



Claymation in the Classroom

To Help you get started with Claymation:

Materials:

Just about anything you can imagine!

modeling clay (non-drying)	toothpicks
pipe cleaners	markers
squiggly eyes	doll house furniture
string or fishing line	empty paper boxes or tri-fold cardboard
pom-poms	buttons
carpet squares	Styrofoam balls
colored fabric	scissors
rocks or plants	fur
painted backgrounds	feathers
rulers	lace
tape	construction paper
sandwich bags	paper towels
hand wipes	
Wax Paper (good for quick cleanup)	

Software Needed:

Windows MovieMaker or any video editing software

Hardware Needed:

Digital camera with tripod
Computer

Web Resources:

<http://www.brigantine.atlnet.org/GigapaletteGALLERY/Claymation%20Lesson%20Plans.htm>

<http://library.thinkquest.org/22316/home.html>

<http://www.pwc.k12.nf.ca/projects/claymation/index.html>

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/middle/Clay-Connie.htm>

Let's Get Started!

First of all, we have to come up with a great idea that we can animate. It's best to keep it short and narrowed down to one main idea. You can get inspiration from just about ANYWHERE! While we are brainstorming, write down every idea. Then later, go back and narrow ideas down to only those that will fit with the final topic chosen.

Develop a Storyboard

Before we ever break out the clay, we will first need to PLAN, PLAN, PLAN. This step can't be emphasized enough. The more you plan, the fewer problems you will have as you begin the set and character construction.

This does not need to be a work of art! This needs to be the backbone of our Claymation video.

Hopefully, any difficulties can be worked out here in our storyboard. Every member of the team needs to participate in the brainstorming and storyboarding activities.

Also, we need to keep in mind the animation process. Remember that motion will need to be in very small steps...our characters can't go from a sitting position to a standing position in one frame. We need to photograph every little movement in order to get smooth animations.

Expect to take 100 or more pictures for a very SHORT video. (See why these types of animated movies take YEARS to complete?)

Setting the Stage

Stage construction can utilize just about anything, but we want our stage to be durable, so tri-fold cardboard or empty printer paper boxes are great choices. Keep the background setting simple so that we don't distract from our characters (unless our background is part of our storyline, of course). Fabric, small rocks, leaves, or carpet squares could be used to create different effects for our setting. We want our characters to stand out from the background, so muted colors are best.

What a Character!

Now it's time to create our main characters. Popsicle sticks, pipe cleaners, or wire can be used to create an armature for your characters. An armature is like a skeleton underneath the clay. This allows us to bend and move our clay figure without the clay falling apart. We are limited only by our imaginations.

Let's Make a Movie!

We will be working in the Physics lab so that, HOPEFULLY, our sets will stay intact for a few days in case we need more than one day to get all the photos we will need.

Typically, it is best to have one person running the camera and the others working with the stage. A tripod is a necessity here, so don't forget to use it. Once you get the camera focused on your set, leave it and don't touch it! Over 100 pictures must be taken in a very short amount of time, otherwise, the camera might turn off and this could be devastating. (This is why the planning of your video is so important!) We will need to refer to our storyboard OFTEN!

The photographer is responsible for keeping count of the photos taken.

That's a Wrap!

After the last picture has been taken, transfer the photos to your computer. We will be using Windows MovieMaker to create the movie. Refer to the MovieMaker lesson in our moodle if you get stuck or need help with MovieMaker. Remember when adding background music, narration, or sound effects, we don't want to distract from our story. Sound sets the tone for the movie!

Cleanup, Cleanup, Everybody Do Your Share

Remember if you borrowed any supplies from other classrooms, you need to return them! Store all clay in plastic bags and return Claymation supplies back to containers.