

Activities for kids

Eyes

4+



STRETCH YOUR BRAIN

Bird's eye view

What does each of these pictures show? They're all seen from above.

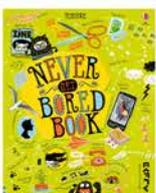


Say what you read

Read out the names of the animals on the left, then try to do the same with the ones on the right...



Answers: A person cooking on egg. A golfer on the green. Two people walking through puddles holding umbrellas. A pirate stranded on a desert island.



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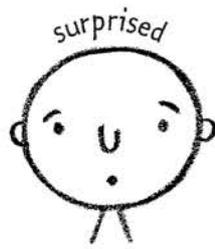
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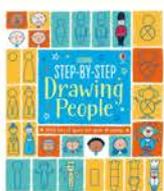
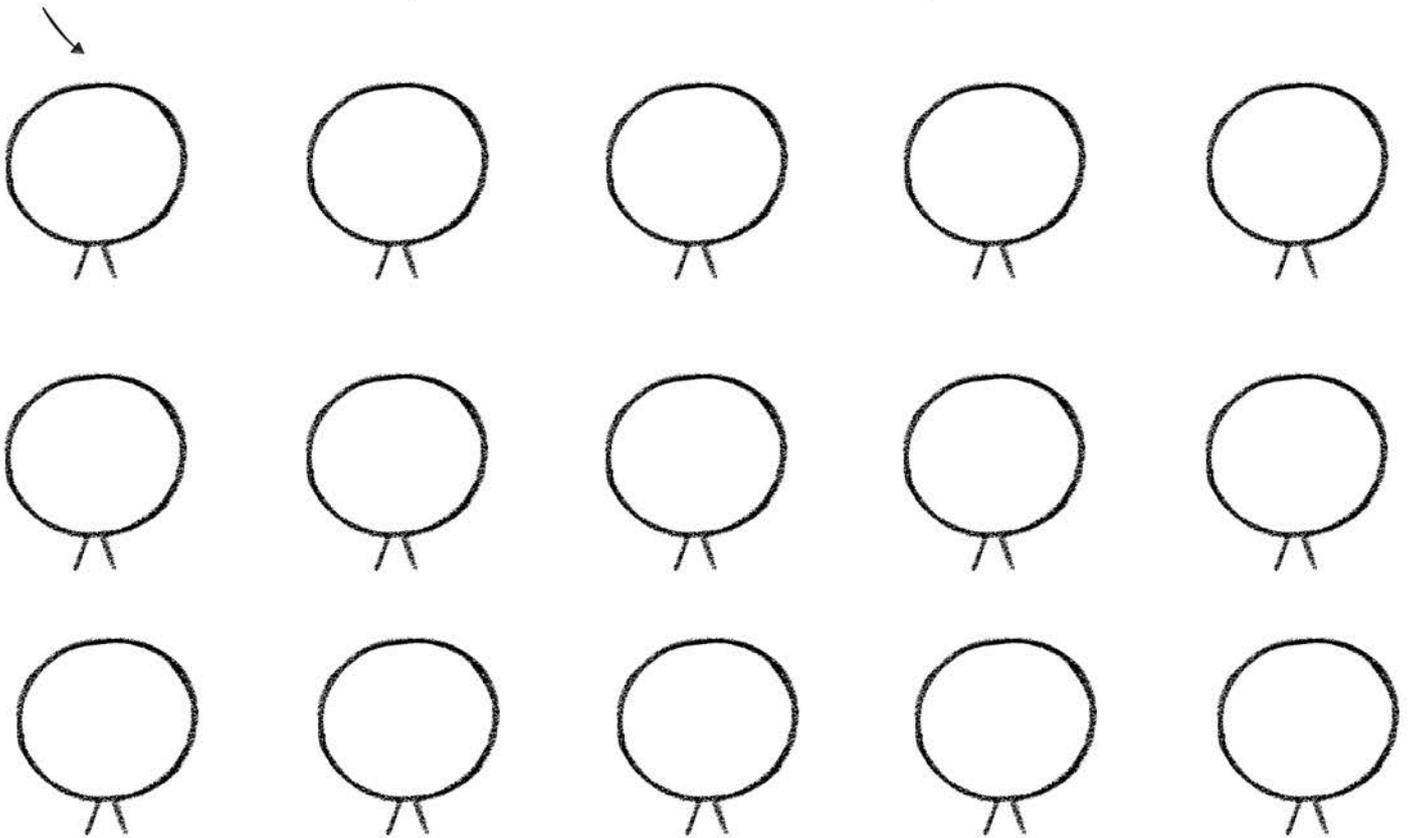


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How to draw faces



Your turn... Draw different expressions on these heads, then draw some of your own...



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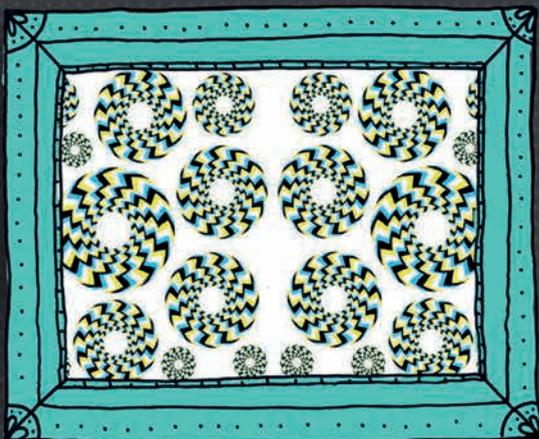
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BAFFLE YOUR EYES

Give these mind-bending optical illusions a try.

WHIRLING CIRCLES

Move your eyes around, and the circles will start to spin.



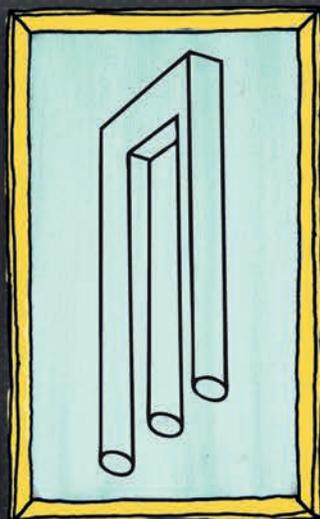
WONKY SQUARES?

The diagonal lines make the squares look as if they're slanting in different directions, but they are completely regular.



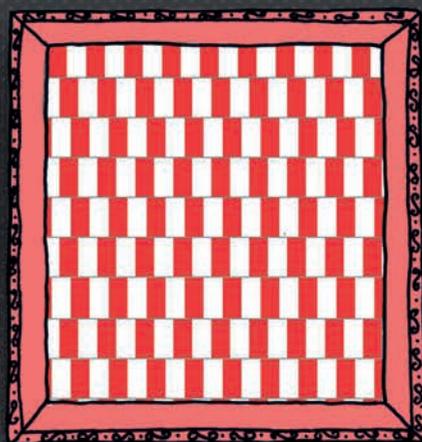
HOW MANY PRONGS?

This impossible shape looks like it has both two and three prongs at the same time.



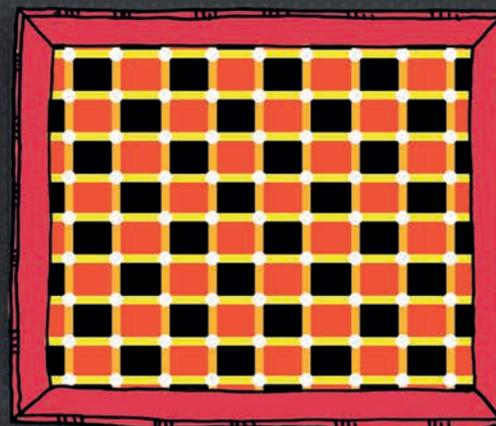
SLANTING LINES

The lines seem to tilt but they are horizontal.



DANCING DOTS

Black dots appear to dance around, but all the dots are actually white.



SAME SHADES?

The patches on both giraffes are exactly the same shade. Changing the background tricks the brain into thinking they're different.



TILTING HEXAGONS

The green lines in both shapes line up perfectly. See for yourself by checking them with a ruler.



HOW DO THEY WORK?

Optical illusions work by tricking your brain into seeing something that isn't there.

Faced with confusing information, your brain jumps to conclusions and imagines things.

If you don't believe it, cup your hands around each giraffe and look closely.



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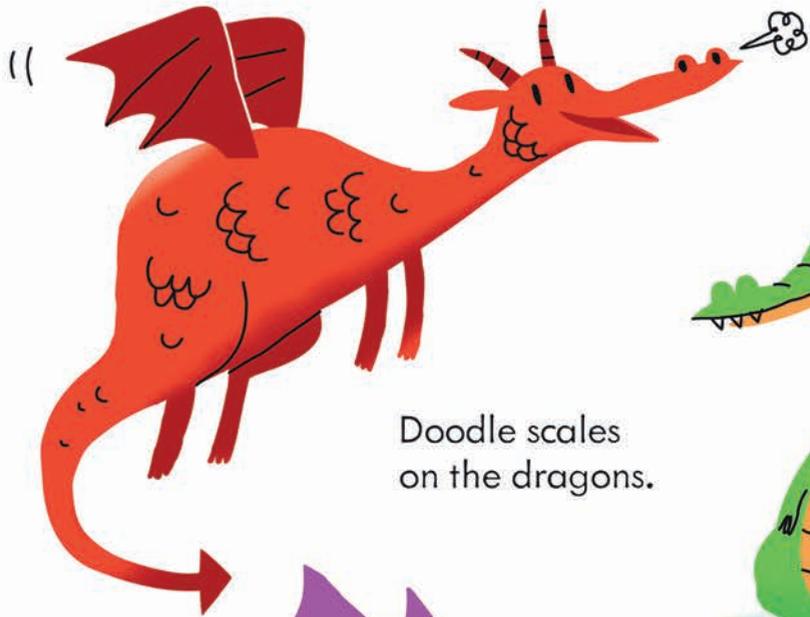
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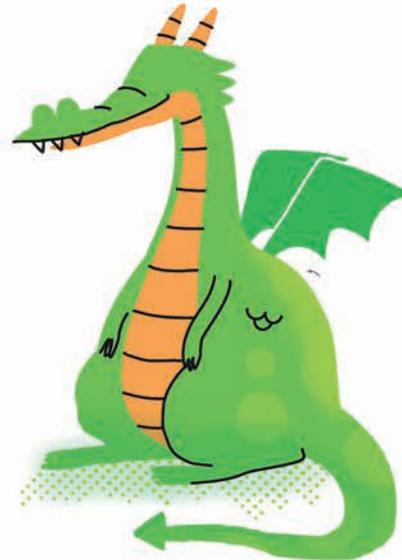
Dragons

Complete these dragons with a black pen.

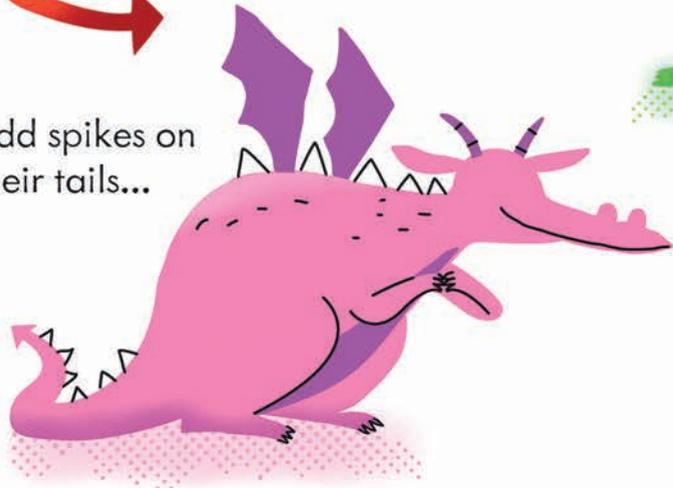


Draw eyes and nostrils.

Doodle scales on the dragons.



Add spikes on their tails...



...and sharp claws on their feet.



Draw teeth in the dragons' mouths.



Doodle little puffs of smoke.



Add flames with orange and yellow pens.



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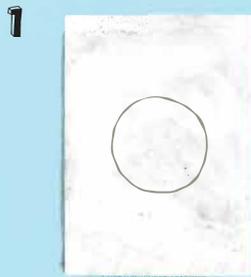


DRAW OPTICAL ILLUSIONS

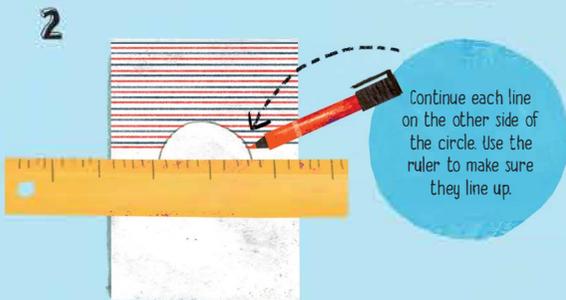
Follow the steps on these pages to draw pictures that play tricks on your eyes.

POP OUT

Try this technique to create an illusion of a hovering sphere.



Put a cup upside down in the middle of a piece of paper. Draw around it in pencil.

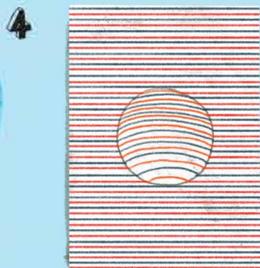


With a ruler; use a red and blue pen alternately to draw horizontal lines across the paper: leave small gaps between the lines. Don't draw inside the circle.



Keep going until it looks like this.

The more lines you draw, the better the illusion looks.



Next draw red or blue curved lines to connect the lines on either side of the circle.

Now look at your picture. The circle should look 3D.

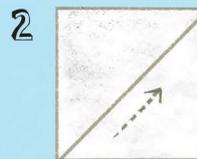
You could draw around other objects in step 1, to make different hovering shapes.

3D HOLE

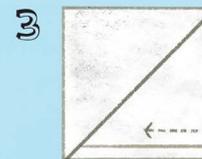
Make a hole appear in a piece of paper by drawing a square and some lines. You could use a ruler to help you draw and measure the lines, but they don't have to be too neat.



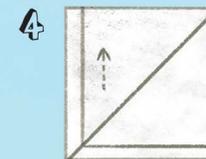
Use a pencil to draw a square in the MIDDLE of the paper: Each side should be about 9cm (3.5in) long.



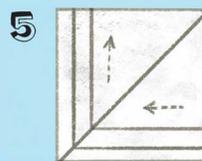
Draw a diagonal line from the bottom corner to the top.



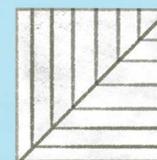
Draw a line about 1cm (0.5in) above the bottom edge, from the right to the diagonal line.



Continue the line up to the top, about 1cm (0.5in) from the left edge.



Repeat steps 3 and 4 five more times. Leave similar-sized gaps between the lines.



Fill in the small square in the top corner with a black felt-tip pen. Then fill in every other row.

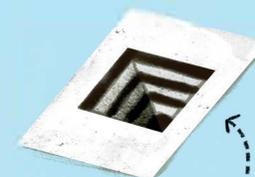
Use a pencil to shade the white spaces, to the right of the diagonal line. They should be less and less dark the further they are from the black square.



Keep your pencil at the same angle as the diagonal line.

Press your pencil firmly...
...less firmly...
...and lightly.

Turn your picture around and look at it from the side.



The illusion works even better if you take a photo of it from this angle.



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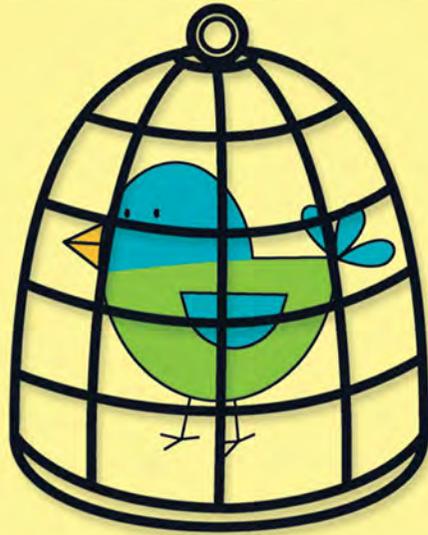
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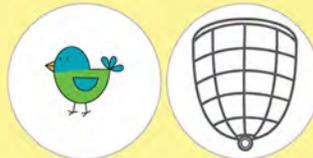
Catch the birdie

Try this activity to find out how your brain can trick your eyes.



1. Make two circles on a piece of thin white card, by drawing around a mug twice. Then cut them out.

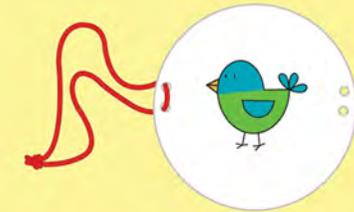
Make the cage a bit bigger than the bird.



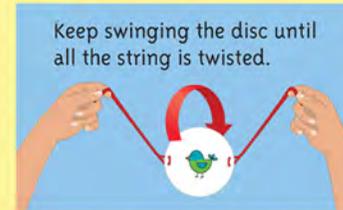
2. Draw a bird on one circle and a cage on the other. Turn the cage upside down. Glue them together back to back.



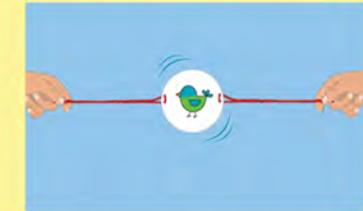
3. Use a hole puncher to make two holes on either side of the cage. Cut two pieces of string as long as your arm.



4. Thread a piece of string through one pair of holes, like this. Knot the ends. Do the same on the other side.



Keep swinging the disc until all the string is twisted.

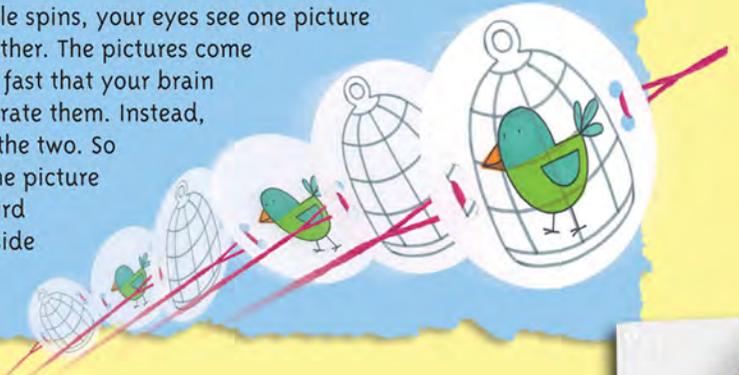


5. Hold the knots so that the circle hangs down. Flip the circle over and around until the string is twisted up tightly.

6. Now, with both hands, pull the string tight. This makes the circle spin around really fast. What can you see?

What's going on?

As the circle spins, your eyes see one picture after the other. The pictures come around so fast that your brain can't separate them. Instead, it merges the two. So you see one picture — of the bird caught inside the cage.



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