



USING CLAY ANIMATION TO ENGAGE THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

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MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AND CLAY ANIMATION

"The single most powerful statement to come out of brain research in the last twenty five years is this: *We are as different from one another on the inside of our heads as we appear to be different on the outside. Look around and see the infinite variety of human heads...know that on the inside such differences are even greater - what we know, how we learn, how we process information, what we remember and forget, and our strategies for functioning and cooperating.*"

- R. Fulghum, from *It was on fire when I lay down on it*

Howard Gardner of Harvard University shares a new view of intelligence in his ground-breaking book, **Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences**. In this work, he broadly defines intelligence as "the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural settings" (Gardner, 1993). He then elaborates on seven more specific types of intelligence including: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal intelligence. He has since added both naturalist and existential intelligence for a total of 9 different intelligences.

Clay Animation can help you easily engage all of these different intelligences. In fact, completing the entire clay animation project building process requires applying or using almost all of the different intelligences at one time or another. A clay animation project allows students to apply their most capable intelligence, while also developing and utilizing all of their other intelligences and learning to use the intelligences (strengths) of their peers.

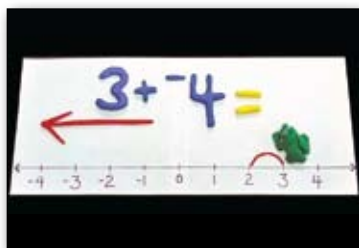
ENGAGING THE MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES



Linguistic intelligence is a proficiency with language and written forms of communication.

No matter what the topic, clay animation requires strong communication and effective storytelling skills. A written narrative of the animation, whether it is a story or a scientific process, should be done before work on the computer begins.

If you are trying to encourage reluctant writers or second language learners, you may want to have them make a clay character first. While creating and "playing" with the clay, stories will appear almost automatically and can facilitate a writing process some students find difficult.



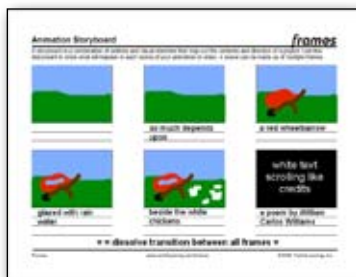
Logical-Mathematical intelligence is a proficiency with numbers, mathematical concepts, and logic.

The clay animation process requires the completion of several distinct steps. Have students plan out the steps and sequences necessary to make their clay animation. You can also have them create a production budget for materials, time, and other needed resources.



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Spatial intelligence is a proficiency with spatial relationships and the ability to think and communicate in a visual format.

To engage the spatial intelligence, have students create a project storyboard or visual map of their project. This requires them to think about how they can best portray concepts and situations visually. Creating the backgrounds, choosing colors for the characters, and modifying character movements to convey information also engage this intelligence.



Musical intelligence is an appreciation of a variety of forms of music and proficiency in using music as a form of self-expression.

Clay animations have a more dramatic and powerful effect when they include music. To engage the musical intelligence, have students create an original soundtrack or score using sound creation software such as Smart Sound or Super Duper Music Looper for their animation to set the mood and showcase conflict.



Bodily-Kinesthetic intelligence is a proficiency in using one's own body to express oneself or to create/build/manipulate objects.

Building a clay character and setting and positioning the character for picture taking of realistic movements requires kinesthetic skill. To engage the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, have students use a variety of materials and approaches to building the character, set, and accessories.



Interpersonal intelligence is a proficiency in understanding and responding effectively to other people.

Clay animation is easiest to manage and often most successful when it is completed by a team of students. Working in teams provides an opportunity for students to utilize their interpersonal intelligence to maximize each individual's contribution to the team's clay animation project.

To further facilitate student learning with this intelligence, create a check-in point to see how the team is progressing and what they are experiencing during the process.



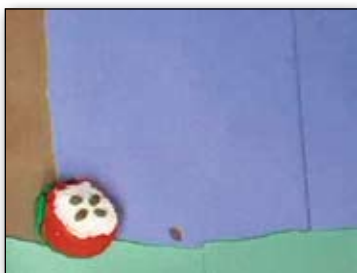
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Intrapersonal intelligence is a proficiency in knowing one's self-motivation, strengths, feelings.

To engage this intelligence, have students keep a journal to record their contributions, feelings, and experiences during the process. Knowing their own strengths and feelings will help students better contribute to their team's clay animation. During the animation presentation, have them share some of these experiences.



Naturalist intelligence is a proficiency in identifying, understanding, organizing, and classifying patterns in the natural environment or the plant, animal and human world.

Engaging this intelligence can be done by having clay animation projects examine patterns and processes in the natural world. Awareness and observation of the environment will also help students add details to their scenes and actions that contribute to the reality, and therefore the impact, of the animation.



Existential intelligence is a proficiency in asking and examining questions about life, death, and ultimate realities.

Stories that try to answer these questions are truly compelling. A clay animation project that includes storytelling will encourage this intelligence. You can further engage the existential intelligence by specifically designing projects to answer "essential" or "big" questions

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES IN A PROJECT

Here are two examples of how projects can address the different intelligences in both content and process. These projects are included as full lesson plans later in this book.

PERSONIFICATION POEMS

Introduce the technique of personification by discussing how human and nonhuman experiences might be similar (logical-mathematical, naturalist). Then, have student teams (interpersonal) choose a nonhuman object and brainstorm feelings and experiences (intrapersonal) they might apply to it.

Have each student team compose a poem (linguistic) that personifies their object. The team should work together to build a clay character (bodily-kinesthetic), design





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a set, and create a clay animation (visual-spatial) that combines narration of the poem with a visual action by the clay characters. Students can add a soundtrack (musical) to further enhance the communication.

Have the students present their animation to the rest of the class in a clay animation poetry festival!

HISTORIC EVENTS

Discuss what it might have been like to live during a particular historic period, as a man, as a woman, as a child, or in different social classes (intrapersonal, interpersonal, existential). Discuss how the natural and social environment at that time contributed to the actions and feelings of different people (naturalist).

Divide students into teams and have each team choose a historic event to animate. The teams should recreate the animation from a perspective not normally chosen. For example, what was it like to hear Dr. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech as a child in the audience?



Each team should complete an overview and storyboard and plan the steps they will need to take to finish their animation (logical-mathematical). Once the plan is complete, teams will build clay characters and design the set for their animation (bodily-kinesthetic, spatial). They will then take pictures and complete a clay animation (visual-spatial) that includes both narration and a sound track (musical) to teach others about this historic event and how it affected different people.

