

Thaumatrope



A **thuma-what?** Say "THO-ma-trope" and you've got it right. A thaumatrope is an optical illusion toy from the 1800s.

What You Need

- 3" by 5" white, unlined index card
- markers
- plastic straw
- clear tape

1 Draw one part of a picture on one side of an index card.

2 Then draw the other part of the picture on the other side. The pictures should be connected (like a fish and a bowl or a flower and a pot).

3 Tape the card to a straw.



4 Spin the straw between your hands. What do you **see?**

Science Scoop

When you spin the thaumatrope, the pictures move so quickly that your eyes and brain can't see them separately. Your brain **holds on** to each picture for a fraction of a second. This is called **persistence of vision**. So, while your brain is still holding on to the first picture, the second picture comes into view. As a result, your brain **blends** the two pictures into one.



Try It Out!



Now it's time for you to **experiment**.

What happens when you spin the straw more **quickly** or more **slowly**? Try drawing **different pictures**. What kinds of pictures work best? Choose **one thing** to change (that's the variable) and make a **prediction**. Then **test it** and send your results to ZOOM.

Sent in by kids from the St. Pierre School in Quebec, Canada



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