# STOP-MOTION

## ANIMATION PROJECT

## TASK OUTLINE

Your task is to create a short stop-motion film about any subject you like. You may work in pairs or individually to complete this project. The outcome should be as professional as possible. Familiarise yourself with recent award-winning stop motion films to get an idea of the quality of work being done. Also ensure that you pay close attention to the marking guide so you know exactly what you need to do/include to gain maximum marks.

## WHY STOP-MOTION?

Stop-motion allows you to try your hand at every aspect of directing, in miniature: character design, set design, animation, lighting, sound, and compositing. You have complete creative control over the process and each one will inform your later decisions in 3D.

## PARAMETERS

Your animation should be between 1 and 2 minutes long. You must include at least one character. It need not be a humanoid, in fact, it might be more interesting if you use an inanimate object instead, but overall you should be able to demonstrate a range of animation principles and timing with your project.

## CHARACTERS

Keep it simple. You can use an existing model such as a store-bought toy or Lego or dolls.  Or you can choose to build a model using plasticine (a small amount will be provided) but you may need to bring items from home to assist you.
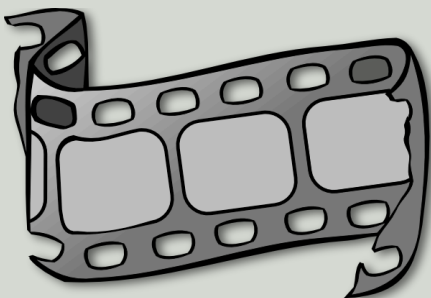
## SET

You should have only one set for the action to take place. You may make a case for a second set if absolutely necessary but this will be considered on an individual basis. A set can be very minimalistic. It's not necessary for it to be elaborate.

## PLANNING

This is absolutely essential in stop-motion animation. You should create and maintain a production schedule and be able to demonstrate your progress at any stage of production. You should design your characters and sets in 2D, digitally or on paper. The set design should include indications of light and camera placement in a top-down view.

Include a storyboard as part of your planning process. This can be a series of hand-drawn sketches timed in Flash (or other software of your choice). Alternatively, you could create a simple paper flipbook outlining your story.

# SHOOTING

Cameras will be provided however you may use your own equipment from home. Please note, you will not use your Macbooks to take photographs for your animation, but you can use it to create your movies from the photos you take with a digital camera.
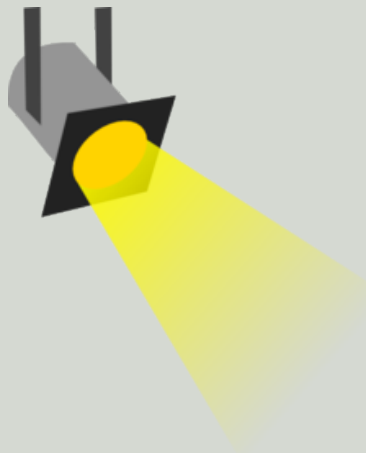
# SOUND

There should be some kind of soundtrack. I urge you to use some of the sound effects found in garageband or see if you can download some samples from the internet. There should be at least be music, preferably something with a Creative Commons license. If you plan to sync sound - such as spoken dialogue or moving in time to music, remember you need to break down that part of the soundtrack first and follow the written timing breakdown while shooting.

# LIGHTING

You will have to provide your own lights and find a way to shield your scenes from off-camera light (e.g. sunlight in windows). Your piece should be well-lit, meaning the style of lighting is appropriate for your mood and subject, and is as professional-looking as possible i.e. no unintentional colour-casts, or shadows of off-screen items like your head or the lighting rigs. Your lighting can be an integral part of the style of your piece. The possibilities are endless!

# GENERAL NOTES

You will not be given more than the most basic information on all these areas. Self directed experimentation is the basis of this project. Seek out and pool your information and be sure to help one another.

# MARKING KEY

| | Excellent (4) | Good (3) | Ok (2) | Needs Improvement (1) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Stop motion | Movement of objects and characters is smooth and easy to follow. Great attention is given to subtle movements. Excellent camera control shown. | Movement of objects and characters is mostly smooth and easy to follow. Attention is given to subtle movements. Camera control shown. | Movement of objects and characters is adequate. Some attention is given to subtle movements. Camera control is acceptable. | Movement of objects and characters is choppy. Little attention is given to subtle movements. Poor camera control shown. |
| Title | Opening titles and closing credits are clear and follow a theme. | Opening titles and closing credits are evident but do not follow a theme. | Opening titles and closing credits are only partially evident. | Opening titles and closing credits missing. |
| Sound | Sound effects and/or music contribute to viewers understanding of story and help to set the mood of the movie. | Sound effects and/or music is used and contributes to viewers overall understanding of story. | There is limited use of sound effects and/or music. | Sound effects and/or music is missing from the project. |
| Storyline | The viewer can discern a clear beginning, middle and end of the story. The animation is within the timeframe allotted. | The viewer has a broad understanding of storyline but the themes could have been clearer. The animation sits within the timeframe but scenes have been inflated to extend the length. | The viewer is not sure of a story but finds it interesting. The animation is too short (between 30-60 seconds) | No storyline can be easily understood from the movie. The animation is too short (less than 30 seconds). |
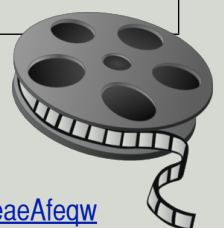
# SOME STOP-MOTION ANIMATIONS TO WATCH

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PzDJQoUdTuk

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t0KMSfiizdY

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AP_yQT58s-M

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u46eaeAfeqw

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaaitgKbr8k