Early animated film

LEVEL	NUMBER	LANGUAGE
Advanced	C1_1048S_EN	English

Goals

- Can read, listen to and understand a complex text about the history of animated film.

- Can discuss animation and moving images in depth.

Animation is such a varied form of film!
Stop motion, flip book...which is your favourite?

With animation, the possibilities are endless – you're never bored watching an animated film!

lingoda

Animated film

Are you the kind of person who likes to watch film and TV?

Do you like animated film? Would you choose to watch animation in your free time? Which are your favourite cartoons?

Contrasting differences

In your opinion, what are the main differences between animated film and live action film? Brainstorm the differences with your teacher and discuss them.

Animated film	Live action film

Animated film – not for everyone!

How would you respond to each of the opinions on animation below? Which viewpoint do you agree with the most? Why?

I couldn't be bothered with animated films – too noisy and bright. The only reason they are even made is to keep children quiet!

Animation can be really cool – there are a lot of really interesting concepts out there. On the other hand, I've been forced to sit through some pretty boring cartoons with my nieces and nephews!

We love animated films! They are so funny, and full of crazy moments that make us laugh. We're counting down the days to the next one that comes out in the cinema.
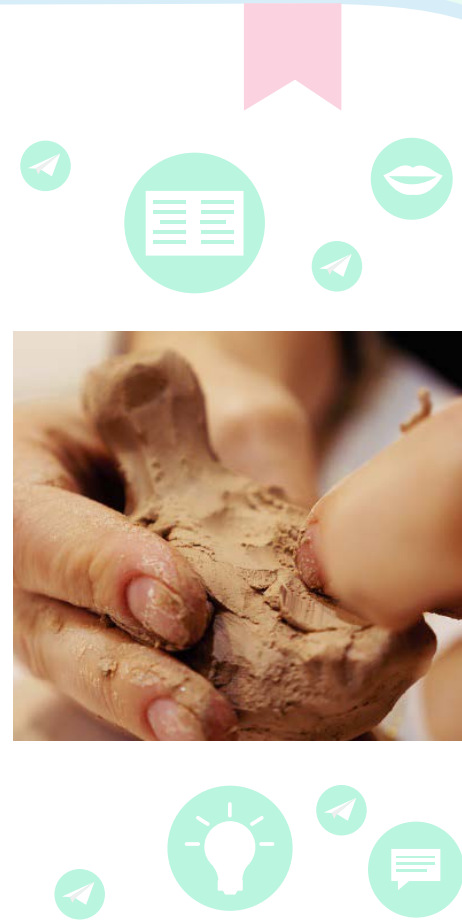
Animation

Animation is a style of film which all children love (as well as plenty of adults), **owing to** its bright colours and infinite possibilities. The visuals of a **live action film** are **confined to** what we see in real life: **protagonists** are typically human and the settings more or less resemble what you will see in everyday life.

In animated film, anything goes! In the fantastic world of animation, talking animals and even abstract creatures like aliens are the norm; the expectation is of abstract and surreal settings in varied shapes and colours. In short, animation allows **a channel** straight from a person's imagination to the screen.

Early developments in animation

Animated film became an area of focus in the early 20th century, which was when the first fully animated films were produced. These early animations used and developed basic techniques such as flip book, a book with a series of drawings which change gradually from page to page. When the book's pages are flicked rapidly, the pictures **simulate** motion.

Early developments in animation

Stop motion, another early technique, involves physical figures and props. These figures, sometimes made from clay, star in a series of photographs; each figure's **posture** is changed slightly between each photo. When all of the photos are shown in fast sequence, the figures give the illusion of movement. One example of experimentation in stop motion taking a turn towards the **grotesque** is a Polish director known as Ladislas Starevich, who in 1912 created a series of short films using dead insects with wire limbs.
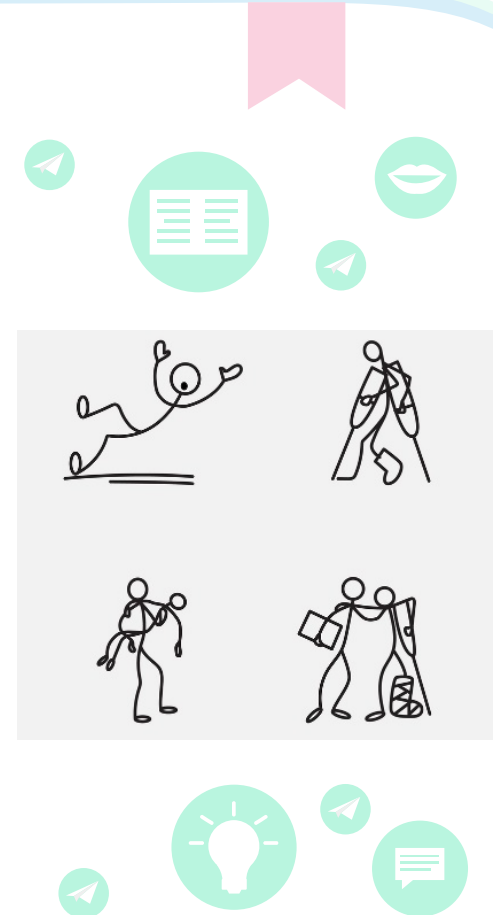
New vocabulary

grotesque

to owe to

live action

to be confined to something

protagonist

channel

to simulate

stop motion

posture

A likely story

Which of these situations or characters do you think would appear in the story of an animated film? Discuss the contents of each picture below and how it would (or wouldn't suit) an animated film. Use as many words from the vocabulary slide above as you can.

One filmmaker used real insect bodies as figurines to shoot his stop motion films.

What do you think of this?

Can you think of other examples where real creatures have been used for art?

Describe the picture

Animation is a richly visual form of art. Describe what is happening in the picture below using as many adjectives and adverbs as possible. What styles and colours would you use to animate this image?
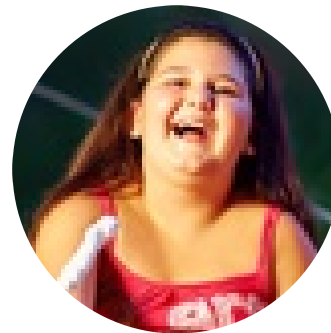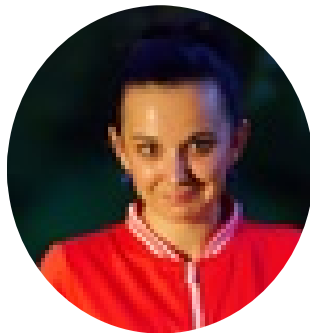
Take some of the people from the picture you described above. Improvise a dialogue with two or more of the characters based loosely on your description. The sentences below describe what each character might be thinking – you can use these to help you if you need.

I wish Mum and Dad were here to help out with all the kids!

I haven't had this much fun since my birthday!

I love camping and bonfires!
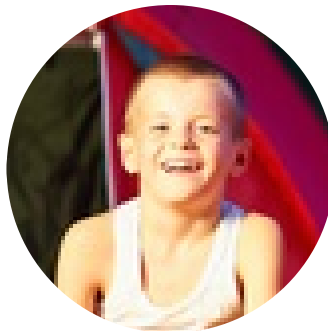
Can you squeeze over a bit? My leg's getting pins and needles…

Get ready to listen

The next few slides will focus on
training your listening comprehension

Fill in the gaps

As you listen to the text, fill in the gaps using the words below.

Emile Cohl, sometimes _____ 'The Father of the Animated Cartoon,' was the Frenchman responsible for the first ever animated film released in 1908. At _____ over a minute in length, this short animation entitled *Fantasmagorie* is _____ of an astounding 700 separate drawings. These drawings were then _____ together, resulting in a _____ series of animated movements. The drawings were first filmed in their original form: black lines on white paper. The _____ from this first _____ were then reversed to produce the effect of moving _____ sketches on a blackboard. Each drawing was double-exposed, which means that two drawings were _____ on one another to give a _____ -moving effect.

negatives

composed

stitched

chalk
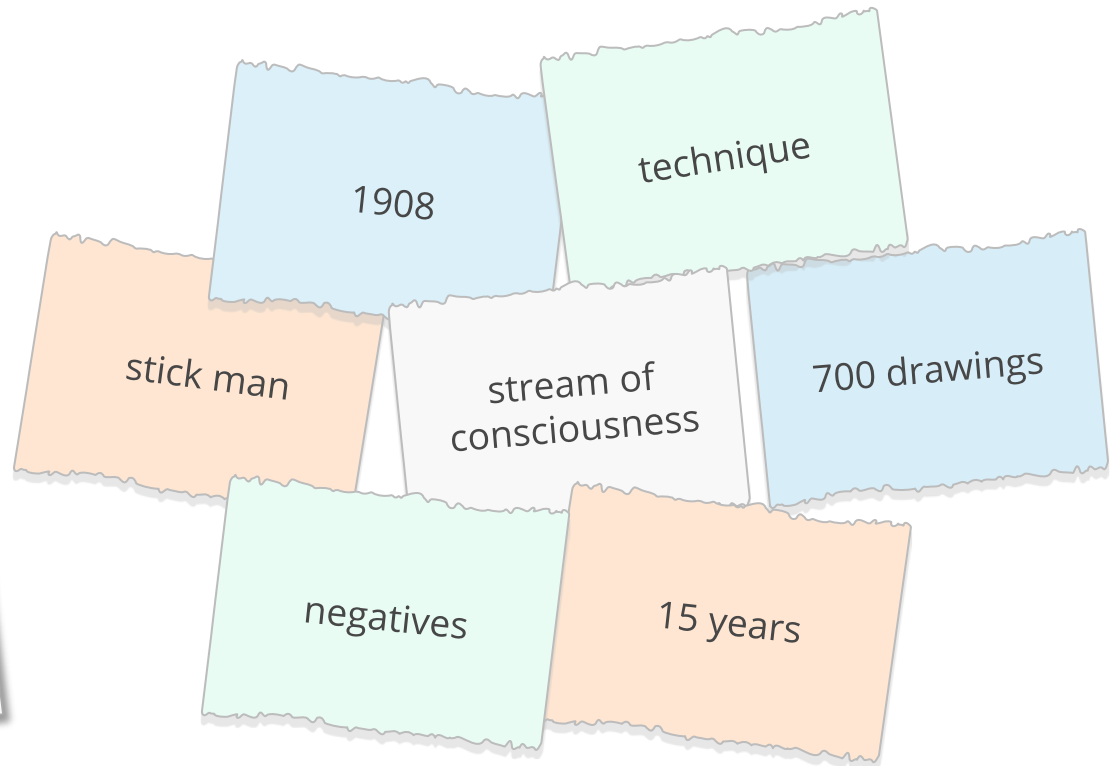
barely

fluid

superimposed

dubbed

rapid

draft

Note the significance of each of the prompts below in relation to the text you are listening to. Make notes and explain each prompt

stick men

1908

technique

stick man

stream of consciousness

700 drawings

negatives

15 years

New vocabulary: have you seen any of these words before?

to dub

to be composed of

fluid

negative

to superimpose

to span

to depict

hectic

industrious

What about you?

Do you like to draw? Have you ever tried animation? Do you have any hobbies where you create things or put things together?
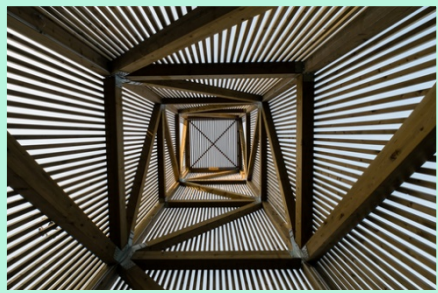
working with your hands

arts and crafts

creativity

Phantasmagoria

Phantasmagoria is described as 'a constantly shifting group of images real or imagined as in a dream.' Can you think of any examples of phantasmagoria? Do you remember any of your own dreams, or have you seen any films or books that illustrate this idea? Use the pictures and words below to help you.

A sequence of...

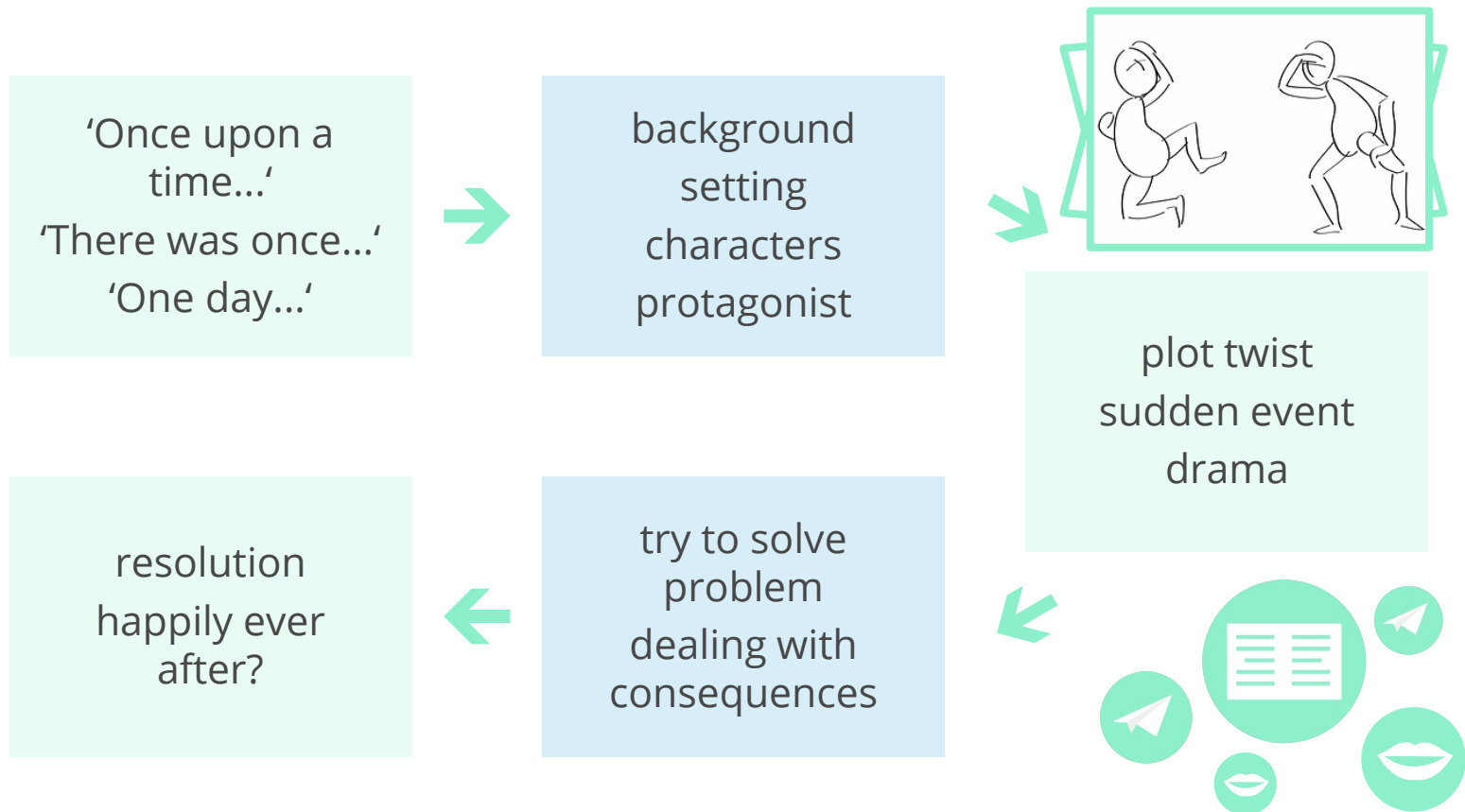people I know
colours
animals
contorted

...suddenly shifted to...

strange
bizarre
confusion
maze

Your own storyboard

All animations begin with a storyboard, which shows the sequence of events and outlines the basic story. Construct your own story in this style, using the words, phrases and instructions in each box to help you.

'Once upon a time...'
'There was once...'
'One day...'

→

background
setting
characters
protagonist

→

plot twist
sudden event
drama

resolution
happily ever after?

←

try to solve
problem
dealing with
consequences

←

Film pitch

Now, imagine you are a film producer. You have been invited to meet with a high-profile manager at a famous animation studio, which is a huge opportunity. Using your storyboard from the previous activity, pitch your film idea to the manager.

- Impress the manager with your idea! Persuade them why your idea would make a better film over others
- Remember to include the message your film will include and who it's for
- Explain what style the film would have. Minimalist? Surreal? What will the soundtrack be like?

Guessing game

plot
characters
summary
style

How many cartoons and animations do you know? What about your teacher?

Take it in turns to describe an animated film or cartoon without using any of the words in the title or the animating studio. Don't use any more than 2 sentences! See if you can guess from one another's clues.

Its a famous film all about a little boy and the things he plays with. They come to life when he isn't there!

Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary**, **phrases**, **language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!

Answer key

p. 16: fill in the gaps

dubbed, barely, composed, stitched, fluid, negatives, draft, chalk, superimposed, rapid

Emile Cohl, sometimes **dubbed** 'The Father of the Animated Cartoon,' was the Frenchman responsible for the first ever animated film released in 1908. At barely over a minute in length, this short animation entitled *Fantasmagorie* is **composed of** an astounding 700 separate drawings. These drawings were then stitched together, resulting in a **fluid** series of animated movements. The drawings were first filmed in their original form: black lines on white paper. The **negatives** from this first draft were then reversed to produce the effect of moving chalk sketches on a blackboard. Each drawing was double-exposed, which means that two drawings were **superimposed** on one another to give a rapid-moving effect.

The short film is entirely silent, however the visuals are so interesting and full of movement that the production doesn't feel **lacking** in any way. The film is abstract and fast-paced, faithful to its name: a French word (**phantasmagoria** in English) which means 'a constantly shifting group of images real or imagined as in a dream.' The first frame **depicts** a small stick man being drawn by a man's hand. This stick man proceeds through various surreal adventures, with bottles morphing into flowers and elephants into houses. The action is **hectic** with objects and characters frequently changing size and a definite stream-of-consciousness feel.
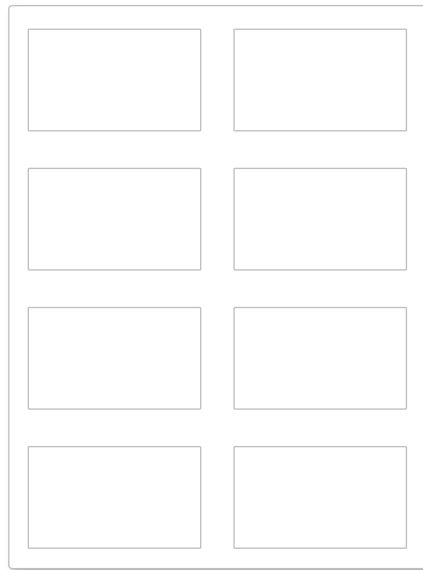
Cohl was so **industrious** that he created more than 250 films in the fifteen years **spanning** 1908 and 1923. 37 of these films still survive today in film archives and can be watched by anyone interested - some of them can even be found on YouTube!

Homework
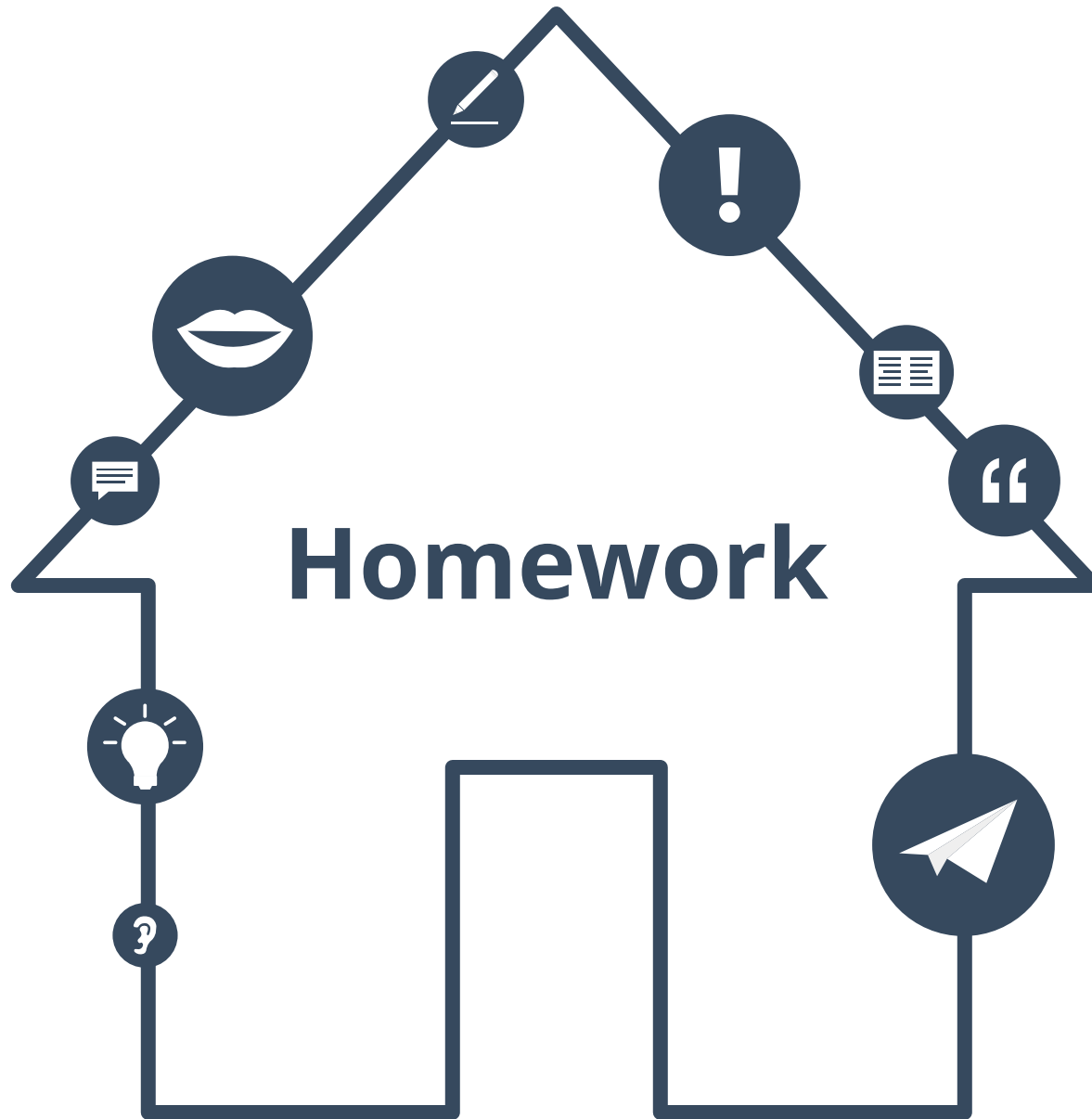
Go back through the lesson and make a note of new vocabulary that will be useful in the future.

hectic

Using the words you selected for your flashcards, write a sentence for each. Try to make the context of the sentence slightly different to that of the sentence you first read or heard the word in.

hectic

Whenever I sleep through my morning alarm, the following moments are always **hectic** beyond belief!

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