A sample from MindReadingExposed.com:

"Revealing a Friend's Name"

Effect:

Imagine asking someone to think of the name of a close friend and to visualize some details about their life. You examine the expression on their face and gradually start to reveal information about the imagined friend that you couldn't possibly know. You start by revealing their gender, then information about where they live, parts of their telephone number, letters included in their name and finally the entire name!

About the effect:

For this sample book I've deliberately chosen an effect that will give you a taste of the different elements of mentalism presented in the full version of Mindreading Exposed. It involves a little acting, some magical trickery, some genuine observation of body language and the psychology of the participant via cold reading.

The effect starts off with a very old mentalism gag. Once you've made the gag you perform a move called the 'center tear' (fully described in the methodology) to find the friend's name. The gag itself is a great way to break the ice with your participant, but more importantly, it gives the perfect cover for finding the name of the friend almost before the real effect has started.

Once you have the friend's name we employ a skill known as 'cold reading' to give the impression that we know a lot more about the friend other than just the name. We start with vague statements and gradually build to more and more accurate revelations until we finally reveal the name itself!

Preparation:

To perform the effect you need a pen and two pieces of card or thick paper about 15cm x 8cm in size. For the center tear to work correctly, you need to make sure that the participant writes their friend's name in the middle of the paper and that they fold the paper in a certain way. To ensure this, we need to prepare the paper a little. Gently fold each piece of paper once lengthways and then from bottom to top as pictured below:
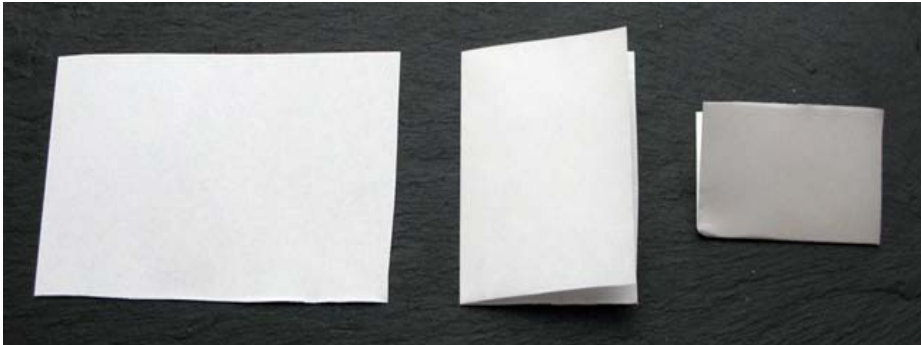
Once you've folded both pieces of paper, flatten them out and on each draw 'x', a line, a period and a circle as shown:

Note that the line is drawn just a little below the center crease in the paper. The x, the line and the period together with the circle make it very obvious to the participant where they need to write.

You may wish to experiment with how you prepare the paper. Some performers only draw a circle or a line. Really daring performers leave the paper completely blank and just say "write in the middle so that when it's folded I can't see."
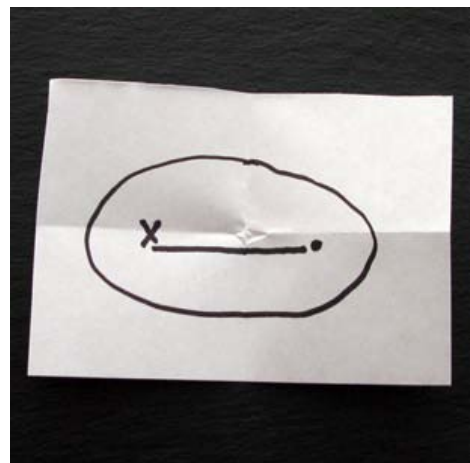
You might want to do the same or prepare some paper in advance. If you are preparing the paper in front of the participant, make sure you do it very casually so as not to draw suspicion to the paper itself.

Methodology:

(The effect is best performed at a table with the participant sat opposite you.)

You: Before we start I'm just going to write something down…

(Take one of the pieces of paper and without letting the participant see, write the words "Your friend's name" then fold the paper twice, then place the folded paper in the middle of the table.)

You: I want you to visualize a close friend, someone who you know well and who means a lot to you. Once you've got someone in mind, write their name here and fold the paper so I can't see.

(As you tell them to "write their name here" gesture at the line on their piece of paper and when you say "fold the paper", gesture the two folds that are required. Because the paper has been pre-folded it is very rare that someone folds their paper in a different way.)

You: How would you react if you unfolded my piece of paper and I had written your friend's name on it? Would that be amazing? Well pick it up and take a look… There – 'Your friend's name' is written on it! Correct?"

(This is a bit of a cheesy joke, but it gets a laugh and is important for what comes next. Quickly move on, and in a more serious voice say...)

You: OK, enough of my bad jokes. Let's get rid of these bits of paper, we don't need them; let's chuck them over there. What we are going to do is going to happen only in our minds. All I need from you is your concentration and co-operation. What I want you do now is to picture your friend's face, blow it up really big in your mind's eye, and make the image really vivid…

(At this stage the participant will be holding both pieces of paper. They will have just read yours, but theirs will still be folded. Take your piece of paper first, fold it in half and then rip it into several pieces and casually chuck them to the side/into a bin/ashtray etc. Then take their piece of paper and perform the center tear.

The center tear is a method of tearing a folded piece of paper that allows you to look the center piece – in this case the portion where the name is written. It can be done very quickly,

and with a bit of practice, from the participant's angle it looks exactly the same as the regular tears you did to your own piece of paper.

The video below shows the preparation of the paper and the center tear in slow motion. Watch the video and follow along with the step-by-step instructions.

If you are unable to play the video, please upgrade to the latest Flash & Acrobat Reader.

1. *Pick up the folded paper and turn it so that the unfolded edges are at the top and on your right. Practice so you can do this by touch without looking.*
2. *Rip the paper from top to bottom. When you are 4/5 of the way down, allow the paper to spring open so that it is half unfolded. When it is open complete the tear by pulling apart the two halves, then place them on top of each other. The piece with the name should be closest to you.*
3. *Turn the stack 90 degrees anti-clockwise and tear off the left hand 1/3 and place it to the back of the stack. Don't make it too neat! Keep everything messy and a bit spread out.*
4. *Tear off the right hand 1/3 and place the pieces to the back.*
5. *The messy stack of papers should now be spread out enough to let the back piece open without it being visible to the participant. With practice you can open the back piece with one hand using your thumb to flip it up. Alternatively you can pass the entire stack to your other hand and in the process lift the flap. Remember, you don't need to peek right away. When I am performing I normally hold the stack of papers quite flat. This makes it even more difficult for the participant to see the rear of the stack. Then I transfer the stack to my other hand as if I was about to throw the paper to the side. When I do this, I deliberately drop one of the pieces of*

paper and it's when I'm looking down to pick it up that I take a peek at the name before immediately throwing the ripped papers with the rest.

6. *As an optional final step, you can tear the pieces a final time after taking your peek. This way if the participant hunts through the pieces they will see the name was obscured with a rip.*

So now you know the name of the friend – but from the participant's perspective, the only thing that has happened is that you've cracked a cheesy joke!

For now it's important to act as if the joke is all that has happened. You need to act as if you don't know the name and that you really are going to tease it out of the participant during the next questions and statements.

The following is a very basic example of cold reading. The statements provided will work for most people, but you need to think on your feet depending on the answers you get and perhaps adapt the questions depending on the participant.)

You: First things first, please concentrate on the gender of your friend. It's a female correct?

(Now that you know the same of the friend, you also know the gender!)

Her: Yes!

You: Great – that was the impression I was getting. Often when people visualize a man's face, they tend to tighten up their own face. You're sat their looking very relaxed – so I'd have been surprised if it was a man you were thinking of.

(This line re-enforces the idea that you really are getting all of this information from observing the participant.)

You: I need to build up the picture of your friend a little more. Am I right in thinking that you've been to her house?

(This is a line that is almost guaranteed to be a hit! Remember, you asked the participant to write the name of a 'good' friend. Nearly everyone has been to the homes of their good friends. Similarly you can ask whether they have known the friend for a long time. Typically friends only become 'close' once they have known each other for several years.)

Her: Yes, many times!

You: Good, now imagine you're looking out of one of the windows of her house. Can you see trees?

(This one is a little riskier, but still has a very high success rate and since you are almost certain to have got a couple of hits in the earlier questions, it's worth taking a risk here. Note that I'm not asking the participant if there are trees, I ask only if she can see them. The advantage of this is that if there aren't any trees near the friend's house, the participant is likely to answer yes to save face.)

Her: Yes, she lives beside the park – you can see the trees and the lake from her window.

(Sometimes the participant will feed back extra information to you when they are answering your questions. When this happens, make use of it. Similarly, you can sometimes tell from the expression on the participant's face that something you've said is going to miss – in those cases you can try to recover the statement by changing your mind sentence e.g. 'can you see the trees? Actually no, they aren't trees – am I right in thinking there is a lamppost by the window? Or is that a telegraph pole?' Lines like this let you recover, even from circumstances when you get a firm no from the participant. Either way, you've got a couple of hits already and sometimes an occasional miss can add credibility to your performance.)

You: Ah, a lake. That would explain it. I was getting the impression of water; I was wondering if her house had flooded or something like that! A lake is much more pleasant. For some reason I'm seeing the number 2… does that have any connection to her? Do you know her phone number?

Her: No, but she lives at number 2 on her road!

(2 is a very common number in telephone systems. There is also a high chance is included in their house number. I use 2 because if they live on a short street or small apartment complex with say 12 apartments, you have a double chance of hitting 2 as opposed to 3 or higher.)

You: I'm getting some mixed messages from my observations. When I asked you to think of a good friend, did you think of anyone else first when you were deciding?

(The answer to this will almost always be yes, simply because people tend to have at least a couple of good friends.)

Her: Ha, yes I did! How on earth can you tell that?

(Let's assume the friend's name is Vicky)

You: Well, I was trying to pick up on the actual name, but I was getting a real mix of letters coming through. Does the name start with an unusual consonant by any chance?

(This statement depends on the name you are revealing. You might ask a question about the name being very long or short, or having lots of consonants or being a nickname etc.)

Her: Yes!

You: Well, next time you're over at Victoria's house you'll have to tell her we were talking about her!

(Note that here I used the longer form of the name Vicky. This is a nice optional subtly that further disguises the secret of the effect.)

Closing Notes:

You need to make the performance of the center tear quick and casual. Practice so that you can execute it quickly and without looking too much at the paper. Once you have mastered it, and practiced subtly peeking at the name, the whole process only takes a few seconds and will be completely above suspicion. They ONLY thing the participant will remember is the joke!

The cold reading is something that you will get much better at with practice. Unfortunately the only way to improve is to spend time actually doing it. Don't worry if the cold reading doesn't go perfectly every time. The final revelation of the name is very powerful in itself, so just keep practicing confident in the fact that even if you fail your participant will be blown away by the final revelation.

I wouldn't advise repeating the effect straight away. If someone asks you to do it again, offer to reveal another name that they are thinking of, but use a different technique. The full Mind Reading Exposed eBook teaches a couple of other methods to achieve the same effect – including one that doesn't require the participant to write anything at all!

We are running a special offer on the Mindreading Exposed eBook at the moment, so click here to take a look at what's included and get your cut price copy today!