Hello, booksellers and librarians!

The newest book in the 'Ology series, *Illusionology*, provides the perfect opportunity to host a Secret Science of Magic event! Not only does *Illusionology* walk readers through the fascinating history of magic across the ages, it is an indispensable guide, with step-by-step instructions, to more than thirty astonishing magical feats. In this event kit you’ll find directions for performing tricks from the book, allowing you to lead your audience in illusions of visual perception as well as body tricks, card tricks, and more.

Your guests will be amazed and thrilled as they learn the science behind the tricks—and take home the secrets of illusionologists from throughout the ages.

**Host an Illusionology SECRET SCIENCE OF MAGIC Event**

Invite your young readers to a Secret Science of Magic Event! If time allows, decorate the event area by hanging glittering stars, shining coins, and playing cards with intriguing designs. If possible, locate a magician’s top hat that you can wear during the party.

Once your attendees are assembled, intrigue them with visual illusions, body tricks, card tricks old and new, as well as two paper-and-pencil magic tricks.

Before your guests head home, you may want to serve a snack of foil-wrapped chocolate coins or rabbit-shaped crackers in mini top-hat cups.

*Have Fun!*

Created by: Toni Buzzeo, MA, MLIS www.tonibuzzeo.com

Ms. Toni Buzzeo, a certified school librarian, is the author of fifteen picture books for children and eleven professional books for librarians and educators.
You are mysteriously invited to a

SECRET SCIENCE OF MAGIC PARTY

Date: _____________________________

Time: _____________________________

Location: __________________________

Bring along your curiosity!
The Science of Seeing: Tricks of the Eye

Introduce these three activities and generate some lively discussion by asking attendees how many think they can resist a trick of the eye.

**Color-blind**

**Materials needed:**
- Copies of *Illusionology*
- COLOR-BLIND reproducible cards (page 7)

1. Provide attendees with copies of *Illusionology* and ask them to open to the Science of Seeing section, or pass around a copy of the book opened to the section.
2. Direct attendees to study the alternating color tiles behind the Deceptionist pictured on the left-hand page.
3. Poll children about the two squares the hands are pointing to. Ask which tile is darker and which tile is lighter.
4. Tabulate the votes.
5. Next, distribute the COLOR-BLIND cards.
6. Have the attendees place the cards over the tiles to mask out the background colors.
7. If anyone has guessed correctly (they are exactly the same color), award him or her a small prize.
8. Ask someone to explain why one tile looks darker than the others. (Answer: Surrounding colors trick the eye.) Offer a small prize for the first correct explanation.

**Warped Squares**

**Materials needed:**
- WARPED SQUARES reproducible cards (page 7)
- Small ruler

1. Distribute the WARPED SQUARES cards around and ask attendees to decide whether all the lines in the squares are curved, all are straight, or there is a mix of curved and straight lines.
2. Tabulate the votes.
3. Pass around a ruler and allow children to discover that the lines are all straight.
4. If anyone has guessed correctly, award him or her a small prize.
5. Ask someone to explain why some lines appear curved. (Answer: The small squares within the larger squares create diagonal patterns so that our visual perception is distorted.) Offer a small prize for the first correct explanation.

**Checkerboard Grid**

**Materials needed:**
- BLACK AND WHITE SQUARES reproducible cards (page 7)
- Reproducible BLACK AND WHITE SQUARES STRIPS (page 8)

1. Distribute the BLACK AND WHITE SQUARES cards.
2. Tell the audience that even though the lines seem to slope, they are actually parallel, and it is the zigzag pattern of the black and white squares that confuses our visual perception.
3. Distribute a set of eight BLACK AND WHITE SQUARES STRIPS to each child and challenge the audience to create a distorted lines illusion.
4. Award a small prize to each child who accomplishes the illusion.
The Science of Levitation

The Flying Finger

No matter the size of your crowd, this optical illusion trick is easy to perform because it’s an individual trick of the eye.

1. Instruct your attendees to stand and extend their arms in front of them at eye level.
2. Now ask them to point their two pointer fingers at each other with the tips approximately a half-inch apart.
3. Tell them to focus their eyes on a spot in the distance behind their fingertips.
4. Instruct children to sing out when a “floating finger” appears between their fingertips.

The Art of Body Manipulation: Amazing Body Tricks

Super Strength

1. Select an audience member who thinks he or she is especially strong.
2. Instruct him or her to hold clenched fists one on top of the other and to use all of his or her strength to keep them this way.
3. Tell your volunteer that you are going to use only your fingertips to separate his or her two hands.
4. Strike the fists from opposite directions with two fingers at the same time. They will fly apart.
5. Explain that the reason this happens is that we can only keep our strength up in a single direction (in this case vertically), and a challenge coming from another direction is too strong to resist.
EXPOSING THE SPIRIT MEDIUMS

The Nine-card Conundrum

Materials needed:
Deck of playing cards

1. Plan this trick in advance, arranging for a knowledgeable accomplice (either another adult or one of the young attendees).
2. Leave the room while your accomplice deals out nine cards, face up, in three rows of three.
3. The dealer will ask an audience member to identify one of the nine cards as his or her selection and will announce this card to all members of the audience but leave it in place on the table.
4. When you return to the room, your accomplice will be casually holding the stack of remaining cards with his or her thumb positioned on top.
5. Your volunteer will position his or her thumb to alert you to the chosen card. For example, a thumb on the lower left-hand corner will alert you to choose the card in the lower left-hand corner of the lineup. A thumb in the center of the deck will alert you to choose the card in the center of the dealt cards.
6. Announce that you will now choose the identified card from the table. You will be right every time!
7. Award a small prize to the first attendee who figures out the reason.

Mysterious Mind Reading

1. Plan this trick in advance, arranging for a knowledgeable accomplice (either another adult or one of the young attendees). Your accomplice will send you away behind a closed door.
2. While you are away, your accomplice will ask attendees to choose a single object in the room.
3. Your accomplice will then call you back.
4. As you enter the room, open the door with a specific number of fingers wrapped around the edge of the door.
5. Once you have returned, your accomplice will ask you a series of questions about the object the attendees chose: “Is it the lamp?” “Is it the table?” “Is it the clock?” He or she will know, from the number of fingers you wrapped around the edge of the door, which number the correct item’s question should be. You can perform this trick multiple times, changing the number of fingers each time.
THE SCIENCE OF MIND READING
Number Telepathy

1. Pick three different numbers between one and nine and write them in the spaces below, left to right, to create a three-digit number:

2. Now write the three-digit number above backward (reading from right to left):

3. Subtract the smaller of the two numbers from the larger number:

4. Write the result of this subtraction backward (reading from right to left). If the result was a two-digit number, add a zero in front.

5. Now add the original result (from step #3) to this reversed result:

Your number equals 1089.
Reproducibles for activities

COLOR-BLIND

Look at the two floor tiles marked with pointers on the left-hand page. Would you believe they are the same color? They just appear different because of the surrounding colors. Test this out by placing this card over the tiles to mask out the background colors.

Cut circles out

WARPED SQUARES

CHECKERBOARD GRID

BLACK AND WHITE SQUARES
Are these horizontal lines parallel, or do they slope?