Wall-E Arm Option, from “Wall-E,” by Jay Shuster, 2008, ink, marker and correction fluid on paper. © Disney/Pixar
LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will learn about the history, the process and the artists who create animated films. They will then create their own detailed characters using transparency films.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- Learn about the process of making animated films.
- Create a character.
- Add details to capture the emotions and setting.
- Add a background to tell a story.

ILLUSTRATION AND ANIMATION

Bob Pauley

Peter Docte

Sharon Calahan

The history of animation started long before movies in the cinema. Humans have probably attempted to depict motion as far back as the paleolithic period with shadow play and the magic lantern. In 1833 the phenakistoscope introduced the stroboscopic principle of modern animation, and would also provide the basis for cinematography. From Pixar: "Computers don't make movies. People do: the artists, editors, animators, and technical directors. People are the life behind everything that gets created at Pixar. While animated films are technically complex to make, they each begin with the simplicity of putting pencil to paper. Many people don't realize that Pixar has almost as many artists working in traditional media-hand drawing, painting, pastels, sculpture-as they do in digital media. Most of their work takes place during the development of a project, when they are working out the story and the look of the film. The wealth of beautiful art created for each movie is rarely seen outside the studio, and the finished film sent around the world would never be possible without it.

Ernesto Nemesio
LESSON PLAN

1. Begin with a discussion about the art of animated movies:
   • What is your favorite animated movie? Why do you think you liked it so much?
   • Describes some of the characters from animated films you have seen.
   • How do you think people make animated movies?
   • Do you see those people as artists?
   • If you could make your own, what kind of characters would you create? What stories would you tell?

2. Using examples from animated films, look at the characters. What can you tell about the characters from the way they are drawn or represented? (Talk about textures, details, facial expressions, clothing and their poses)

3. Share the process of creating characters and stories for these films. Often, directors come up with ideas for the films from their own lives and also fantastical things from their imagination. Then the story moves in to pre production: artist start drawing (pencil on paper and digital painting) to develop the details about the story, characters, and the imaginary world it takes place in. Then in production artists are brought in to make the frames of the film with computer graphics.
   • How many frames do you think are in an animated film?
   • How long do you think a films takes from start to finish.

4. Student will now imagine their own character and setting for a story. First students should make lists of qualities for their character (qualities, personality trait and details). Then, pass out scratch paper for brainstorming and sketching.

5. Pass out copies of a few options of basic figures or ‘skeletons’. Students will then layover a clear laminate sheet to add characteristics specific to the character they are imagining. Students should define the physical traits, think about their life circumstances, and think about their personality to make their character unique.

6. Pass out additional laminate if students would like to explore different poses, facial expressions and mood. Students can also add a setting behind the character to add to their story. (Optional: students can write a story about this character)

Harley Jessup
Pete Docter
Daniel Lopez Munoz
KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT TO VISUAL ARTS CORE CURRICULUM:
Based on Utah State Visual Arts Core Curriculum Requirements (2nd Grade).

**Standard 2.V.CR.1:**
Brainstorm multiple approaches to an art or design problem, and make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.

**Standard 2.V.CR.2:**
Experiment with various materials and tools to explore personal interest in a work of art or design.

STUDIO HABITS OF THE MIND:
Envision: Learning to picture mentally what cannot be directly observed, and imagine possible next steps in making a piece.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES
Click on links to learn more.
- [https://pixarartcollection.com/pages/the-artists](https://pixarartcollection.com/pages/the-artists)
- [https://www.bloopanimation.com/6-steps-of-animation/](https://www.bloopanimation.com/6-steps-of-animation/)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rzwdRqsuVM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rzwdRqsuVM)

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