MATERIALS
• 18 Gauge wire, pre cut into 2 foot lengths.
• Copper wire, precut into 2 foot lengths.
• Pencils to form curls on fish tail.
• Round containers to form fish body (styrofoam cups in cafeteria).
• Colorful pony beads (preferably red, blue, yellow, orange, black or white).
• Wire cutters on hand, as needed. Scissors for thin wire.
PREP
• Precut wires as noted above into lengths.
• Have beads in small containers on tables.

CALDER AND WIRE
As we know, Calder used simple found materials to create some of his wire animals. His Fish mobile made in 1944 was created from painted metal rods, wire, metal, glass, plastic and wood. This was made during WWII when steel was rationed and hard to get. Calder used found objects and trash to create his art. He made about a dozen mobiles that look like fish.

He called this type of sculpture a “drawing in space” because it resembles a line drawing. His Fish was kinetic, as it would move at the slightest gust of wind and then the scales rotated, making it appear that the fish was swimming. Calder made most of his sculpture for amusement. He was enchanted with the sea and saw it as forever rebeginning, forever new. Calder did not use complicated tools and techniques to create his mobiles. He thought that if you had a lot of equipment, you went in the direction your equipment carries you and you set limits. Most of the time he just uses pliers, no power tools, and he even invented many of his hand tools.

We are going to create a wire fish sculpture toy with a minimum of tools and using a simplified color palette of mostly primary colors that Calder was fond of.

PROJECT
• Take your thicker piece of aluminum wire and figure where the middle is. Form the wire equally around the cup and twist the ends to close in the circle.
• Remove the cup and bend your wire to form a mouth at the middle end of the wire.
• Then slightly bend your sculpture into more of an almond shape to look like a fish.
• Take a pencil and twirl one of the fish tails at the end to form a spiral. Then make the other spiral. Calder used spirals a lot in his jewelry and paintings.
• Now we will use the thinner wire. Begin by gently twirling the wire at the top of the fish body towards the mouth to secure it to the thicker wire. “Thread” a bead for the eye and then wrap the wire through the hole of the eye bead to secure it.
• Then wrap over the bottom of the fish sculpture and come back up. Repeat, adding beads as desired in the pattern you want, making sure to alternate the wire direction when you bring it around the bottom. The other beads are meant to move, so they are not secured in place like the eye.