

Flip Books: Animated Cartoons

(Target audience: Ages 9–12)

In this activity children learn about animation and make flip books. Staff can provide inspiration for their cartoons by using funny poetry and rhymes.

Background:

In a classic animation, images appear to move across the screen—a bird flies, a fish swims and a car races across the page. In actuality, this illusion is created by showing a series of pictures in slightly different, progressive positions. When these images flash across the human eye the creature seems to move.

This method of animation is older than computer animation but is still used, and most companies familiar to children such as Walt Disney, and Hanna-Barbera began by using this method, known as “classic animation.”

More information:

Flipboard Animation and other Ways to Make Cartoon Characters Move by Patrick Jenkins

Discover the literature:

1. Inspire ideas for images by reading nursery rhymes, “Jack Be Nimble”; “Incy Wincy Spider”, “Three Blind Mice”, or other short, narrative poems. If “Mary Had A Little Lamb” is depicted, have the image of Mary move on the page as well as the lamb.
2. Take inspiration from short, funny poems (Jack Prelutsky, Douglas Florian, Dennis Lee) or funny rhymes (David Booth, Joanna Cole, Edward Lear) all listed in the booklists.

Cinderella dressed in yella,
Went upstairs to kiss her fella,
Made a mistake and kissed a snake,
How many doctors did it take?
1, 2, 3,.....

Other book suggestions:

The Book of Pigericks: Piglimericks by Arnold Lobel
Grimericks by Susan Pearson

Flipbook activity

Materials:

- Paper, white, pre-cut 4" x 4" or 20 cm squares, approximately 10 squares (or frames) per child. Stiffer paper will make it easier to flip.
- Pencils
- Felt pens
- Crayons
- Rulers
- Transparent tape
- Stapler

Directions:

1. Each child receives a minimum of 8 squares which are laid out in a long row similar to a comic or cartoon storyboard. Consider each of these squares to be a frame in a movie film. With an erasable pencil, number the frames 1 to 10 beginning on the left side.
2. Starting with the frame 1 draw the tip of a creature, vehicle or bouncing ball etc., entering from the right side of the frame, the bumper of a car, for instance. In frame 2, draw the bumper and half of the hood. In each as you go draw in more of the car so that it appears to slowly enter the scene, and, if there are enough squares of paper, gradually slides out.
3. When the drawing is done, put the frames on top of each other with frame 1 at the **bottom** and the last frame on **top** to make a little book. Staple the left hand side.
4. If you flip the pages from back to front the vehicle will move from right to left and if you flip the pages from front to back the car will appear to be moving backwards.

Suggested depictions:

Have animals chasing each other; a character run across or around the page; an animal doing a flip flop, a clown smiling.

Show a bird flying (change the position of its wings), a monkey scratching his head, a bird eating a worm, a cat catching a mouse, a man climbing a stair, a balloon flying into the air.

