**The phenakistoscope**

Pronounced *fen-a-kist-o-scope*. Its name comes from the Greek words *phenax*, meaning ‘deceiver,’ and *scopein*, ‘to see’. It was developed in 1833 by Joseph Plateau as a toy that would make stationary images appear to be animated. These ideas eventually led to the development of cinema.

**Construction**

1. Print out either page 2 or 3 on thin card. Alternatively you can print on to paper and glue the paper on to a sheet of card.
2. Cut out the outline and put a hole through the central black spot.
3. Push a straw through the hole to act as an axle, as in Diagram 1.
4. Hold the phenakistoscope in front of a mirror. Make sure that you can see through the slits as in Diagram 2, with the dots/image facing the mirror.
5. Look through the slits while you spin the disk. You will see the pictures in the mirror and they should seem to be moving.

**Science Museum events and workshops**

This activity was to support an event at the Science Museum. For more information about events at the Museum, see [www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/education/holiday_events.asp](http://www.sciencemuseum.org.uk/education/holiday_events.asp)

Why not visit the *Cinematography* gallery on the third floor of the Museum to investigate the history of film-making?