This is my first time animating in Maya and I was introduced to/implemented concepts such as animating a walk cycle, rigging, blendshapes, and using lights and cameras in Maya. I found the rigging aspect of the assignment more straightforward.

However, I think my animation was overall too simplistic and could do with a lot of improvement. I started with the rigging part of the animation and spent too much time on it because I initially did the rigging without the blendshapes, and had to restart.

For the animation part, I spent too much time thinking about how I wanted to animate the child's walk cycle, which prevented me from actually starting. Firstly, I struggled with timing. For example, I made the child move slowly in an attempt to make their actions seem more uncertain and clumsy. I think this made their interaction with the ball too slow and it looked unnatural. On the other hand, I think the way the bigger character stood up and picked up the ball was too fast. If I had more time I would adjust the timings of the actions of the characters.

Also, I struggled with making the bigger character's movements realistic.The way he stood up from his sitting position was very unnatural and there was a lot of sliding. This is probably the main issue with the animation. Other than that he didn't do much so if I were to improve I would make him interact with the ball/child more, and make the whole animation more cohesive.

I liked how his initial pose came out for the most part. However if I had time I would definitely go back and readjust the placement of his hands, because one is not quite reaching the ground and the other is going through the ground. Also, the ball went through the ground instead of bouncing off of it. This is probably because I put in a ground plane after I finished animating, when I should have animated with my characters on the ground.

I also had an issue with the characters' arms twisting unnaturally. If I had more time, I would go back and clean up on the things previously mentioned. I could also continue the interaction because it ended quite abruptly and looked like there should have been more.

I went for a beach environment and used softer lighting. I like how it came out as I think it makes for a believable sunset scene. However I could have been more creative with my cameras, for example, using camera movements.

I think I underestimated the difficulty of making characters move in a way that is believable. I definitely needed to take more time to study references and body language, perhaps act out some of the parts myself and break down the movements I wanted. If I could do things differently I would take the time to actually understand how the characters should be moving and then hopefully animate more complex interactions successfully.

REFERENCES

Ralph (No last name given). (no date) Sandy beach [360 photo] At: pixexid [online]. Available from: https://pixexid.com/image/sandy-beach-nkfj1lyv [Accessed 23 April 2024].