Unit 5: Stop Motion

Content Area: **Fine Arts**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **35-40 Classes**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Unit 5: Stop Motion

This unit introduces students to the art and technique of stop-motion photography, a unique method of creating animations through a series of still images. Students will learn the principles of motion, timing, and sequencing, applying these concepts to create short stop-motion animations using photography. The unit will cover the technical aspects of setting up a stop-motion shoot, including camera settings, lighting, and staging. Students will also explore the creative aspects, such as storytelling, composition, and visual continuity, to create engaging animations. By the end of the unit, students will complete their own stop-motion animation project and participate in a class critique.

Revision Date: July 2025 - Samantha Berk

Essential Questions

- What is stop-motion photography, and how does it differ from traditional video or animation techniques?
- How can you manipulate still images to create the illusion of movement?
- What role does timing, sequencing, and composition play in creating a successful stop-motion animation?
- How can lighting, angles, and set design enhance the visual storytelling in a stop-motion project?
- How can collaboration and critique contribute to improving the stop-motion animation process?

Essential Understandings

- Stop-motion photography is a powerful creative tool that combines technical knowledge and artistic vision to create dynamic and visually compelling animations.
- The process of creating a stop-motion animation requires meticulous planning, attention to detail, and a deep understanding of motion and timing.
- Lighting, composition, and storytelling are integral to producing high-quality stop-motion animations

that effectively engage an audience.

- Collaboration and constructive critique allow for refinement of techniques, helping students improve their skills and final projects.

Students Will Know

- The basic principles of stop-motion animation, including frame-by-frame shooting and how to achieve fluid motion through still images.
- How to set up a stop-motion shoot, including camera settings (shutter speed, aperture, etc.), lighting, and staging.
- How to create an effective storyboard to plan a stop-motion animation project.
- The significance of timing, pacing, and sequencing in creating smooth and believable motion in stop-motion.
- How to use editing software to compile and refine a stop-motion animation.
- How to provide constructive feedback during class critiques and how to apply feedback to improve their projects.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Fine Arts students demonstrate differentiated proficiency according to their ability to answer the essential questions through formative and summative assessments. Evidence of progression may be demonstrated in divergent ways through the Artistic Process of Creating, Presenting/Producing, Connecting, and Responding.

Tasks will include:

- Answer Essential Questions
- Meaningfully and appropriately participate in class critique and discussions
- Complete class projects including weekly critique assignments
- Complete self-assessment rubrics
- Participate in assessment discussions with teacher
- Complete final exam

Learning Plan

- Preview Essential Questions
- Learn the basic principles of stop-motion photography and animation, including frame-by-frame shooting and movement creation.
- Set up a stop-motion shoot, adjusting camera settings, lighting, and staging for optimal image quality.
- Create and execute a storyboard for stop-motion animation, organizing visual elements effectively.
- Capture consistent frames while maintaining proper composition, timing, and sequencing.
- Edit frames, adjust timing, and finalize animations with optional sound and effects.
- Participate in a class critique, giving and receiving constructive feedback to improve projects.
- Complete and present a fully realized stop-motion animation demonstrating both technical and creative skills.

Suggested Activities:

- Introduction to Stop Motion & Basic Principles
    - Students learn what stop-motion animation is through examples and a lecture on motion, timing, and sequencing. They discuss the difference between still photography and animation.
- Planning & Storyboarding a Stop Motion Animation
    - Students create simple storyboards for a short stop-motion sequence, focusing on narrative flow, key frames, and shot planning.
- Technical Setup: Camera, Lighting, and Staging
    - Hands-on session where students practice setting up a stop-motion shoot, adjusting camera settings for consistency, and experimenting with lighting and backgrounds.
- Shooting & Sequencing Images for Animation
    - Students capture their stop-motion frames, learning how to maintain continuity and control pacing. They upload and sequence images using basic stop-motion or video editing software.
- Final Project Presentation & Critique
    - Students present their completed animations to the class, participate in a structured critique using specific criteria (storytelling, smoothness, creativity), and reflect on their creative process.

Materials

The materials used in this course allow for integration of a variety of instructional, supplemental, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments. Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

Digital Cameras, Sketchbook, Various Pencils, Sharpies, Markers, Various Papers, Various Erasers, Mirrors, Blending Sticks, Charcoal, Graphite, Sharpeners, Colored Pencils, Oil Pastel, Chalk Pastels, YouTube Videos, Value Scales, magazines, glue, scissors, Watercolor, Watercolor paper, paint brush, ink, printing materials, chromebooks, ipads, Paint, Color Wheels, Drawing Pen, Rulers

Websites:

- Stop Motion Basics & Principles
  Clear introduction to stop-motion animation, explaining frame-by-frame shooting, timing, and movement.
  Website: https://www.stopmotioncentral.com/stop-motion-animation-basics

- How to Plan and Storyboard Stop Motion
  Step-by-step guide on creating effective storyboards and planning sequences for stop-motion projects.
  Website: https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/media-literacy-stop-motion-animation/zv7j7nb

- Technical Setup Tips for Stop Motion
  Tutorials on camera settings, lighting techniques, and staging for consistent, high-quality stop-motion shoots.
  Website: https://www.premiumbeat.com/blog/stop-motion-animation-tips/

- Editing Stop Motion Animation
  Guides and free software recommendations for sequencing frames, adjusting timing, and adding sound/effects.
  Website: https://www.techradar.com/best/best-stop-motion-software

- Critique and Presentation of Stop Motion Projects
  Frameworks for constructive critique and reflection on storytelling, creativity, and technical skills in stop-motion.
  Website: https://www.edutopia.org/article/peer-critique-instructional-strategy

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

This link includes content specific accommodations and modifications for all populations:

Fine Arts Accommodations & Modifications

- additional time on task
- alternative outcome options
- assessment based on individual development in the area of study
- audio tape of instruction
- cooperative learning groups
- handouts of notes, procedures, processes, diagrams, etc.
- images and visual aids
- one-to-one instruction and assistance
- preferential seating
- reading material modified to student level
- revised techniques, use of tools and media in hands-on activities
- study partners
- testing materials appropriate to student level