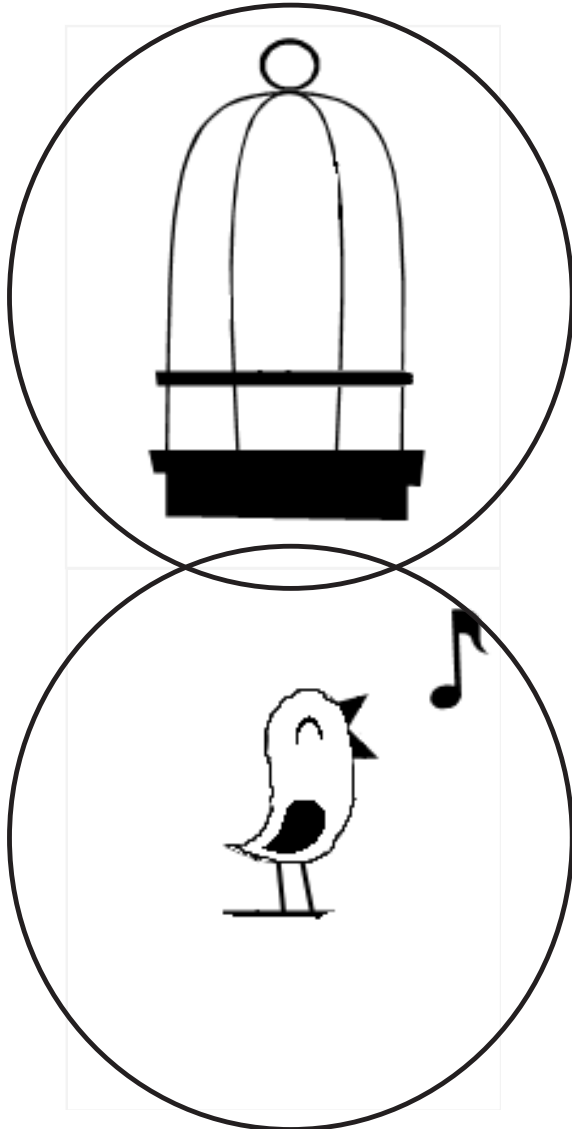


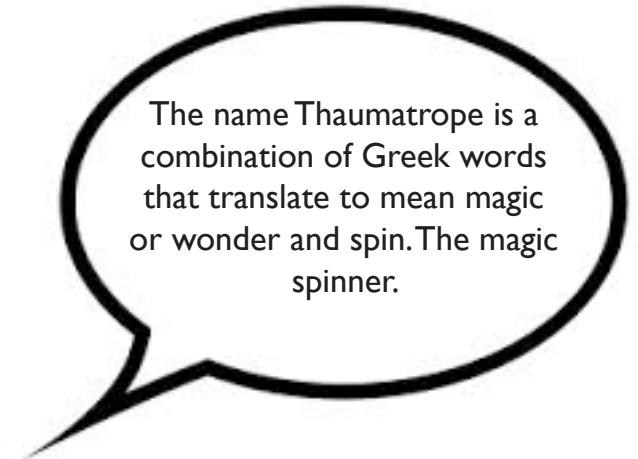
What is a Thaumatrope? A Magic Spinner!



A Thaumatrope or Magic Spinner is an optical illusion.

Two pictures are drawn on either side of a circle. The circle is then spun really fast, so fast that your brain does not even see the difference between the first picture and the second picture.

This makes it seem like both pictures are in the same place, even though they are not.



The name Thaumatrope is a combination of Greek words that translate to mean magic or wonder and spin. The magic spinner.

Some interesting questions about Thaumatropes...

How old are Thaumatropes?

Some people think that ancient people living in caves in France had something like a thaumatrope as a toy. We do know that they were very popular in the Victorian times, before television or films came along.

What would happen if one of the pictures was upside-down?

It would seem upside-down when the thaumatrope was spinning!

What happens if you spin the thaumatrope very slowly?

It does not seem to work. Your brain can see two different pictures rather than one overlapping picture because it is spinning too slowly.

What to try next...

How about a flip book? It works in a similar way to the Thaumatrope because your brain cannot separate all of the pictures because they are moving too fast. A flip book lets you use lots of pictures, not just two like a thaumatrope, why not try making a movie!

Thaumatrope Activity Sheet

This sheet will help you to create your very own spinning thaumatrope to take home and amaze your family and friends.

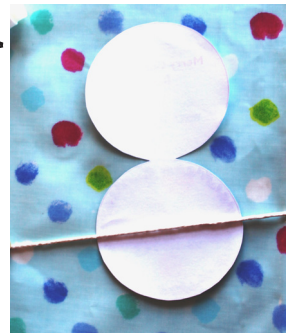
You will need some extra things to get started:

- Glue Stick
- String
- Scissors



What to do:

1. Carefully cut out the thaumatrope from over here
2. Cut your string so that it is about this long
3. Fold over your thaumatrope and glue the string in the middle of the circle so that it looks like this
4. Wait patiently for the glue to dry
5. Spin it as fast as you can to see the whole picture



For Step by step instructions with photos check out:
<http://bit.ly/IU7DTY>

You can make your own thaumatropes too, just cut out two circles, draw a design and stick them together. Share your favourites with us, ask an adult how to put them on Facebook or Twitter and tag Camera Obscura!

