



What is Animation?

Animation is the art of movement. You can bring anything to life: beads, pipe cleaners, leaves, coins, cloth or paper cut-outs. If you can move it, you can animate it. In the Animating History workshop we use **paper cut-out animation**. To animate figures you cut them out, superimpose them on a background, move a bit at a time, and take a picture with each small movement. This is a rewarding method to use because it is easy for students to learn quickly. They can make a great film in a short amount of time.

Exercise 1: Animation Web

Ask students what they know about animation and create a web. Try to discover if they understand that animation includes a variety of purposes (cartoons, advertising, instruction are some examples) and techniques, (clay, cut-out, flipbooks, photo, drawing are some examples).

Exercise 2: Making a Flipbook

A **flipbook** can be as simple as two images in different positions. A bird in flight can be created by drawing and cutting out one image with the wings up and one with wings down. The perception of motion is created when the pages of the book are flipped through quickly. Cut-out animation is an extension of the flipbook but using a series of pictures of paper shapes put on a computer and played back in sequence.

Have your students create simple flipbooks to introduce them to animation technique. You may wish to use the Make Your Own Flipbook sheet included in your package or available on the Port Moody Station Museum website www.vcn.bc.ca/pmmuseum.

Exercise 3: Paper Cut-Out Puppet Show

If students are experienced with animation, practice cutting out figures and moving them on backgrounds to tell stories. Have your students think of it as a kind of play or puppet show where they create a story and bring it to life.

Tips for Cut Out Animation

There is ample time for students to create their story characters in the Animating History workshop. However, here are some tips if you wish for your students create characters or backgrounds to animate in the workshop.

Background - The background establishes the mood of your story. Contrast it with your characters, dark against light, bright against muted. Our backgrounds are generally 11x17in or a little larger. A poster board will not fit in the camera shot.

Characters - Main characters should be the size of your hand and have some moveable parts. Characters should have arms and legs that are detachable to allow movement. However, the more moveable parts, the more movements to keep track of and the more time a scene will take to animate. Use Tac 'n Stik (or something similar) to keep characters' moveable parts in place.