

Now that you have explored the essential *e* (borrowed from the Latin *essentia*, itself from *esse* “to be”) you may well exult (Latin “to leap up”), “Eureka *E!*” – “I have found the essence of the English alphabet!”

WORD WAYS MAGIC

MARTIN GARDNER
Norman, Oklahoma

This trick is based on a paper-fold idea by Max Maven that I included in my Sterling book Mental Magic. It occurred to me that “Word Ways” applied nicely to the trick. (The answer result word is in Answers and Solutions.)

W	O	R	D
W	A	Y	S

Fold the sheet into a packet eight leaves deep by folding it any way you like along the creases. After you do this, some cells in the packet will face one way, other cells will face the opposite way. Because you made the folds at random, there seems to be no way to know which cells face which way.

Trim the four sides of the packet with scissors, so that no cell is attached to another cell.

Spread the pieces on the table. Can you arrange the face-up pieces to spell a common English word? If you can, stop. If you can't, turn over all the pieces.

Try again to spell a word with the face-up pieces.

You are sure to succeed. What word do you spell?