



ARE YOU A MIND READER?

A Social Skills Game for Teens

Do you know who Harry Houdini was? He was a famous magician early in the 19th century. One of his famous tricks was “Mind Reading”. His wife, Bess, would go into the audience and ask random audience members for a personal item. She would then hold up the item in front of a blindfolded Houdini and ask the “Spirits” to tell him what the item was. Little did the audience know, the words she used to ask the “Spirits” was a coded alphabet. She used the special words to spell out the item. Harry guessed the item every single time to his amazed audiences.

In this game, you will learn how to do a Mindreading trick with a friend using a few simple instructions and a deck of Uno Cards! Instead of words, like Bess Houdini used, you will use facial expressions and gestures to give away the answers to your partner.

Here’s the code for colors:

Red =	Angry
Blue =	Happy
Green =	Sad
Yellow =	Surprised
Bored =	Wild

Give your partner a color code chart. Remove all of the “non number” cards from the Uno Deck (reverse, draw two, etc.). Place the deck in the middle of the table. Draw a card and hide it from your partner. Make the facial expression that goes with the color. It will be difficult at first for your partner to guess, but with practice it will get easier.

To add an extra challenge, you can add codes for the numbers on the cards... This is a little tricky because you need to combine two codes, but awfully fun once you get it.

Here are the codes for numbers:

- 1 Eye Blink – any number from 1-4 and the Wild card.
- 2 Eye Blinks – any number from 5-9

Shrug shoulders –	1 or 5
Scratch head -	2 or 6
Cough -	3 or 7
Sigh -	4 or 8
Giggle -	Wild or 9

So, for the number 2, for example, you would blink your eyes once and scratch your head. For the number 8 you would blink your eyes twice and sigh.

Once you get practiced at reading facial expressions and gestures, you and your partner will look like you have ESP!! Amaze Your Friends with this fun trick.

ARE YOU A MIND READER? NOTES FOR TEACHER OR THERAPIST

This activity focuses on being able to read facial expressions and gestures of another person. In my social skills groups, I there are some students who get this right away and others need more cues to keep looking at the person's face and movements. Once they get it, it's a great deal of fun.

- Print out the first page for each student.
- Put the UNO deck in the middle of the table.
- Draw an UNO card and ask each one to guess the color – without giving the cues.
- Make note that most people get the color incorrectly this first time through.
- Teach the color codes to the students and “guess” again.
- Have the students take turns guessing and giving the codes.

Other activities can be incorporated into this game to make it more interesting and to provide more social skills practice:

1. Learn more about Harry Houdini by going online to <http://www.thegreatharryhoudini.com/> . Have discussions about his life and adventures.
2. Prepare a script with the students on how they will present this new “magic trick” to other friends and family. Have them perform the script to each other.
3. Invite other students and/or staff to come observe the “Mind Reading” and impress them!
4. Sign up for the talent show! Everyone will be amazed by your psychic abilities!

Cheers,

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