

Introduction

Literacy is a cornerstone of education and stop motion animation can be a valuable tool when inspiring students to explore their language and literature to the full. With an app like Smooovie, children have a fantastic opportunity to be really creative with their ideas and get the most from their language studies.

Let's have a look at a couple of ideas:

Idea 1 - Story Writing

Stop motion animation is a fun and imaginative way for students to practice story writing skills. The key steps required to write a story or an animation are the same, namely to understand the structure of a story, to develop strategies for building suspense and tension and develop character through description, action and dialogue. A huge advantage that animation is able to give is the ultimate visualisation of the children's ideas. This exercise can be done individually or in groups.

1. Ask the children to plan a story, thinking carefully about the setting and characters, how they are going to build suspense and tension into the early events, and what the conclusion will be. How are they going to introduce their characters and build upon them throughout the story?
2. The next step is to create a storyboard of the individual scenes which, together, will make up the story. This will help the children to keep track of their animation once they get started.
3. Ask the children to create a range of props to use to portray their characters and scenes, keeping in mind the practicality of working with these props during the animation process.
4. The children can make their animation. This will probably take more than one lesson so make sure that you have a safe place to store the sets and props when not in use :)
5. Watch the animations as a class and discuss.

Idea 2 - Interpretation of a Set Reading Book

The students create a stop motion animation based on their set reading book. Working as a class or in groups they can either create a summary of the entire story, or just one or two key scenes in the book.


1. Lead a discussion of the set reading book and decide how best to interpret the story as a stop motion animation based on the students' evaluation. Will they create a summary of the whole book or just key points in the story? How do they decide which key points should be portrayed?
2. Plan the story for the animation and create a storyboard of the individual scenes which, together, will make up the story. This will help the children to keep track of their animation once they get started. A mixture of close-up shots and more general views can be useful.
3. Ask the children to create a range of props to use to portray the story. How are they going to portray key individuals, conversations, emotions, and the backdrop?
4. The children can now animate the story. This will probably take more than one lesson so make sure that you have a safe place to store the sets and props when not in use :)
5. Watch the animations and review what has been learned.

The character introduction on the next page looks at Mrs. Bennett in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Mrs Bennett is introduced using words taken from the original work and an illustration created by the student. The cut-out character is then used in the animation.



Mrs Bennett

*“She was a woman
of mean
understanding,
and uncertain
temper.*

A hand-drawn illustration of Mrs. Bennett, a woman with a serious expression. She is wearing a blue dress with a white collar and a white headscarf. Her hands are clasped in front of her. The drawing is done in a simple, sketchy style with some color washes.

little information,

*When she was
discontented she
fancied herself
nervous.”*