

Animated Stories

Creative writing brought to life for new audiences using a digital camera, a PC and a lump of Plasticine.



Contents

Introduction

Primary School
Case Studies

Secondary School
Case Studies

Conclusions

Appendix

Animated Stories

Key Stage 02
Literacy

Tim Browse, Deputy Head and Year 3 teacher and Alexa Vickery, Year 4 teacher at Headley Park Primary School, wanted to develop children's digital literacy through the re-creation of written stories into alternative formats for new audiences.



They undertook a piece of work that aimed to foster **collaboration**, which was also a current whole school focus, and **creativity**, by giving students the task of turning one of their own written stories into an animation for younger children in the school.

"We wrote stories, then turned it into an animation, like a fairytale."

Year 3 boy

In order to support the children in situating the task in a **cultural and historical context**, the teachers and students spent the first sessions looking at animation and exploring its history and the way it has been used to represent and communicate stories with different meanings and for different purposes. They watched older drawn animations and more recent animated films with computer generated images (CGI) and compared them.

They also discussed how stories need to change in order to be represented in an animated form.

The children were supported to think this through by considering what four key moments of their written story they were going to represent in animation, and which characters needed to be involved. They then considered how they could represent these moments in a different format and for a different audience.

The children then storyboarded four scenes on paper, with red arrows to show how the characters were going to move.

The children collaboratively **created** their animations by using a variety of software and hardware. Some used the simple drawing application Paint to create their four key scenes and then uploaded them to a set of teacher-prepared PowerPoint slides. Other children worked in groups to create stop-motion animations, making Plasticine models of their characters, moving them in small, sequential steps and photographing them with a digital camera at each point. The photos were then uploaded and 'stitched' together using Windows Movie Maker to make an animation.

Contents

Introduction

Primary School Case Studies

Secondary School Case Studies

Conclusions

Appendix

Successes and next steps

The children enjoyed bringing the characters of their stories to life through the animations and reported feeling a sense of achievement:

“I made a movie! I didn’t think I could make a movie with models.”

Year 4 boy

The children had some **awareness of audience** and were able to discuss how they had made their stories simpler and easier to understand for a younger audience. They also acknowledged that they had to develop their collaboration skills in order to complete the task.

“I actually found it OK working in groups. Well, one person thought it was all about her though, we had to calm her down and get on with it and then it was OK.”

Year 4 girl

The children had whole class discussions around what they already knew about animations, and they learnt about how animation has changed over time. This provided some context and cultural understanding for the children. To extend this, their own experiences of watching and creating films and animations could have been drawn on. Some children reported having made their own films and animations at home in the past and were keen to be able to bring their experiences, knowledge and understanding into the classroom context.

For example, several children had previous experience of using Windows Movie Maker

“At home I got some of my dad’s pictures and made a movie with Windows Movie Maker.”

Year 4 boy

Students could also have **reflected on and evaluated** the animations they had made, considering why they had chosen to present them in such a way, what previous experience they had used to make decisions about how to create the animation, and whether they felt they had created an output suitable to the target audience. They could also have considered which format and which technologies were most successful for the purpose.

