Character Design Turnaround

with Lynn Okimura

A QUICK HOW-TO

Here is how you can add dimension to a character design for animation - draw it from three points of view: Front, Side and Back.

1. Think of a character - person, animal or imaginary - that you want to draw. Imagine it in various positions.

2. Sketch your character in different positions using basic shapes (squares, rectangles, circles, triangles). Choose one of the designs to develop further.

3. Select your favorite drawing and sketch your character from the front view.

4. Then, create a “Turnaround Model Sheet,” taking basic measurements of the character as seen from the front.

5. Using your “Turnaround Model Sheet,” draw a side view of your character based on the basic measurements.


NEW WORDS

Animation
The technique of photographing successive drawings or positions of puppets or models to create an illusion of movement.

Turnaround Model Sheet
A sheet to record the measurements of a drawing of a character from the front view - in order to keep it consistent from side and back.

Character
A person or animal in a novel, play, or movie.

Character Design
Drawings of a character from different perspectives and points of view.

Point of View
Refers to seeing a character from the front, side, back, above and below.

MATERIALS
Paper, pencil or pen, ruler or something with a straight edge.

THINK ABOUT IT
What did you learn? What do you want to know more about?

DIG DEEPER
To learn more about drawing characters for animation, check out The Music Center’s Artsource Curriculum: “Every Picture Tells a Story.” www.musiccenter.org/education/Teacher-Resources/Artsource-Curriculum/Available-ArtSource-Units/John-Ramirez--Paul-Tracey/

TRY THIS CHALLENGE
Teach what you learned with members of your family. Suggest that each person select a character to draw. Then, teach them what you learned about drawing a front view using simple shapes. Show them how to make a “Turnaround Model Sheet” of simple measurements - then ask them to draw their character from the side and the back. Perhaps you can tell, or write, a simple story featuring each of the characters your family created.