

# Animation

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Animation is a long process that has many steps to get to the finished product (Chambers). There are different types of animation. Before even starting your animation, you have to decide which kind of animation you are doing. Richard Williams, in his book *The Animator's Survival Kit*, explains that the animations you can do are 3d animation, 2d animation, stop motion, hand-drawn animation, computer-generated, and "flipbook" (14). The animation I chose to do was 2d animation, which is what it sounds like: I draw two-dimensional drawings, then proceed to animate them on computer programs that are for animation. The next step is to write my story. I have to write what I am animating. Having my thoughts laid out for me on paper helps me a lot. The words help me organize my thoughts. The animation has to have a story to it of course. I also find that doing it this way, I am less likely to get artistic blocks. It is helpful because it creates an image in my head that guides me to draw.

After the writing is done, I move on to the next step. I draw character designs, which are the characters that will be used in the animation. When you animate, you are trying to have the illusion of movement. To get that illusion, you have to make the world and character look as if it is alive. To do that, I recommend drawing out the character design. Knowing your character from every angle helps with the shading and mastering that illusion. Williams says that you should focus on the character's height and how they present themselves. Keep the character the same. The height and weight of the character should be the same, because in real life, no one's height changes in a minute (257). Another important thing about doing character design is to make sure you know all your character's angles. Knowing this information, animating them from different angles will be easier and less of an unknown thing to do. "Once done with the character designs, all of that sketching and working pays off in the final layout, which is called

the art template. The art template is just the artwork of your characters”(Vanarsdall). This helps because seeing your character only through your brain is not the greatest. It is better for you to be able to physically see your character rather than mentally see it.

Finally, after writing and the character designs, we can move on to the storyboard, which, according to Aaron Sherman in his article, is “a graphic organizer that plans a narrative”Sherman. The online article (Chambers) says that a storyboard is a graphic representation of how your animation will unfold, shot by shot. It gives you the power to control and edit how you want your animation to be.” It’s a visual script that directs you to the next step, which is the animatic.

Once the storyboard is completed, we will now move on to the animatic. An animatic basically helps the animator decide their pacing and timing. Before making the frame by frame animation, cut the frames and organize them to your liking. You are the puppetmaster and have full control.

Finished with the animatic? Good, now we are going to color the animatic. Adding shading and color to your animatic brings your drawing to life. While coloring and shading, it is important to know where your light is. If you want to shade correctly, find where your light source is. Then, travel away from it; the further you go from the light, the darker it gets.

Now, time to do the animation! Finally, after all those steps we will start animating. An animation is crucially only an animation if it is frame by frame. By drawing frame by frame, you are creating the illusion of movement. Doing it with your own hands is a powerful experience. It takes a long time, though it is very fun and rewarding.

I used many programs and materials for this project. to animate, I used an app on my phone called Flipaclip. Another app I used was Ibis X paint. I used this to draw my templates and to draw out the character designs. To write my animation, I used Google Docs. I used the

journals Ms. Richardson gave us to take my notes in. Making my storyboard and character design, I took a more traditional route. I used paper, pencils, pens, and erasers. I used a stylus for my animation, to digitally draw.

My mentor, Jacquie, taught me the ropes to animation. She gave me some helpful advice on the usage of templates, adding more steps to help me with my 8th-grade project. She also taught me how to receive help. Having her by my side has been very helpful for my project. For my service project, I worked with the Humane Society. I gave them my time, went to their shelters, and spent time with the workers and animals. When I was doing my service work, I used the animals that were there to study animal anatomy. This helped with my animation, since my main characters are a cat and a dog. Everyone at the Humane Society was very nice. It is great to support your local animal rescues, especially during these troubled moments we are living in. The animal shelters will not receive as much people coming in to take care of the animals. So, it is up to us to help the animals in need. Visit your local shelters today!

My 8th-grade project has been a huge experience for me. It has taught me many different ways to get my ideas across to other people. I have also been able to achieve animation; in the future I hope to get better at it. There is always room for improvement.

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