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Lip–sync claymation

VA:Cr1.1.5a
Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art-making.

VA:Cr2.1.5a
Experiment and develop skills in multiple art-making techniques and approaches through practice.

VA:Cr2.2.5a
Demonstrate quality crafts-manship through care for and use of materials, tools, and equipment.

Objectives

Students will know...
- Claymation is one form of stop-motion animation
- Claymation uses nonhardening clay or plasticine to create movable characters
- Lip-sync or mouth expressions matched to dialogue adds more realism to animation
- Lip-sync and eye movements as well as head, arm, and leg movements add to a natural look of the characters

Students will be able to...
- Use the Production Process to guide them through the creation of a Claymation movie
- Make concept art of a character, non-human, make a storyboard showing camera angles and action, and mark up a script with lip-sync symbols
- Create scenery for a background and a clay character using a variety of color plasti-cine, nonhardening clay
- Use a camera, phone, or tablet to photograph the character's actions
- Work with an app for stop-motion or video editing to complete their movie
- Record narration and import it into the movie
- Match motion with sound

Introduction

Students will create a short Claymation using an original character (preferably non-human). The character will exhibit lip-sync by either reciting a riddle or joke (e.g., Why did the chicken cross the road?), sing a short verse of a song, or recite a line or two from a movie. The character should in some way reflect the content of the spoken/sung words. Show classes examples of clay characters moving and speaking or singing created by former students.

Suggested activities to complete before the lesson

1. Create a short stop-motion movie using any kind of object or material other than clay, such as Lego® blocks, paper cut-out animation, playing cards, toys, or dolls. This introduces the concept of animation (individual images combine to show the illusion of motion) as well as techniques such as gradual incremental movements. Students can also use an app such as Stop Motion Studio or a camera and an editing program (iMovie® or Movie Maker).

2. Introduction to the plasticine clay. Create a small head with an expression based on one of the expressions from the handout (available to download online). Have students copy three illustrations of cartoon expressions and three illustrations of eye expressions into their sketchbooks. This introduces the students to working with the clay. Demonstrate how to manipulate clay into a round ball. Each student gets a ball and will need to pick one of the expressions made in their sketchbook. Show how to use different carving and detail clay tools. Students will practice making a clay head with a facial expression.

3. Students should view one of Aardman's Claymation films. They will answer questions as they watch the movie. Discuss stylization to create suspense and emotion in the film.

4. Have students watch https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omhYBHFY75U

Instructions

Introduce the Production Process: Pre-Production, Production, and Post-Production.

Pre–production

1. Students will individually come up with three possible ideas. Have students submit the ideas for approval. These will be discussed and decided upon with your assistance. This will include the type of character as well as the action taking place. A short description should be written down.

2. Students will type the verse, song lyrics, or joke (the script).

3. Have students sketch out their character in color (so you know what color clay to use).

4. Students will create a storyboard containing types of shots. Storyboards will determine camera angles.

5. Introduce lip-sync symbols to students. They will apply these to their script. Scrips will determine mouth and eye movements.

6. Students will decide on a background or scenery. Have them sketch this in their sketchbook.

Pre–production
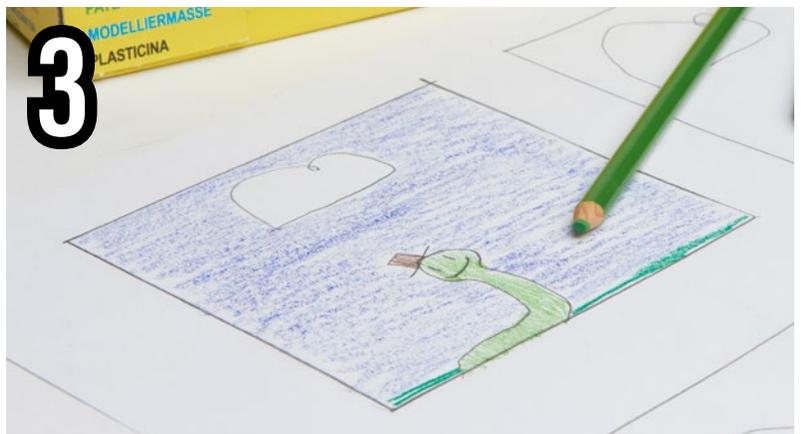
Sketch out characters in color (so you know what color clay to use).

Create a storyboard containing types of shots. Storyboards will determine camera angles.

Production

1. Students will create scenery — either drawn or a tiled printout in color — large enough for a background. 21" x 14" mounted on cardboard is a good size. The scenery is wider so that the scene works in a camera format.

2. Demonstrate how to make an armature of wire if needed. Make an armature with wire and tape for clay characters.

3. Demonstrate how to build the character in clay. Emphasize details and craftsmanship using clay tools.

4. Students should be sure to make extra eyes and mouths. At least five sets of mouths should be created and three sets of eyes (open, halfway closed, closed). All work should be complete (scenery and characters) before any photography begins.

5. Review storyboard and script. Students should find a partner to work with so that one person can operate the camera while the other person can move the character.

6. Students may begin to photograph their action using cameras, tablets, or phones. An app such as Stop Motion Studio should already be installed on their device.

Production

Make an armature with wire and tape, then build character with clay over the armature.

Be sure to emphasize details and craftsmanship using clay tools.

Create extra eyes and mouths (at least five sets of mouths should be created and three sets of eyes — open, halfway closed, closed).

Post–production

1. Students who have completed shooting will proceed to the edit phase of this project.

2. Review how to use Movie Maker Narration and Soundbooth. Give tips on recording narration/dialogue.

3. If students are using their phone or tablet, review how to edit in these apps. Demonstrate how to add frames or make an action last longer.

4. Students should be sure to add title and credits. Any sound effects or songs must be credited.

[Using DEWEY — The Document Camera Stand]

Begin to photograph action using cameras, tablets, or phones.

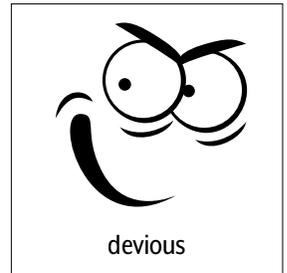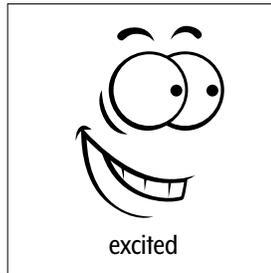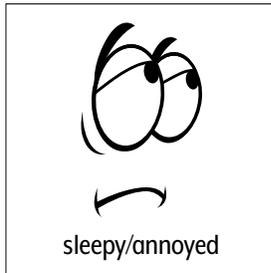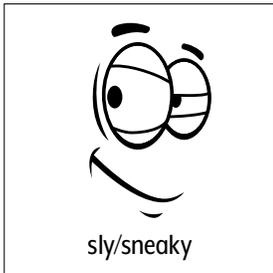An app such as Stop Motion Studio should be installed on your device.

Materials list

- Tru-Ray® Fade-Resistant Construction Paper, 50 sheets, 12" x 18", assorted colors **[9708564(AR)]**
- Pacon® Corobuff® Sheets, Pkg. of 12, 12" x 16" **(2100196)**
- Aluminum Armature Wire, 32-ft. coil, ¹⁄₁₆" dia., 14 ga. **(9719161)**
- Wire Cutters, 5" **(9719697)**
- Aluminum Foil Roll, 12" x 75 ft. **(W09460)**
- Jovi® Plastilina, 1¾-oz. bars, box of 30 **(9739819)**
- Texture Tools, set of 7 **(4300233)**
- Royal Brush® Potter's Select Ceramic Sculpting Tools, set of 8 **(9736997)**
- Cameras or phones/tablets for image input
- DEWEY — The Document Camera Stand **(TB26685)**
- Stop-motion and video editing software
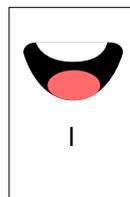- Claymation Facial Expressions handout (available for download online)
- Claymation Rubric handout (available for download online)

DEWEY — The Document Camera Stand

facial expressions

happy	mad	sad	shocked/stunned
normal	sleepy	disgusted/unsure	deflated
thoughtful/happy	mad	sad	shocked/stunned
sly/sneaky	sleepy/annoyed	excited	devious

mouth animation

a, e, i	o	c, d, g, k, n, s, t, x, y, z	l	f, v	th	b, m, p
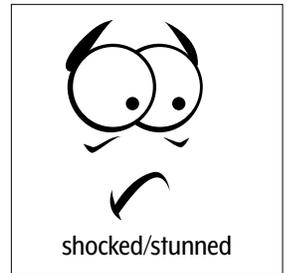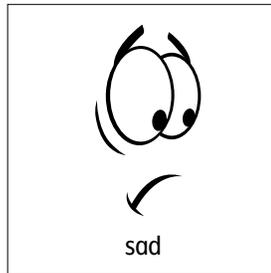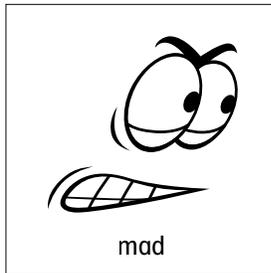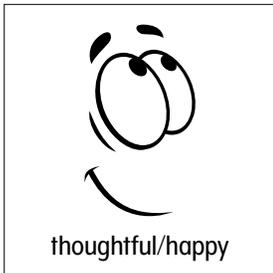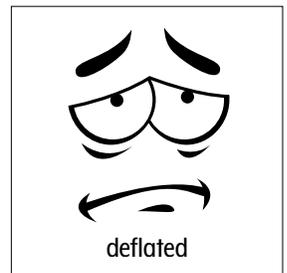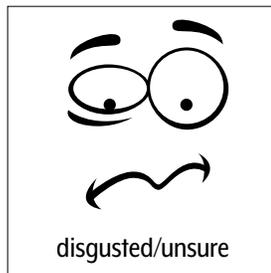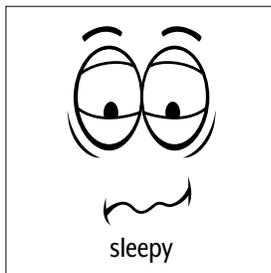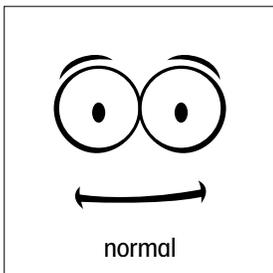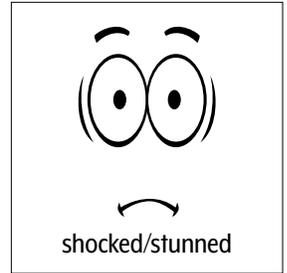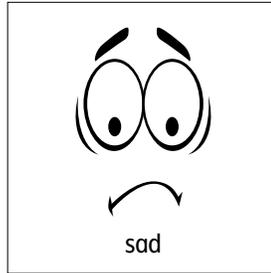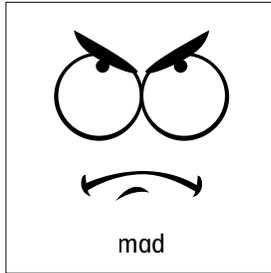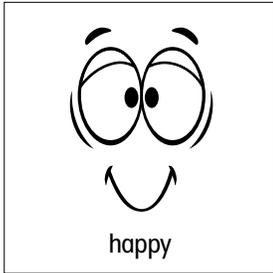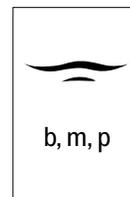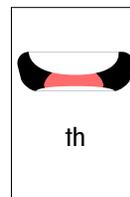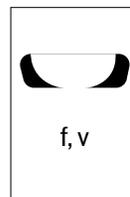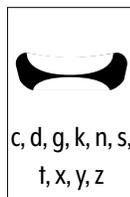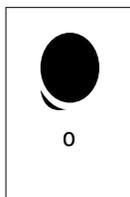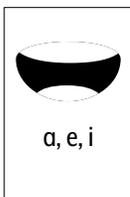
Lip–sync claymation — **rubric**

Name: _____ Period _____ Date Completed/Total Score _____/_____

Using clay, you will create an original character which will demonstrate the techniques of lip-sync. See rubric below for steps necessary for this project and how you will be scored. Imagination and craftsmanship are most important here.

Pre-production	1	2	3	4	5
Select a phrase, joke, quote or part of a song — type it up (script)					
Make 3 rough sketches of a character to get an idea					
Select the best idea and make a detailed character design in color					
Determine what kind of backdrop is needed and sketch that out					
Using a storyboard, show one variation to your camera angle					
Apply lip-sync symbols to your script and add any notes on eye or body movements					

Total points pre-production	/30

Production	1	2	3	4	5
Create your background — craftsmanship is important					
Carefully create the character — use wire for armature if needed					
Create sets of eyes and mouths for the character					
Record or capture sound					
Using camera and tripod, shoot — don't forget camera angles					

Total points production	/25

Post-production	1	2	3	4	5
Import photos into iMovie® Movie Maker					
Edit movie					
Add titles and credits					
Save movie to specified location					
Final Product: timing is excellent, speed of movie is not too fast or slow					
Final Product: lip-sync matches sound and eyes/body moves					
Final Product: overall quality and craftsmanship					
Final Product: creativity — is it a unique concept?					

Total points post-production	/45