

Talcott Mountain Science Center

Topic Science & Magic

Home School Science

Instructor John Pellino

Home Links

Date Oct 20, 2023

Here's some information about the activities your student did with us. Links at the bottom will help you explore further. Enjoy!

What did we do (content, skills, data collection)?

We focused on closeup magic, gimmicks, complex devices and commercial illusions (TV and movies)

We learned how actors and directors and effects staff can create things that either don't exist or are "classic" tricks (sleight, misdirection, gimmick, illusion) for an audience.

In the real world, the "trick" is whatever the natural world is presenting and the "spectators" are the scientists trying to figure it all out.

We saw some complex illusions that are based on using different parts of your brain (left / right hemispheres, speech vs reading centers).

How did we do it (materials & methods)?

We reviewed some of the tricks we've learned and compared them to things on screen in movies, tv, videos.

We proposed theories about how certain effects are done and saw the real work behind them;

We used the "stroop interference test" and a version of the "Thatcher" illusion to see how different parts of your brain can confuse each other.

We used video playback (freeze frame, slow motion) to investigate videos.

Where can we find out more?

Links:

"Thatcher" Illusion: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/thatcher-effect-the-35yearold-optical-illusion-that-will-work-on-almost-anyone-a6875481.html>

Stroop test: for everything that comes on the screen, say out loud what color that thing is. <http://www2tmsc.org/thsfall23/StroopAuto.m4v>