

iStopMotion Workshop

Workshop outline

The purpose of this workshop is to give participants the opportunity to actively explore the techniques by which films like *Early Man* are made. The duration of the session is entirely up to you, though it is possible to develop a finished stop motion animation in a **workshop lasting 2-3 hours**. Of course, the more time you can give participants, the greater the attention they can give to producing their animation.

As a general recommendation, participants should ideally be **8 years old or above**. This is simply because the process of making a stop motion animation requires a high level of patience and concentration, and you may find that younger children's attention will wane as the workshop progresses.

Included in this resource are a couple of how-to-use iStopMotion tutorials in PDF format. It is worth familiarising yourself with the animation program prior to the workshop, and these tutorials are a good place to start.

Resources:

iPads with iStopMotion installed

Tripods for iPads

Laptop

Screen or Projector

Modelling Putty (Plasticine is best)

Lego

Colouring Pens

Crepe Paper

Paper

Cardboard Boxes

Fuzzy Bendy Sticks/Pipe Cleaners (These can be used to make a strong and flexible frame for building Plasticine figures around)

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Workshop structure

11. It is always a good idea to start the session by asking participants if they know how stop motion animation is made. Have any of them got any experience of making stop motion animation themselves?
12. Explain the process by which stop motion animation is made. At this point it is a good idea to show a couple of examples. There are a number of examples in this folder in mp4 format. These range from examples of animations made by primary school pupils to more professional offerings, so that participants can see both what is achievable in a short workshop session, and what can be done when more time is available.
13. Demonstrate to the participants how to use iStopMotion. If you have a number of animating materials available (i.e. Lego and Plasticine), make use of all of them in this demonstration, so that participants can begin to understand how to utilise and manipulate each.
14. A quick list of dos and don'ts is handy before the participants begin animating:

Do

- Shoot more frames than you need (you can always delete some of them later)
- Record two frames for each movement (this will make your animation look smoother)
- Check your animation as you go along (playback what you have recorded to make sure it looks the way you want it to)
- Follow your plan! (have an idea of what your animation is about and what happens, and don't get distracted!)

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Don't

- Knock the camera or the set/figures (you'll get a wobbly animation if you do!)
- Change the lighting in the room (if there are curtains in the room, it is a good idea to close them before you start animating)
- Change any of the settings on the iPad whilst you are animating.
- Rush your animation (always take care that everything is ready and that no one's hand is in the shot before you record the frame!)

5. Ask participants to divide into groups.

6. Give a theme or choice of themes to the participants. This can tie in with the *Early Man* screening (i.e. 'The Stone Age' or 'New Inventions') or be something unrelated. As these sessions may be relatively short, it is best to have a simple theme such as:

The Surprise
The Accident
The Noise
The Chase
The Best Day Ever
The Victory

7. Give the groups 10-15 minutes to make a plan for their animation. There is no need to storyboard (unless you have the time to do so), but it is a good idea for the participants to note down what is going to happen in their animations so they have something to refer to as they progress.

8. Give the groups 25-30 minutes to construct sets and figures (if they are using Plasticine). Cardboard boxes with one side removed make an excellent set, and help participants to frame their animations:

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9. Animate! Keep an eye on the groups whilst they are producing their animations to make sure they are not doing anything that will be detrimental to their finished film (such as moving the iPad excessively).
10. Depending on the duration of your workshop, it is good to leave 10-15 minutes at the end to view the animations that the groups have made. If you have a screen/TV that has a HDMI input, it is easy to hook the iPads up directly using a HDMI cable and an iPad adaptor like this:



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11. When viewing the animations, instigate a discussion with participants about how they found the experience. What did they feel went well? What might they do differently if they were to make another animation?

12. Both participants and their parents are often keen to see a finished product after a workshop session. If you have email addresses for participants or parents/guardians, you can make use of a Dropbox account to upload and distribute the animations made in the workshop. For instructions on how to set up and use a Dropbox account, visit the following websites:

www.dropbox.com/individual

www.techadvisor.co.uk/how-to/photo-video/how-send-videos-image-3457201

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For more information contact Matt Beere, Learning & Participation Manager

Market Rd,

Canton,

Cardiff,

CF5 1QE

matt.beere@chapter.org



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