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Abracadabra: The Story of Magic Through the Ages

Aylea Stephens

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Book Review

Title: Abracadabra: The Story of Magic

Through the Ages

Author: H.P. Newquist

Illustrator: Aleksey Ivanov

Reviewer: Aylea Stephens

Publisher: Henry Holt and Co.

Publication Year: 2015

ISBN: 9780312593216

Number of Pages: 160

Interest Level: Primary

Rating: Dependable

Review



Even from the earliest recorded history, people have been performing magic to fool, inspire, educate, and entertain. In this nonfiction book, it summarizes the history of magic from the beginning to the modern day. Nequist explains how the most famous magic tricks were created, how the most influential magicians got started and developed their craft, how magic went from being punishable by death to requested by world leaders, and many things relating to how magicians perform tricks and astound their audiences every day. The book contains instructions to perform eight of the most common and oldest magic tricks, sections on tools of the trade, a guide to figuring out magic tricks, and a list of recommendations for people wanting to learn more about magic.

Young readers will enjoy this thorough explanation of the development of magic. The tricks are simple enough to perform without much equipment so that interested readers can have an active part of learning about magic. The book does detail how some of the most famous magic tricks are done as a way to explain the development of magic and how it still takes a lot of skill to be able to pull off tricks. Some of the tricks could use more diagrams, and the tools of the trade sometimes aren't organized as well as they could be because it will sometimes have the pages about them separating words in a sentence. It does have several illustrations and photographs of influential magicians to help readers make more of a connection to the history. Written in a very simple way, young readers who want to be magicians or who are just interested in magic will find this book accessible and interesting.