

Western Australian Museum – Perth

Childhood Past

The Thaumatrope

Instructions

1. Carefully cut out the circles.
2. Colour the bird in. It is best to use the darker shades of colour rather than the lighter ones.
3. Paste the reverse sides of the bird and the cage together making sure that the bird is UPSIDE DOWN in relation to the cage.
4. Use a hole punch to punch 2 holes where marked.
5. Thread rubber bands through the holes, looping each band back into itself to secure.
6. Hold one loop in one hand and the other loop in the other hand.
7. Twirl the thaumatrope 20-30 times around and pull tight spinning the card rapidly.

You can make your own design on the blank circles. Other ideas for images to combine are clockface and hands, or a ship and bottle.

What do you see?

The thaumatrope was first described by Dr Paris in 1826. It works because of persistence of vision. The thaumatrope was the first in a long line of devices which work on this principle. Thaumatrope were popular children's toys in the 19th century.



