

Alan Fisher's
TV HOLIDAY SPECIAL

EFFECT: Magicians displays a Christmas present or envelope. Opening it, he pulls out 6 notecards containing pictures of classic television holiday specials: "*Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*", "*How the Grinch Stole Christmas*", "*A Charlie Brown Christmas*", "*Mr. Magoo's Christmas Carol*", "*Frosty the Snowman*", and "*The Star Wars Holiday Special*". Laying them out on the table he tells a little bit of trivia about each one. He then asks a volunteer to assist him in selecting one special by eliminating all of the others. He mentions that he has made a prediction as to the outcome of this selection process. In turn, five of the six cards are eliminated until only one is left. The magician reveals his prediction and it matches the remaining television special.

SECRET: The PDF you have been given has 4 pages and contains all of the cards you need. You must print those pages double-sided so that pages 1 and 2 are the front & back of the first sheet of paper or cardstock and pages 3 and 4 are the front & back of the second sheet. Then you'll need to cut out all 8 cards.

There are two principles involved; a magician's choice and multiple outs. The cards must be arranged on the table in a specific pattern, but within that pattern you do have some choices. Arrange the cards in two rows of three. In the row closest to you the middle card must be either the *Grinch*, *Magoo*, or *Star Wars*. In the row farthest from you the first and last card must be either the *Grinch*, *Magoo*, or *Star Wars*. It doesn't matter the arrangement of these three cards only that they must be in those positions. The remaining three cards can be anywhere within the remaining three positions. This way when you ask them to eliminate odd or even, you're able to eliminate the three indifferent cards every time by starting your count from either the left of the farthest row or the right of the nearest row. If they say to eliminate odds, then you start on the right of the row nearest to you counting to the left 1 - 2 - 3. Then move to the farthest row and from the right count 4 - 5 - 6. So that when you eliminate cards 1, 3 and 5 you eliminate *Rudolph*, *Charlie Brown*, and *Frosty*. If they say to eliminate the evens then you begin counting from the farthest row on the left to right 1 - 2 - 3. Moving to the closest row on the left to the right count 4 - 5 - 6. Now when you eliminate the evens you again eliminate *Rudolph*, *Charlie Brown*, and *Frosty*.

The remaining three cards each have a different out. You are provided with 2 extra cards, a prediction for the *Grinch* (which you keep in the Christmas package or envelope with the other cards) and a prediction card for *Star Wars* (which you tape to the bottom of your Christmas package or the back of the envelope). The *Magoo* card has its prediction on the back. If the card you are left with is *Magoo*, pick up all of the other eliminated cards and one by one deal them face down onto the table. Then pick up *Magoo's* card and turn it over to reveal your prediction. If the *Grinch* is left, open your Christmas present or envelope (wherever you had the cards store) and pull out the *Grinch* prediction card. If *Star Wars* is the card that remains, then turn your Christmas package over to show the *Star Wars* prediction card on the bottom of it or show the *Star Wars* prediction card taped to the back of the envelope (making sure you never flashed it to the audience during the performance).

PRESENTATION: The effect is very straightforward. For the presentation you simply need to elaborate a little bit on each of the specials as you introduce their picture card. You can say as little or a lot about each one. It depends on your style and comfort level. For my presentation I mentioned the following about each show:

Rudolph: the original stop motion doll of Rudolph used in the special was sold at auction in November of 2020 for almost \$400,000.

Grinch: the Grinch was voiced by Boris Karloff, who also did the narration. But the song "You're a Mean One Mr. Grinch" was actually sung by Tony the Tiger. Or at least the actor who voiced Tony the Tiger, Thurl Ravenscroft.

Charlie Brown: When Apple TV bought the exclusive rights to the three Charlie Brown holiday specials (Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas) there was a huge public outcry because they were not going to be shown on broadcast TV. Because of the extremely bad press, the Apple was forced to cut a deal with PBS to air the Thanksgiving and Christmas specials on broadcast.

Magoo: Magoo's Christmas Carol was extremely unique in that it was a movie of Dicken's classic but a stage production with Magoo starring as Ebenezer Scrooge. Many times throughout the show you were shown the theater where the play was being performed. The opening sequence even had Magoo walking past the box office where the marquis displayed that he was the star of the show. It was one of those very rare times when they use Magoo's first name. The marquis showed Quincy Magoo in A Christmas Carol. Quincy was Magoo's first name.

Frosty: Frosty had the legendary Jimmy Durante as the narrator and fellow comic legend Jackie Vernon as Frosty. But most magician's watch the show for the evil magician Professor Hinkle who was always busy, busy, busy!

Star Wars: The most infamous of all holiday specials, and considered to be the worst of all time, 1978 Star Wars holiday special was a disaster. Not only was the original cast (Mark Hamel, Carrie Fisher, and Harrison Ford) forced to make brief appearances it features a galaxy of guest stars including Jefferson Starship, Diahann Carol, Harvey Korman, Art Carney, and Bea Arthur. Yes, Maud herself sang a song in the Moss Eisley Cantina with the original character band.