

# Lesson Plan

## Thaumatrope

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### Summary

Students create a disk with a picture on each side. When the disk is twirled quickly the two pictures appear to blend into one. This is a good starter project for animation and persistence of vision.

- Grades: 3-8
- Create original works as a means of personal or group expression. **(ISTE standards: creativity and innovation)**
- Time: 45 minutes

### Teaching Plan

#### Learning Context

Grab students' attention by having several thaumatrope examples for students to spin. You may need to demonstrate how to spin the thaumatrope, especially with younger students.

Explain that a thaumatrope is an optical illusion that uses [persistence of vision](#) to blend the two images into one. You may want to use some of the optical illusion resources or videos about persistence of vision to explain how optical illusions work (see resources).

#### Procedure

Show students several examples of thaumatropes. Demonstrate how to make a thaumatrope using the [student instructions](#). There are other videos in resources that show how to make a thaumatrope.

1. Cut out the disks
2. Draw the two images on separate disks. Glue the disks together (the images need to be upside down from each other for the thaumatrope to work so it is a good idea for students to check with you before gluing the disks together)
3. Punch two holes

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4. Add the string or rubber band
  5. Twist the string or rubber band quickly to create the illusion

Encourage students to use simple drawings. It is much easier to match the two sides of a drawing if they are simple. If students are not sure what to draw, a smiling face is an easy and satisfying first project.

## Materials

- Thaumatrope examples for demonstration
- Copies of instructions for students
- Thaumatrope templates printed out on card stock
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- String or rubber bands
- Markers
- Glue or tape

## Resources

[Mr. Wizard explains Persistence of Vision](#)

[Thaumatrope Examples](#)

[How do optical illusions work?](#)

[Optical illusions for kids](#)

[Creating Thaumatropes](#)

[Instructions for another type of thaumatrope](#)

