Animation is a process by which images or objects are made to appear as moving images. In traditional animation, images are drawn or painted by hand on transparent celluloid sheets to be photographed and shown on film. Popular examples of animated media include cartoons, comic books, and flip books.

The phenakistiscope is a predecessor to the flip book. It is regarded as one of the first forms of moving media entertainment that paved the way for the future motion picture and film industry. Like a GIF animation, it can only show a short continuous loop.

TRY IT!

1. Cut out the notched circle on the next page.
2. Draw a simple animation that repeats with a slight change in each square of drawing space.
3. Pin your drawing in the exact center to a pencil eraser.
4. Holding your phenakistiscope away from you, look at the reflection of your animation in the mirror through the back of the notches. You will see your image spring to life!