



Make a Thaumatrope



Image: Black and white drawing of a wooden chair and text “Best Seat in The House.”

First, watch the animation *Best Seat in the House* (09:26)

<https://vimeo.com/404710193> Password: NYCSchools

In *Best Seat in the House*, trouble breaks out over ice cream!

QUESTIONS

1. What have you done in your home to avoid spilling ice cream on the couch?
2. Have you recently done something that you never thought about doing for yourself? For example, maybe you just made your first peanut butter and jelly sandwich. And cut off your own crusts!
3. How did that make you feel?

Ready to be an animator? We are going to make a thaumatrope: one of the very first handmade animated toys.



Make a Thaumatrope

WHAT'S A THAUMATROPE?

Thaumatrope is a word that means “spinning wonder.” The thaumatrope was invented in the early 1800s. A thaumatrope has two different pictures that when spun quickly, appear to be one image.

MATERIALS: What you will need for your Thaumatrope

Note card or paper
The lid of a jar (to trace a circle)
Scissors or hole puncher
Markers, colored pencils or pencils
Rubber bands or string

INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Cut your circle** Put the lid of the jar on your note card and cut out a circle.
2. **Draw your picture** On one side of the circle, draw a bird. On the other, draw a cage. Color your picture with colored pencils or markers.
3. **Punch holes** Use the tip of your scissors or the hole punch to make two holes on opposite sides of your circle – left and right.
4. **Attach rubber bands or string** Loop on rubber band or piece of string through each hole.
5. **Spin** Spin your disk by twirling the rubber bands or string. See the illusion of the bird in the cage? The faster you spin, the better!

The illusion works because your eye holds the picture of the bird for a



Make a Thaumatrope

tiny split second before it sees the picture of the cage. You see both of the pictures together!