

Colour trickery



Location

First floor, Curiosity zone exhibition

In a nutshell

Do you see a blue and a green spiral?
Is it possible they are an identical colour?

What to do

Look at the exhibit; can you see two different coloured spirals? Now compare the different spirals with the bar of colour at the bottom of the exhibit. You should be able to see that actually both spirals are green rather than two different colours.

Time Required

KS1 & KS2 2-3 minutes per student.

What's happening?

This amazing illusion has been created by Japanese vision expert Akiyoshi Kitaoka.

Scientists are not really sure how your brain creates two such different coloured spirals from a single 'colour'. However, it is likely to be related to the different colours that are on top of and behind both spirals.

Look closely at the 'green' spiral – the lines of colour on top of it are orange, and it sits on a pink background. Now look at the opposite situation for the 'blue' spiral. Here the lines on top of the spiral are pink whilst it sits on an orange background.

As with all illusions, scientists use them to understand more about how our brains interpret the world. At the moment, they think this illusion is caused because of something happening at the T-junctions – the places where the spiral, background and foreground colours meet.

Curriculum links

Curriculum links	
KS1/2	<p>Science - Working scientifically</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (Yr 1 & Yr 2) asking simple questions and recognising that they can be answered in different ways - (Yr 1 & Yr 2) using their observations and ideas to suggest answers to question <p>English - Spoken language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions - give well-structured descriptions, explanations and narratives for different purposes, including for expressing feelings - use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas

Relates to:

Workshops & Theme Days	Shows	Trails	Other exhibits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Body basics (KS1) • Brain and body theme day (KS1 & KS2 lower) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainworks (KS1 & KS2 lower) • Boggling Brains (KS2 upper) • How my body works (KS2) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eye witness • Cafe wall illusion • Push over • Funny faces • In a spin

