

**Name:** Alejandro Camacho

**Theme:** Interdisciplinary (Writing, Science, Technology)

**Lesson Title:** Claymation Monsters

**Grade Level:** 11th Grade



### **History/Background:**

Claymation is a fun and engaging form of animation for all ages to enjoy. The most famous claymation studio is Aardman Animations. Aardman animation is a British animation studio known for stop-motion films using Plasticine characters. Famous films include: Wallace and Gromit, Flushed Away, and Chicken Run. Aardman studios decided to use Plasticine clay to create their characters, because clay does not dry and it can be molded into many shape. They also design miniature sets proportionate to the characters they created. Photography is a really important part in the filmmaking process, because claymation is an animated-film making technique where objects are manipulated in small increments between individually photographed frames. Claymation or any type of stop-motion film takes a tremendous amount of time and energy. All claymation characters take a long time to create as well. All claymation characters have armatures (a metal framework in which a sculpture is molded with clay) so they can have precise mobility. Other materials like plastic, metal, cloth or wood can also be used in designing characters or in the set designs. Allison Shulnik is another claymation artist that is not as well known as Aardman Studios. She is a multidisciplinary artist from San, Diego California. She has a background in animation, music, dance, sculpture, and painting. The focus in her claymation work is to create animated monsters out of clay.

## **PA Standards:**

9.1.5.A: Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities. (Visual Arts: color, form/shape, line, space, texture, value)

9.1.5.B: Recognize, know, use and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principles, to produce, review and revise original works in the arts. (Visual Arts: paint, draw, craft, sculpt, print, design for environment, communication, multimedia)

9.1.5.C: Recognize and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms.

9.1.5.D: Use knowledge of varied styles within each art form through a performance or exhibition of unique work.

## **Goal/Activity:**

Students will design and mold their own clay monsters to make a stop-motion film.

## **Objectives:**

1. **Knowledge:** (Cognitive) Students will be able to use their imagination in order to create a script for their stop-motion film.
2. **Skill:** (Psychomotor) Students will be able to manipulate clay on armatures in order to create a monster character for their stop-motion film.
3. **Attitude:** (Affective) Students will be able to present their character design and story to their classmates in order to verbalize the meaning behind their stop-motion film.

## **Teacher Preparation:**

Teacher will:

- Ensure each student has supplies.
- Students will be in groups with an even distribution of students with an IEP.
- Prepare presentation of monster examples/ animations.
- Outline objectives for students.
- Write learning objectives on the board.
- Make sure classroom is prepped for lesson (tables are covered, tools are placed at a specific location).
- Show students claymation videos

**Resources/ Materials/ Visual Aids:**

- PowerPoint presentation on claymation and artists
- Videos of the process of claymation
- Claymation videos
- Examples of claymation characters

**Prior Knowledge:**

- Working with clay in various styles (molding, slab building, sculpting)
- Character designing
- Sketching ideas for a project
- Writing short stories
- Journal writing
- Brainstorming ideas on paper

**Supplies/ Materials:**

- Pencils
- Erasers
- Scissors
- Paper for sketching
- Lined paper for writing
- Color paper
- Cardboard boxes for background scenery
- Plasticine (in a variety of colors)
- Aluminum foil
- Armature Wire
- Beads (Plastic and Glass)
- Toothpicks
- Found objects (coins, plastic pieces, small objects)
- Sculpting Tools
- Large grip tools for students with physical disabilities
- Sticky mat to secure sculpture
- iPhone to take pictures for stop-motion film

## **Teaching:**

### **Motivation:**

Teacher: Hello class, what can you make with clay?

Students: Ceramics, pottery, and sculptures.

Teacher: Well done. Did you also know that you can use clay to make movies? They are called claymations and today we will learn how they are made.

### **Intro:**

- Show class a slide-show presentation on the process of claymation, specifically Aardman Studios.
- Have video clips of Aardman Studios: *Wallace and Gromit* and *Chicken Run* (two of Aardam's most famous claymations).
- Have clips of other claymation artists like Allison Shulnik to show to the classroom (her work is specific to clay monsters).
- Show other selections of artistic monsters in pop culture animation like *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Aaahh!!! Real Monsters* for inspiration.

### **Sketch character designs:**

- With paper and pencil (color as well) students will design there clay monster (front, back, and side view).

### **Write a background and short story of character:**

- With paper and pencil students will write down the history of their monster and a short story about their monster.
- They must go into detail; where does the monster live, what does it eat, what is it's name, do they have any friends, what do they do everyday? Etc.
- After the character history is completed they will write a short story about an event that happened one day with their character.
- A story planning worksheet will be used to document all of their monster's characteristics and the plot of their story..

### **Demonstration on creating a claymation character:**

- Step by step process (previously shown in a video) and demo by teacher.

### **Create the clay monster:**

- Build the armature wire structure of the character.

- Flesh out character by applying aluminum foil and Plasticine to the surrounding armature wire structure.
- Final touches on character by adding beads, tooth picks, scraps of plastic, metal, or other found objects.

#### **Create background scenery:**

- Using cardboard boxes, students will create their own backgrounds for their stop-motion film.
- Students can add color to their scenery using paint, markers, color pencils, crayons, etc. or cut paper.
- Students can also use toothpicks, cut cardboard, plasticine, beads, and wire to add to their scenery.

#### **Create stop-motion film:**

- Using a stop-motion film app on the iPhone, students can make a short stop-motion film.
- The teacher will explain how to use the stop-motion app.
- Students will create a short stop-motion clip based on their short story.

#### **Critique/ Evaluation/ Assessment:**

- Students will have a critique at the finish of their claymation character assignment and their stop-motion video.

#### **Conclusion:**

Teacher:

How was the your experiences creating your own clay monsters?

Was it helpful to sketch a character design before building your clay monsters?

Did it help to create a background story before building your clay monsters?

Was it helpful to write a short story to better understand your clay monster and eventually create it from a story to clay?

How was the creating process for the stop-motion film?

#### **Vocabulary:**

- **Plasticine** - A non-hardening oil based clay primarily used in claymation studios.
- **Claymation** - Stop-motion film using clay (primarily Plasticine).
- **Stop-motion** - An animated-film making technique where objects are manipulated in small increments between individually photographed frames.
- **Armature** - A metal framework in which a sculpture is molded with clay.

- **Line** - An element of art defined by a point moving in space. Line may be two-or-three dimensional, flat, or limited to height and width.
- **Form** - An element of art that is three-dimensional and encloses volume.
- **Space** - An element of art by which positive and negative area are defined or a sense of depth achieved in a work of art.
- **Texture** - An element of art that refer to the way things feel, or look as if they might feel it touched.
- **Proportion** - Comparison between elements in a composition.
- **Repetition** - Repeating an element, multiple times, which may create a tempo or beat
- **Movement** - Cause the viewer's eyes to move from one element to the next

### **Assessment Strategy:**

At the end of everyone's creation of their clay monsters students will be assessed according to the class rubric. The rubric will grade the completion of the students background story, character design, stop-motion film, class participation, and their presentation skills. Classmates will respond to each students presentation and critique their work. Classmates will ask the presenter questions they have about their character design, background scenery and stop-motion film. Participation will be graded on how the students respond, criticize, and evaluate each other's artwork.

### **Adaptations:**

- Students the are not able to mold with clay can focus on the bending and manipulation of the armature wire.
- The teacher, paraprofessionals, and other students can help mold clay over their armatures.
- If manipulating armature wire is too difficult for a student they can work with twisteez or fuzzy pipe cleaners or aluminum foil to create their character.
- If the students speak a different language, they can write their story in their home language.

### **Extensions:**

- Create a second monster.
- Add accessories to character.
- Create another short claymation video using stop-motion applications on iPhone.
- Group collaborative claymation video (depending on how many students finish early).

## **Time Budget:**

Class time: 7 Sessions, 45 minutes each

### Session 1:

- Intro, slideshow, videos: 10 min.
- Demonstration: 5 min.
- Sketch Character Design: 25 min.
- Clean-up: 5 min.

### Session 2:

- Review lesson: 5 min.
- Write a background and short story about the monster: 15 min.
- Build the armature: 20 min.
- Clean-up: 5 min.

### Session 3:

- Review lesson: 5 min.
- Mold clay over armature: 35 min.
- Clean-up: 5 min.

### Session 4:

- Review lesson: 5 min.
- Final touches on the clay monster: 15 min.
  - Start background scenery: 20 min.
  - Clean-up: 5 min.

### Session 5:

- Review lesson: 5 min.
- Finish Background scenery/ start stop-motion film: 35 min.
- Clean-up: 5 min

### Session 6:

- Review Lesson: 5 min.
- Finish stop-motion Film: 35 min.
- Clean-up: 5 min.

### Session 7:

- Review lesson: 5 min.
- Presentation/ class critique: 40 min.

**Safety Concerns:**

- Ensure handling of tools are only used on the students artwork, not among each other.
- Ensure students with physical disabilities are being safe with the materials (clay included).

**Bibliography/References:**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydNCj-866\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydNCj-866_Q)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aeBB3HgfIP8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Puph1hejMQE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BXYNHHj4KDw>

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