

The Bag Escape

This is a great trick. It was one of the first tricks I did with my son Tom when he was in the 5th grade.

General Description:

A bag is handed out for examination. Ask the students if they can find any zippers or openings. If they say no remind them there is 1 opening at the top. You open the top of the bag and have your assistant knell in the bag. You gather the top of the bag together and hold the top closed and tie a handkerchief around the top.. You then select 2 or 3 students, one at a time, to select a shoelace and write their initials on the attached tag. Each student then ties the top of the bag closed with their shoelace. You cover the bag with a sheet for a very short time. When you take the sheet away your assistant is standing outside the bag with the bag in their hand with the handkerchief and shoelaces still in place. The students that sealed the bag can examine it. They find that to see the shoelaces with their initials on them are still tied at the top and the bag and the bag is still sealed.

Materials required.

Two large lightweight bags that are identical. My wife sewed 2 large black cloth bags made of a light weight material that work great. Laundry bags work well but any cloth bags are great as long as your assistant can knell in it without showing at the top Large heavy duty garbage bags can be used. I do not use garbage bags as they are not breathable and I worry about students seeing them used and then having a student use them in an unsafe manner.

1 handkerchief that is brightly colored.

5 or 6 different colored shoelaces. I get mine at the dollar store and make sure I have different colors and patterns that stand out.. I add a blank name tag to each shoelace when I do this trick but it is not required. A pen to initial the tags if you decide to use the tags.

1 large sheet that you can hold up to hide the assistant in the bag from the audience.

One assistant. A small child works best but almost anyone can be used as long as they as long as they can knell in the bag without showing at the top. The assistant must be dressed in a loose fitting shirt and pants so that the second bag can be put inside their clothes without a bulge showing.

A open box to hold the materials and put everything in at the end of the trick.

Preparation.

Lay out the handkerchief, shoestrings, one of the bags and a large sheet on a chair in front of the room. Be sure that there are at least 10 feet between you and the audience. Have your assistant place the second bag down the leg of their pants (or sweatpants) with the top of the bag by their waist. If they are small then the bag may need to go down both legs forming a U shape at the waist. Spread out the bag and be sure no lumps show. An alternate placement is to lay out the bag flat and wrap in around the midsection of the assistant under their shirt. A third option is to have the assistant wear a suit jacket and place the folded bag inside the suit jacket in the back. If your assistant is a girl the bag will fit between her leg and under a skirt or dress. Any placement will work as long as the bag is spread out as flat as possible and does not make any obvious lumps under their clothes. The assistant will need to take the bag out **BY THE TOP OF THE BAG** while in the dark so be sure the top of the bag is placed in a location that is easy to get to. Wrap a rubber band around the top of the bag to make it easier to find and grasp in the dark. The placement you choose will depend on the bag and the child you use so find the combination you like.

Performance:

You walk out and take the bag and handkerchief off the chair and walk towards the audience. Hand out the bag and let them examine it for zippers or hidden openings. Ask if they think it is a well made bag with the only opening at the top. Take the bag back and walk to the back of the stage so you have at least 10 feet between you and the audience. Ask your assistant to come out. Kneel down, open the bag wide and have them kneel in the bottom of the bag while you lift the top of the bag up so that most of the assistant is covered. Move so that you are facing the bag with your back to the audience. As you are doing this the assistant takes the bag out of their clothes, grabs the top of the bag in their hand and starts to push it out of the top opening. You take the top of the inner bag and gather the top of the outer bag around it so the inner bag's top sticks out several inches above the opening of the outer bag. The bottom part of the handkerchief that is tied around the top part of the inside bag should just nip the outside sack also, so that the hand holding them may be presently removed without any exposure resulting. The greatest care must be taken that the sealing is done upon the inside sack only. Everything depends upon the neatness with which this is preformed. Your body will hide the action of wrapping the top of the outer bag around the lower part of the inner bag's top. You then use the handkerchief to tie the top on the outer bag tightly in place. The handkerchief will hide the seam where the top of the outer bag stops. Be sure the handkerchief is wound around this neck area a couple of times so it hides the seam well.

At this point you turn around and show the audience that the top of the bag has been tied with the handkerchief with your assistant inside. Ask a student to come up and select any colored shoelace they like on the chair. If you decide to use the name tags have the student use the pen on the chair and write their name or initials on the tag. Put your hand around the neck of the bag at the location of the handkerchief the top of the inner bag is above your hand. While you hold the bag top have the student tie their handkerchief tightly around the bag top. Tell the student to go back to the audience.

area. Ask a second student to come up and select another shoelace and repeat the process with that shoelace tied above the first one and return to the audience . Have a third student repeat the process if you want to. Point out that the assistant is tied inside the bag by the students and note the different colored shoelaces that were used.



Take the sheet and stand beside the bag. Use both hands to spread out the sheet and hold it in front of the bag. I hold the sheet as wide as I can and try to be sure that no student can see the bag from the side of the sheet. Tell the students that the assistant will now escape from the bag. As the assistant hears this they take hold of the top of the inside bag and stand up. As they did this the outside bag will fall to the floor and the assistant will be standing with the inside bag in their hands tied with the handkerchief and shoelaces. Carefully drop the sheet on top of the outside bag that is lying on the floor and have the assistant walk toward the audience. Gather up the sheet being sure to gather it around the bag and put them in the open box at the back of the stage. **BE SURE THE BAG IS NOT SEEN.** Stand by the side of the assistant and point out that the bag is sealed and tied with the ties used by the students. Have 1 or 2 students examine the bag. Retrieve the bag and place everything in the box at the back of the stage. Have the audience give your assistant a big round of applause.

Move on to your next activity.

Additional Step:

If you can pull this off it is the topper to the trick. When the assistant gets in the bag and takes their bag out they can take off one of their shoes and place it inside the inner bag. When they take that bag by the top and hand it out they will have 1 shoe inside that bag. After the assistant stands up and escapes they will be missing a shoe. When the bag is handed out from a student in the audience to examine they will feel the shoe in the bag. Have them untie the shoestrings and handkerchief and return the shoe to your assistant.