

COLLAGE ANIMATION

Things to Keep in Mind:

Movement

Animation is all about movement!

Registration

Make sure to keep the things that need to be still (like the camera and background) from moving

Lighting

Do you want shadows or not? Will your lighting be consistent throughout?

Materials

Even standard household objects make great animation tools (paper clips, pennies, peas, nuts, etc.). You can create an exploration of geometric designs with multiple sets of the same small object. You can also use magazine cutouts or photographs.

Aluminum foil (extra strength is best) can be used to create an object that can be manipulated to move like a character. This has to be done carefully and slowly to look best. You can use pushpins on foam core to keep your character in place between shots. The foam core could be covered with colored paper or even a design and provide a background for your character.

The Background

The background should be simple and not too distracting so that the viewer's attention is drawn to the motion which is the heart of animation. Color can be used to great effect and can emphasize the placement of the objects on top. You can change the color of your background to create a kind of crazy rhythm.

Timing

Experiment with moving objects at different increments and see how the motion feels. Almost all animation is created shooting at least 2 frames of each position. Otherwise the motions tend to move too quickly. You can shoot 3 frames of each position and still get very smooth movement, depending on how much you move the objects each time you shoot. Experiment and see how shooting different numbers of frames affects the quality of motion you get. The greater distance you move the object each time, the faster it will appear to move. Play with that.

In the end the WAY an object moves can be more important than how far. Different types of motions create different feelings. Movement can portray mood and motivation, passion and meaning. Think about how you might move an object to suggest a feeling.

Replacement Animation

Animating by replacing objects, putting them down one after another. This can be done with different images (for example a caterpillar becoming a butterfly) or with different sizes of the same object, etc.

These objects can also move across space. You can try having cutouts emerge from behind an object or have a lot of cut outs fall from above to below or vice versa. If you remove an object, shoot and then replace it and shoot again, you will create a flashing effect. You can create a dance across the frame of the film using different cutouts.

The most important thing is to be playful and try different things to see what you like and what seems to work best.

Have fun!