teaching you everything you need to know in order to successfully present the trick to one student, a group of students, or a roomful of students.

**THERE WILL BE SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**, and you'll find an abundance of magic you can use for different occasions and purposes.



### **This 6-part series is FULLY GUARANTEED**

If you are not completely satisfied that you have received magic you can actually use in your classroom or counseling practice, simply request a refund.

My desire is to help you in your work with students, and give you a tool you may not have used before.

If it doesn't help you, I don't want your money.

**ARE YOU READY TO ENGAGE YOUR STUDENTS WITH MAGIC?**

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