

Animation lesson plan



National Curriculum: KS 2 & 3 Art and Design

Interested in Animation?

This lesson plan identifies different animation styles and techniques, and encourages students to explore the history of animation and find out about the pioneering work of several renowned animators. The lesson plan also explores early experiments in animated movement through Victorian optical toys, and looks at ideas for using animation in the classroom.

<https://www.culturestreet.org.uk/lesson.php?id=66>

Learning Objectives

Through this lesson plan students should have a better awareness of the history of animation. They should also develop a better understanding of the different animation techniques. Through making an animated film, students can develop their knowledge of the animation process . Through the Development Activity they will understand how film production stages can be applied to making an animated film. Through activities they will also be able improve problem-solving and team-working skills.

Overview

This lesson plan can be used:

- to build knowledge of the history of animation and the work of animators.
- to support the creation an animation project based on a topic of your choice.
- to develop an understanding of animation techniques.
- to help identify equipment you could use.
- to experiment with your own ideas and choice of materials.

What is animation?



Animation is a technique where still images are given the illusion of movement. Animation techniques are commonly used in television, movies, online and in advertising. Animation techniques you will have seen include hand drawn animation, stop motion animation, which includes styles such as model and cut out, and computer animation.

Victorian Optical toys



The Victorians created optical toys with long names such as the phénakistiscope, the zoetrope, the praxinoscope and the Kinora Viewer. These toys created a short animated loop using a sequence of still images, a bit like an early gif. They usually work by spinning a wheel or turning a handle. You can find out more about these toys by watching this short film made at the National Media Museum in Bradford. <https://www.culturestreet.org.uk/artist.php?id=70>

Virtual Kinora Viewer



The Kinora Viewer had a drum of a few hundred photographs and if you turned the handle at the right speed they play as a film. This toy must have been fascinating to Victorian children but what frame rate makes the still images come to life? Have a go with our virtual version and see if you can make the planes fly, the river flow or the train move.

<https://www.culturestreet.org.uk/activities/kinoraviewer/index.php?id=17>

Drawn animation



Drawn animation is one of the earliest animation techniques. It involved creating a series of drawings on paper or transparent sheets known as cels. The drawings would then be recorded in sequence to create a film clip. Winsor McCay's 'Gertie the Dinosaur' (1914) is one of the earliest animated films.

Cut out animation



Cut out animation is a technique which uses materials such as paper, card, or photographs to create flat characters and scenes. Cut out characters are made in sections like a puppet so they can be moved into different positions. German filmmaker Lotte Reiniger (1899 - 1981) is well known for her silhouette animation which use intricate cut out characters.

Model animation



Model animation is a technique which uses three dimensional, puppet-like figures and scenes. The models are often made from clay, latex, foam or silicone materials with an inner skeleton known as an armature. Willis O'Brien (1886 - 1962) was an American animator who is well known for creating some of the earliest stop-motion model animation. One of his most famous films is King Kong (1933) which mixes model animation and live action.

Task



Think about a piece of animation that you've seen on television, online or in an advert.

Describe how it looked. Which of the techniques listed above do you think has been used to make it? Why do you think that that particular technique was used? Try to find out about the animator or company who made it.

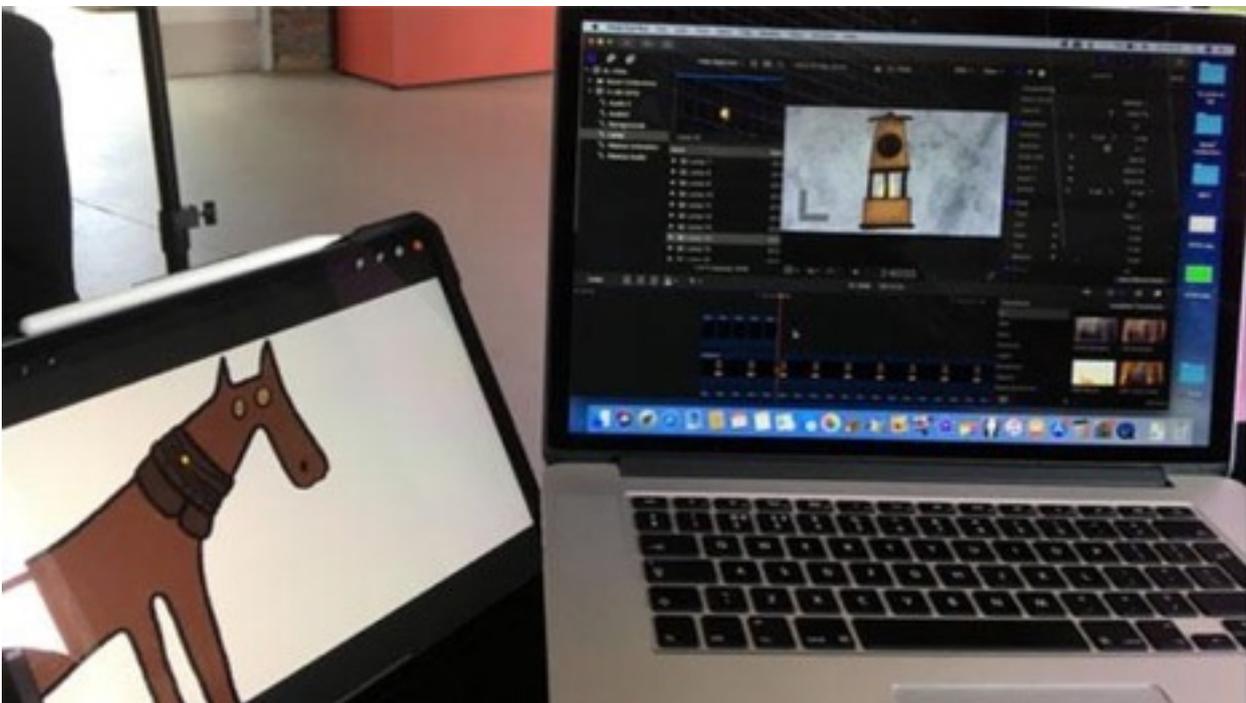
A Sculpture Near You- Draped Seated Woman



In their film about the work of Henry Moore, pupils from Lansbury Lawrence Primary School used animation to illustrate part of the story of the sculpture. Originally installed on the Stifford Estate, Stepney, in 1962 when the estate was demolished in 1997, the sculpture moved to Yorkshire Sculpture Park. In 2017 it returned to London and is currently located in Canary Wharf. The group used basic cut out animation to create short, animated sequences to illustrate this point.

<https://www.culturestreet.org.uk/artist.php?id=175>

Equipment



Advances in technology mean more ways of making animation and more equipment on which to do it. At the moment, the easiest equipment to use for animation is a tablet, phone or stills camera. Whatever you choose to work with, it's important to keep the equipment still when you're capturing images. Try using a clamp or tripod if you have one. You could try using a music stand with your tablet. Whatever you use, make sure it's sturdy and your equipment is safe and suitably attached.

Recording your animation

Just like equipment, software and apps are always improving. If you're working with a stills camera, try importing your images into something like iMovie. If you're working on a tablet, check out which animation apps are available and experiment with those.

Try searching on the internet for open source animation and free editing software.

Suggested Classroom Activity - Making an animated film



Research a local story, landmark, or local history and, using the filmmaking equipment and apps or software that you have available, take inspiration from the animated work by pupils from Lansbury Lawrence Primary School, and try making your own cut out animation. Design your backgrounds and characters and make your story come to life. You could try editing your work in an editing app and adding your own music or sounds.

Development Activity

A great way to introduce animation, and to start learning about the process, is to have a go at making a flip book. In this link you will be guided through the steps to make a two picture flip book:

How to flipbook

<https://www.culturestreet.org.uk/workshop.php?id=34>

Once you've had a go at making a flip book with two pictures, try making a longer sequence using as many drawings as possible. Try using a booklet of post-it notes. Start at the back of the booklet so that you are able to see where your previous drawing is when you're tracing the next one. Don't separate the pages. With a two picture flip book you are limited to a looped movement. With a longer flip book you can create a longer sequence of action like someone running or a vehicle moving across the page.

