

LESSON PLAN 67 : I CAN ANIMATE

Objective: To learn how to create simple stop-motion animations

Age range: 7-12

INTRODUCING 'I CAN ANIMATE'

This is an easy-to-use and very effective software tool for creating stop motion animation. Designed specifically around the needs of education, it works well for beginners and intermediates alike, and allows users to create great movies using a variety of animation techniques.



WHAT IS 'STOP MOTION'?

Stop motion (aka stop action) is an animation technique to make a physically manipulated object appear to move on its own. The object is moved in small increments between individually photographed frames, creating the illusion of movement when the series of frames is played as a continuous sequence. Clay figures are often used in stop motion for their ease of repositioning – a process known as 'clay animation' or 'clay-mation' (such as the well-known Wallace and Grommet series).

YOU WILL NEED

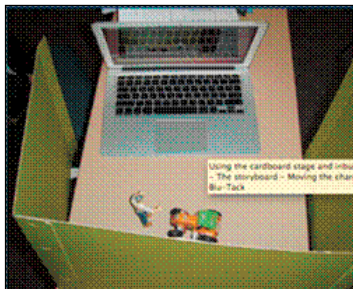
A computer with webcam, *I Can Animate* software, characters (small toys, plasticine figures, paper/cardboard cut outs), blank storyboards, video-editing software.

DEVELOPING SKILLS

Story telling – narrative, stop motion animation, collaboration, presentation, video editing, project management.

METHOD

1. Introduce your class to the task of creating an animation based on a narrative – as well as the *I Can Animate* program.
2. Get your students to work in groups to create or convert a story into storyboard format.
3. Start transforming the storyboard into an animation by setting up your stage. There are many ways to do this – a whiteboard, simple cardboard walls stuck to a desk, or any place you can easily move characters and film.
4. Using *I Can Animate*, filming is as simple as pressing a number on the keyboard. 1 will give you one frame per capture through to 9 giving you nine frames. 6 is a good starting point as it gives smooth motion to your animation. The software interface is easy for students to use and the ability to delete individual frames is a bonus.
5. Film your titles – these could also be added in the editing stage.



6. Begin filming the story by arranging your characters in the desired position then capture the image by pressing 6 on your keyboard (or whichever key/number of frames you have chosen).
7. To create movement, reposition your characters capture the image by again pressing the number 6. *I Can Animate* offers the ability to be able to see a watermark of your last capture to help you to successfully reposition your characters.
8. Repeat this process until you have worked your way through your storyboard.
9. Once finished, the animation project can be exported to video-editing software where titles, music, sound effects and voices can be added.



SHARE YOUR ANIMATIONS

The final production of your animation will be done using video editing programs, such as Windows Movie Maker or iMovie. It can then be easily played or uploaded to YouTube for embedding on wikis or blogs.

ADDITIONAL USES

- *I Can Animate* is easy to use and could fit into just about any area of your teaching programme. Animations are not limited to narratives; other uses include animating maths strategies, recounts, procedures, behavior expectations, and social stories.
- For the more adventurous *I Can Animate* also allows you to draw animations directly within the program and to create Hollywood styled green-screen effects.
- Many examples of animations made using this program can be found on YouTube by simply searching for 'I Can Animate'.

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I CAN ANIMATE

This software is available for Windows and Mac. Produced by Kudlian Software, there's a free and fully functional trial version for you to try out. There are also video tutorials available.

kudlian.net/products/icananimate/



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