A Cat, a Parrot, and a Bag of Seed:  
Since the man only has room for one other item, my solution for him would be to bury the bag of seed, take the cat first, then come back and take the bag of seed and then the parrot.

Socks in the Dark:  
a) the smallest amount I would choose are 5 to result in a matching pair.  
b) the smallest amount I would choose are 8 to result in at least 1 matching pair of each.  
  
Predicting Fingers:  
a) first finger.  
b) ring finger  
c) thumb