



Instructions for Optical Illusion Performer

You are performing the Ponzo Optical Illusion discovered by Italian psychologist Mario Ponzo in 1911

1. Download and print off both pages – This instruction page is NOT shown on camera
2. Practise holding the image page up to your camera so the audience can clearly see it
3. Ask the audience which horizontal line appears longer. Most people will say the upper line.
4. Explain that the two horizontal lines are the same length.
5. Optional additional explanation - The upper line looks longer because we interpret the converging sides according to linear perspective as parallel lines receding into the distance. In this context, we interpret the upper line as though it were farther away, so we see it as longer – a farther object would have to be longer than a nearer one for both to produce retinal images of the same size.
6. Conclude by commenting that things are not always as they appear.