

Book Tests

There are numerous book test tricks available to the classroom teacher. They all work on the same basic format. The student does a series of calculations and finds a final 3 digit xyz or four digit xxyy number. They select a book from those provided by the teacher. They then turn to page xx and find the yyth word and it matches the prediction you made at the start. It is a very convincing effect. I have seen this type of trick performed at large magic shows and on TV Magic shows and the trick never seems to disappoint.

There are three parts to any version of the trick:

Number Force: Forcing the number the student finds when doing the calculations. This is achieved by using one of the many calculations that force a predetermined outcome.

Book Force: You must either provide only 1 book or force the book that the student will look at. This can be as simple as using only 1 book but using several books will be more entertaining. The number the student finds can select the book, the magician's force is the most common tool used to force the book.

NOTE: Choose the book so there is no confusion about the page number on what word is at the desired location. Almost all books will work but it is best to check to be sure.

The Reveal: Once you know the number and the book that will be used the rest is easy. Look at the page number determined by one part of the number and look at the word determined by a second set of numbers. You now have the predicted word. When the student looks at the book, page and word they will find the same word. It is up to you to determine how you will reveal the word they found.

The most common reveal of a prediction is to write the prediction beforehand and place it on the desk or in a sealed envelope. After the student has discovered the word and announced it to the class you can have them open the prediction.

Some teachers have the student show the book, to the class, open it to the correct page and point to the correct word, then have them open the prediction.

If you like you can pretend to read the student's mind and then announce the word and then have them open the book to the correct page and point to the correct word. If you trust the student's math skills this is fine.

NOTE: Many teachers are concerned about the student getting the wrong number while doing the calculations. One way to prevent this is to have the student read off their number and lead them through the book choice and other steps. This is not the preferred method. A better way is to have a second student watch the first student's work.

Example of the Force

Force 238 :

Step 1. Choose any number from 1 to 99.

Step 2. Add 21 to that number.

Step 3. Multiply by 3

Step 4. Add 39

Step 5. Divide by 3

Step 6. Subtract your original number

Step 7. Multiply by 7

The answer is 238

1 book: You have them turn to **page 23** and look at the **8th word**.

Multiple books: You have them select **book 2** and turn to **page 3** and look at the **8th word**.

Force 198:

Ask the student to write down a 3 digit number where the digits are descending consecutive numbers that get smaller as you go from left to right. Say” for example 876 has 3 digits that are next to each other and get smaller as you go from the left to the right.

They pick 729

They write a new number by switching the ones and the hundreds digits of the first number.

They write 927

They SUBTRACT the smallest of the two numbers from the largest to get a new number.

$$\begin{array}{r} 927 \\ - 729 \\ \hline 198 \end{array}$$

If you have 1 book on the desk ask the student to go to the 19th page and find the 8th word.
Choose your level.

If you have 3 books on the desk ask the student to select the first book, go to the 9th page and find the 8th word. Choose your level.

Extension.

Show the prediction card but turn it upside down so the number looks like 861.

If you have 1 book on the desk ask the student to go to the 86th page and find the 1st word.
Choose your level.

If you have 8 books on the desk ask the student to select the 8th book, go to the 6th page and find the 1st word. Choose your level.

Force 1098:

If you have 1 book on the desk ask the student to go to the 108th page and find the 9th word. Choose your level.

If you have 3 books on the desk ask the student to select the first book, go to the 8th page and find the 9th word. Choose your level.

Write the number 1089 on a piece of paper, fold it, and place it on the desk.

Give a student a piece of paper (or a small pad) and ask the student to write down a three-digit number on the paper. Say that to make sure their the number is a large one they need to make the first and last digits (ones and hundreds places) at least 2 digits apart “like 2 and 5 or 1 and 7” Emphasize that all the digits must be different and that the first and last digits must differ by at least two.

After the student has written down the three-digit number, ask him to write a new number by switching the ones and the hundreds digits of the first number. Ask the student to select the largest of the two numbers and SUBTRACT the smallest of the two numbers from it to get a new number.

Example:

They pick any 3 digit number where all the digits are different and that the first and last digits differ by at least two.

They pick 729

They write a new number by switching the ones and the hundreds digits of the first number.

They write 927

They SUBTRACT the smallest of the two numbers from the largest to get a new number.

$$\begin{array}{r} 927 \\ - 729 \\ \hline 198 \end{array}$$

Once this is done, ask the student to reverse their new number, switch the ones and the hundreds digits and write their new number under the one they just found by subtracting. Then ask the student to draw a line under these two numbers and ADD the two numbers.

$$\begin{array}{r} 198 \\ + 891 \\ \hline 1089 \end{array}$$

Extension:

One TV Magic special used a nice approach. You lay out 6 or 7 books or magazines and force the magazine and page. The student is asked to look at the page and get a general idea of what on that page. You then read their mind and give a brief description of the main idea. They turn the magazine to the class and show that you were correct.

Force 238:

Step 1. Choose any number from 1 to 99.

Step 2. Add 21 to that number.

Step 3. Multiply by 3

Step 4. Add 39

Step 5. Divide by 3

Step 6. Subtract your original number

Step 7. Multiply by 7

The answer is 238 You have them select book or magazine 2 and turn to page 38.