



## Tips for Teaching Stop Motion Animation to Students

- **Make your own stop motion animation film first, using the same equipment and space your student(s) will be using.** Doing something yourself is always the biggest teacher. You will find ways to streamline the process and make it more user friendly before the kids get involved. You'll also be able to answer their questions when they run in to trouble. Consider experimenting with different apps. I like iMotion for Mac products. Stop Motion Studio can be used with both android and Mac products and is also good. Both are free.
- **Start by teaching the following tenants of successful stop motion animation film making and let students practice and explore.**
- **Keep a consistent angle with the camera.** A tripod can help with this. If you don't have one, you can recreate a tripod by taping or tying the phone or tablet to something stable. You can also partner students up and one child (the camera person) can stay in the same position and take the pictures from the same angle. Meanwhile, the other child (the director) moves the objects around.
- **Keep the frame clear of irrelevant items** (such as feet, hands, furniture legs, etc.). In order to help kids with this one, consider setting up a station for the movie making. Use white or black foam or cardboard to create a set, one large piece on the floor, another on the wall behind. You could even use a very large box.
- **Move objects only slightly for each new frame and don't forget to move multiple objects at the same time.** This one requires the most patience and practice but it's worth it because mastering this will make the movement in

their films smooth and more life-like. A good exercise to begin is to have a line of rocks or shells or pencils that “march” into the frame and back out of it.

- **Have kids draw or write out a story board when it comes time to make their movie.** Even if they don’t ultimately stick to the story board, it’s a good exercise to get them thinking and creating an action or narrative. It will also give you something to look at in order to offer suggestions and feedback before they get started.
- **Be patient and have fun!** The results are often amazing and the kids I’ve worked with have really loved the process.