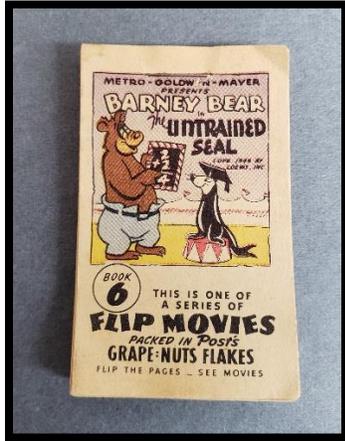




What in the World Wednesday #8?

Wray Museum Young Historians

Flipbooks



#1990.245.33 Flipbook

With their simple but charming form of animation, Flipbooks became one of the biggest selling optical toys in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The books are designed so that each page's image advances the scene from the previous page; when the pages are thumbed rapidly the sequence becomes animated due to the persistence of vision.

The flip book looks like a small notebook – originally stapled, mostly bound today- that you hold in one hand while you flip over the pages with the thumb of the other hand, either from front to back or from back to front. They are also called flick books, thumb books, or hand cinemas.

History of Flipbooks

Flipbook animation has been around for over 150 years. Pierre-Hubert Desvignes is credited with creating a version of the flipbook around 1860, though John Barnes Linnett, a British lithograph printer, was the first to patent the design. Linnett's flipbook debuted in 1868 and was called the kineograph, which is Latin for "moving picture."

Shortly after the flipbook's debut, English-American photographer Eadweard Muybridge developed a way to make his own flipbook by setting up a camera rig to take multiple pictures at rapid speed, that when viewed in sequence produced a moving image.

The flipbook continued to evolve, with American inventor Herman Casler developing a mechanical version called the mutoscope, which used a Rolodex-like mechanism rather than a book to produce the animation. Flipbooks set the groundwork for film as they projected moving scenes on paper, which eventually evolved into moving scenes projected on to a screen—what we know as film today.

Easy to manufacture and made of photographs or lithographs (drawings), toyshops or joke shops sold them. Thanks to their low cost to produce, they were often offered as promotional gifts. Flipbooks were popularized in the early 1900's by the Cracker Jack Company who gave them away as free in-pack prizes. Other marketers soon followed suit with flipbooks, including manufacturers of bubble gum, cigarettes, automobiles and snack foods. Then, in the 1960's, innovative marketers from Disney, Gillette, McDonald's, Post Cereals, Canada Dry, Ford (and others) resurrected the flipbook animation trend, creatively using flip books as novelties, interactive brochures, and promotional giveaways to promote their products. But unfortunately, that trend ended in the 1970's in favor of new "interactive multimedia" technologies that began to take the spotlight.

Because they were never meant to be kept and were cheaply produced, it is very hard to find flipbooks in good conditions and to archive them. The magic of a flipbook touches everybody, no matter the age. As you do not need peculiar knowledge to use it, it has a universal characteristic.

Make your own Flipbook

Supplies Needed

Stack of paper like sticky notes, index cards, or a small notepad

Pencil, pens, and colors

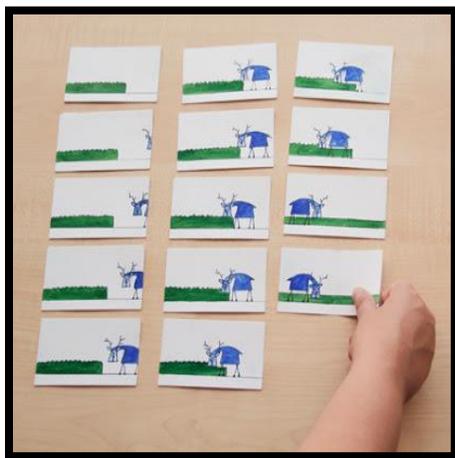
Tape or stapler

Lightbox (optional)



Step 1 Get a thick stack of paper. You'll need a thick stack of small pieces of paper, like sticky notes, notepad paper, or index cards—the kind of paper that is conducive to page-flipping. Most standard flipbooks contain approximately 60 images, but you can use as many as you need to tell your story.

Step 2 Think of a story. The best stories for flipbooks are simple motions like: a wheel rolling across the page, a frown turning into a smile, a person doing jumping jacks, or a flower growing.



Step 3 Start at the bottom right. The last sheet of paper in your stack will be the first image of your flipbook. Use a pencil to draw your image towards the bottom right of your paper stack so you can see it when you start to flip. If you draw your image too close to the spine of your book, it won't be visible while flipping.

Step 4 Draw the next image. The card on top of your bottom sheet will be your second sequence. Draw the sequence in the same area as the previous sequence, but change its movement slightly. You can place a lightbox beneath the stack of paper to see the initial image better, creating a tracing paper effect.

Step 5 Continue the process. Each subsequent piece of paper should contain a slightly changed image of the one you drew before so that the images form fluid, consecutive movements—images should not jump across the page or suddenly move out of sequence.

Step 6 Polish and enhance. After illustrating the animation sequence on your sheets of paper, you can enhance it with markers, ink, or other coloring tools. Keep your designs consistent to present a continuous sequence as you flip through the book.

Step 7 Hold the flipbook in your right hand. Flip all the pages up with your left hand then let them go one by one to watch the action. Once everything is in order use tape or a stapler to secure the pages. Add a title page to the top and enjoy! Note you can also use a series of photographs to make a flipbook.