

# Make your own Thaumatrope

URRBRAE HOUSE SCHOOLS' PROGRAM



THE UNIVERSITY  
of ADELAIDE

The thaumatrope was invented in 1826 by an English physician named John A. Paris. The word thaumatrope (pronounced *thomma-trope*) has Greek origins. The word 'thauma' means magic in Greek and 'trope' refers to something that turns.

It is magical because it creates a picture that does not really exist by superimposing one image upon another. This uses the principle of 'persistence of vision'. This same principle is used in hand-drawn animation. A hand-drawn cartoon is made by putting together many separate images. Did you know that it takes 24 frames of film per second to convince your eye that something is moving on screen?

## MATERIALS YOU WILL NEED

White card

Scissors

Two short pieces of string

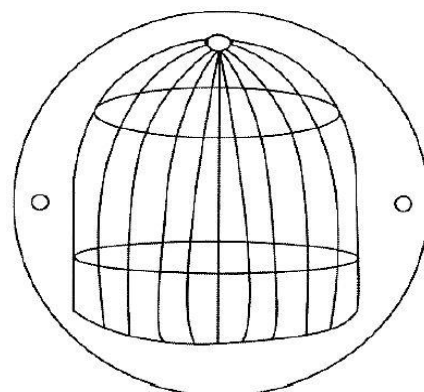
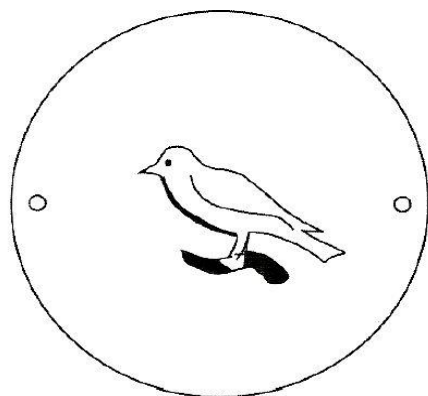
Compass or glass

Hole punch or sharp pencil

Pencils, crayons and/or felt pens

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Draw a circle on a piece of card. You can use a compass or trace around a glass to make a smooth circle. Cut out the circle.
2. Lightly draw a line with pencil through the centre of the circle. Using the hole punch or sharp pencil make a hole on each side of the line about 0.5cm in from the edge.
3. Draw a bird on one side of the card and then flip it over. On the other side draw a cage. If you use felt pens for your drawing you will need to draw lightly or use thick card.



4. Loop a short piece of string through each of the holes on the card. Hold the two strings between your fingers and twist them. Let them unwind quickly and watch the two pictures magically merge into one.

Now see if you can make another thaumatrope using another idea such as a horse and rider or a flower in a pot.

