Grades 3–5
Journey to NYC Monuments

Film Strip

The Museum of Moving Image features the magic of film from across its history. How did the first filmmakers create these amazing moving images?

What Will You Learn?

- The purpose and function of a zoetrope
- How to make your own zoetrope
- Understand the illusion of motion caused by the sequence of images

Materials:

- Image strip
- Cardboard cylindrical food container
- Scissors
- Tape
- Thick black marker
- Pencil with an eraser on top

Instructions:

1. Poke a hole in the center of the bottom of the container and put a pencil partway through the hole.
2. Cut out slots all around the top of the container like in the picture above. Don’t make the slots too low, because the picture needs to go below the slots.
3. Cut out the strips with pre-printed images or the blank strips. If the strips are blank, draw your own images that are slightly different and that...
simulate cyclical (continuous) motion. Once your images are ready, tape the two strips together to form one long strip, and place it inside the zoetrope below the slot openings.

4. Look through the slots at the images as you spin the zoetrope.

Reflection Questions:

- What happened to the images when you spun the zoetrope really fast?
- Try spinning it slowly. What is the difference?
- After making your own moving image, do you prefer stories told through film rather than stories told through still pictures?

Explanation:

- Zoetropes are early animation devices that create the illusion of motion from a rapid succession of static images. The human eye retains an image for a fraction of a second, so when a series of images are viewed back-to-back very quickly, the brain processes the images as one continuous motion.
Further Reading Recommendations:

Motion Pictures

Behind the Scenes: Animation

How to Create Animation

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