Name: _____ Date: _____

A Clay Rabbit Hops Through Stop-Motion

Circle group

Some movies have clay characters that seem to walk, talk, and dance. No one pulls strings. The figures are not alive. The trick is called stop-motion. It takes patience and lots of photos.

Say an artist wants a clay rabbit to hop across a table. First, the artist sets the camera on a steady stand so it will not shake. The rabbit goes at the start of its path. The artist takes a photo. Then the rabbit is moved a tiny bit, maybe the width of a pencil. The artist takes another photo. This goes on, move after move. Each time, a paw or an ear is changed a little.

The photos are played back fast, one after the other. Our eyes blend them into smooth motion. The rabbit looks as if it hops by itself. A flip book works the same way. But these pictures are photos of real things.

Stop-motion takes a long time. A few seconds of film can take hours of work. The lights must stay the same in every shot, or the picture will flicker. If a figure moves too far, the motion looks jumpy. Small, careful moves make the best illusion of life.

Questions

1. What is the trick behind moving clay characters called?

_____

_____

2. Why does the artist put the camera on a steady stand?

_____

_____

3. How far is the rabbit moved between photos?

_____

_____

4. Why does the rabbit look as if it hops by itself?

_____

_____

5. What happens if the lights change from shot to shot?

_____

_____

6. What happens if a figure moves too far at once?

_____

_____

Words to know

patience: the ability to wait or work slowly without getting upset
blend: to mix together so they seem like one
flicker: to shine or look unsteady
illusion: something that seems real but is not

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

A Clay Rabbit Hops Through Stop-Motion

Triangle group

Some movies and shorts feature clay characters that seem to walk, talk, and dance. Nobody is pulling strings, and the figures are not alive. The trick is called stop-motion, and it is built from patience and many photographs.

Imagine an artist who wants a clay rabbit to hop across a table. First, the artist places the camera on a steady stand so that it will not shake. Then the rabbit is set at the start of its path, and the artist takes a photo. Next, the rabbit is moved a tiny bit, perhaps the width of a pencil, and another photo is taken. The artist repeats this move after move, adjusting a paw or an ear each time.

When the photos are played back quickly, one after the other, our eyes blend them into smooth motion. The rabbit looks as if it is hopping by itself. A flip book works in the same way, but the pictures are photographs of real objects.

Stop-motion takes a very long time. A few seconds of film can need many hours of work. Lights must stay exactly the same in every shot, or the picture will flicker. If an artist moves a figure too far, the motion looks jumpy. Small, careful changes make the best illusion of life.

Questions

1. What is the trick behind clay characters that seem to move called?

_____

_____

2. Why does the artist put the camera on a steady stand?

_____

_____

3. How far is the rabbit moved between photos?

_____

_____

4. Why does the rabbit look as if it is hopping by itself?

_____

_____

5. What happens if the lights change from shot to shot?

_____

_____

6. What happens if an artist moves a figure too far at once?

_____

_____

Words to know

patience: the ability to wait or work slowly without getting upset
photographs: pictures taken with a camera
blend: to mix together so they seem like one
flicker: to shine or look unsteady
illusion: something that seems real but is not

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

A Clay Rabbit Hops Through Stop-Motion

Square group

Certain movies and short films feature clay characters that appear to walk, talk, and dance. Nobody is pulling strings, and the figures are certainly not alive. The technique is called stop-motion, and it is constructed entirely from patience and an enormous number of photographs.

Picture an artist who wants a clay rabbit to hop across a table. To begin, the artist mounts the camera on a steady stand so that it cannot shake. The rabbit is placed at the start of its path, and the artist takes a photo. Next, the rabbit is nudged forward a tiny distance, perhaps the width of a pencil, and another photo is taken. The artist repeats this process move after move, adjusting a paw or an ear slightly each time.

When the photographs are played back rapidly, one after another, our eyes blend them into smooth motion, and the rabbit looks as though it is hopping by itself. A flip book operates on the same principle, except that these pictures are photographs of real objects.

Stop-motion is extraordinarily time-consuming, since a few seconds of film can require many hours of effort. The lighting must remain identical in every shot, or the picture will flicker, and if an artist moves a figure too far, the motion appears jumpy. Small, careful adjustments produce the most convincing illusion of life.

Questions

1. What is the technique behind clay characters that appear to move called?

_____

_____

2. Why does the artist mount the camera on a steady stand?

_____

_____

3. How far is the rabbit nudged between photos?

_____

_____

4. Why does the rabbit look as though it is hopping by itself?

_____

_____

5. What happens if the lighting changes from shot to shot?

_____

_____

6. What happens if an artist moves a figure too far at once?

_____

_____

Words to know

patience: the ability to wait or work slowly without getting upset
photographs: pictures taken with a camera
blend: to mix together so they seem like one
flicker: to shine or look unsteady
illusion: something that seems real but is not

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: A Clay Rabbit Hops Through Stop-Motion

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: A Clay Rabbit Hops Through Stop-Motion

Easier · 201 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.6

1. Stop-motion.
2. So it will not shake between photos.
3. A tiny bit, maybe the width of a pencil.
4. Our eyes blend the fast photos into smooth motion.
5. The picture will flicker.
6. The motion looks jumpy.

Triangle: A Clay Rabbit Hops Through Stop-Motion

This passage · 216 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.5

1. Stop-motion.
2. So that it will not shake between photos.
3. A tiny bit, perhaps the width of a pencil.
4. Our eyes blend the quickly played photos into smooth motion.
5. The picture will flicker.
6. The motion looks jumpy.

Square: A Clay Rabbit Hops Through Stop-Motion

Harder · 226 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.9

1. Stop-motion.
2. So that it cannot shake between photos.
3. A tiny distance, perhaps the width of a pencil.
4. Our eyes blend the rapidly played photographs into smooth motion.
5. The picture will flicker.
6. The motion appears jumpy.