

NUMBERS AND THE TRICKS THEY VIDEO TRANSCRIPT:

Numbers can get up to all sorts of mischief to attract your attention, so when sorting the fact from the fiction in news stories, beware of these guys.

A favourite trick for numbers is to dress up as really big and important – when in fact they’re quite small.

Or the opposite – to disguise themselves as tiny, when they’re actually pretty significant.

Here’s a story about one million – quite a few zeros, eh!

And look, now it’s got a pound sign too – big number! What a lot of money!

But hang on, the story is changing – here’s another one million – this is the number of people you have to share that money with.

Uh oh – your one million pounds, has just shrunk to one pound each. Not such a big number after all!

Sometimes, the very smallest or the very biggest numbers push others into the shadows so they can take centre stage in the story... it’s another way numbers play around.

Here is seven hundred and sixty million [760,000,000]. It’s telling the story of how many people in the world are left-handed.

That’s a big flashy number – sounds like lot of people!

And there’s the number ten [back of stage] – it’s also telling the story about how many people in the world are left handed – ten per cent.

But that sounds like far fewer people and so it just can’t get a look-in compared to this show off...

So two different numbers can make exactly the same story look very different – depending on which one is getting more attention.

And these guys have loads more tricks up their sleeves... so the next time you see a number in a story ask yourself what is the number really up to.