

Cheshire Cat

Make a friend's face disappear, leaving only a smile.

Try This

- Ask a friend to sit in the other chair.
- Push the black lever away from you until it stops. Rest your forehead against the eyepiece.
- Look straight ahead with both eyes, and slowly sweep your right hand across the big white screen at your right. Notice that part of your friend's face disappears. Look at the smile so it doesn't disappear.
- Push the white lever away from you, and try the same thing with your left hand.

What's Going On?

Normally each of your eyes sees a slightly different view of the world. Your brain combines these views to make a single three-dimensional picture.

This exhibit uses a mirror to send totally different views to your eyes. One eye looks at your friend, while your other eye views the white screen and your moving hand. As your brain tries to combine and interpret the views, it is distracted by the hand's motion. This distraction causes your brain to suppress visual information from your friend's face, making parts of it momentarily disappear.